Preface

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, when less was known about the disease and no vaccine was yet available, BTC established a COVID Response Team and a rigorous process for responding to reports of student illness in order to meet the public health requirements at that time. Now, in 2021, more is known about the nature of the coronavirus and how it spreads and vaccines have been made widely available. Because of these changing circumstances, BTC's process for response to campus illness have changed.

As a Fully Vaccinated Campus, BTC programs and departments will be able to continue their work while we respond to incidents of COVID-19 exposure. And as we move through this next phase of the pandemic, we remain mindful of the lessons we have learned and how we can apply those lessons not only to COVID, but to all contagious or infectious diseases our campus may encounter, including the annual flu.

This procedure articulates the principles and establishes the process necessary to maintain a healthy campus community in a sustainable way during the pandemic. The college will continue to provide support, counseling, and information to our campus community as we move forward.

Principles

Stay healthy and engage in healthy practices: BTC encourages all students to manage their health through proper diet, exercise, and stress reduction to the extent possible. Please check these links (CDC Healthy Living, WA DoH You and Your Family) for general advice and consult with your health care provider.

Engage in good public hygiene practices: Wash your hands frequently. Get a flu shot. Stay current on all recommended vaccinations. Get the COVID vaccine. Mask up and take extra precautions during cold and flu season. Make staying healthy and keeping your community healthy a consistent practice. (CDC Hygiene, CDC Vaccine Information for Adults, WA DoH Immunization). As a Fully Vaccinated Campus under the Governor's Higher Education Proclamation 20-12.5, BTC requires all students to get vaccinated and to continue to wear face coverings indoors and outdoors regardless of vaccination status.

If you're sick, stay home: It is the intention of BTC to instill in students the importance of honestly reporting all incidents of illness. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the individual to stay home and not come to campus. If you are sick unrelated to COVID-19, contact your faculty member. Stay off campus until 48 hours after symptoms subside. If you contract or are exposed to COVID-19, observe the following protocol:

COVID-19 response

As a Fully Vaccinated Campus, the college will not generally be closing or pausing instructional cohorts if illness is reported; the college follows Whatcom County Health Department guidelines regarding quarantine and isolation for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. When appropriate, the college will

inform specific campus populations of an incident of COVID-19, advise them of those guidelines, and possibly require modifications to operations.

If you exhibit COVID-19 symptoms, get a test. If you test positive for COVID-19, report that to your faculty. Follow directions from the Whatcom County Health Department regarding COVID-19 exposure or infection; you may not be released to return to class until certain conditions are met or a medical release is provided. Any student developing a temperature of 100.4°F or higher while on campus is considered to have a fever and will be sent home. You are to report to your instructor if you develop symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, or new loss of taste or smell).

If you have been in close contact (within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes within 24 hours) with someone who has been confirmed with a positive case of COVID-19, report this to your faculty as soon as possible and use the CDC guidance on how to self-monitor and when to contact your health care provider.

If you have a sick family member at home with COVID-19, notify your instructor as soon as possible. Follow the isolation/quarantine requirements established by the Washington State Department of Health.

Faculty who receive notification of a student illness or exposure in their class or cohort will advise all students of the potential exposure, and provide them with DoH and CDC guidelines for recommended response by vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.

Faculty who receive notification of a student illness or exposure will report the information to the COVID Response Team. The Team will contact the reporting student directly with clear instruction on the protocols to follow in response to their circumstance. Students may not return to campus sooner than allowed by the response protocol and will be subject to Student Code of Conduct sanctions if they do so. The COVID Response Team will be the follow-up contact for reporting students.

If there is a second report of symptoms, contact, or positive testing within the same class or cohort, the COVID Response Team will work with the appropriate faculty and dean or director to develop any operation modifications.

Campus awareness
The college will notify programs or departments about public health issues of general concern. All communication about such incidents will come from the college and should not come from individuals.

Campus community support
BTC is committed to the success of students and employees who may be affected by COVID-19. Each program or department will work with impacted individuals on a case-by-case basis as situations arise. Students should work with faculty to stay current with work and access alternative means of instruction, if available.

Process compliance

Individuals who fail to comply with the COVID reporting procedure will be subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.