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Seattle U Community Finds Hope in Becoming Eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine

Ashley Hagar, Staff Reporter

As all students become eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in the coming week, staff and administration advise Seattle University community members to stay vigilant in maintaining proper social distancing and COVID-19 protocols. All Washington residents ages 16 and older become eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine April 15, with a recent announcement that all students returning to campus for the fall quarter of 2021 will be required to be vaccinated.

Second-year Business Analytics Major, Jay Grant, shared his excitement to get the shot as soon as he can.

"I am looking forward to being able to have more peace of mind in my everyday life. My parents have already gotten their first dose and I am looking forward to being able to safely see them again," Grant said. "I also look forward to my peers and professors getting their vaccines, so we can safely return to in person classes next fall."

Despite some Washington counties moving into different phases and loosening restrictions, the Seattle U community must continue to follow the protocols put in place by administration. Students, faculty, staff and any visitors must continue to fill out the Safe Start Survey prior to coming to campus. Students living on campus and commuters will continue to participate in the surveillance testing program throughout spring quarter.

Any decision about opening Seattle U remains dependent on the recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health officials. The reopening committee in charge of Seattle U's reopening plan meets with administrators regularly to ensure Seattle U's policies are safe and updated.

Director of the Student Health Center, Tara Hicks, encourages students to get vaccinated once they are eligible. She explained that the campus will be more open for in person contact once more people in the Seattle U community are vaccinated.

"I strongly encourage everyone to get the vaccine as soon as possible. Being fully vaccinated is not enough right now, but it is the combination of actions that allows us to continue fighting this threat," Hicks said. "It is very important to continue doing everything we know has been effective in decreasing virus transmission so far such as wearing well-fitting masks correctly, stay home when you're sick, avoid crowded indoor spaces, and improve ventilation by opening windows and doors."

Once vaccinated, Seattle U hopes to have community members register in their records, through a voluntary survey once students are fully vaccinated. Sharing this information will allow the university to continue making proactive decisions regarding protocols and allow for effective contact tracing when necessary.



Colby Lane

Seattle U has made changes in the last few months, opening more programs and events for students and visitors. However, this can only remain in place if students continue following proper protocol.

On campus residents are still allowed to have residential pods of up to seven students from any of the residence halls.

Seattle U Athletics announced that home athletic events are now allowed to have a limited number of spectators as of March 17. UREC has also increased its offerings, including opening SU Park and the RAC inside. They also have other programs available for students to register for on their website.

As announced last month, Seattle U plans to return to mostly in-person classes for the upcoming fall quarter. First-year Biology Major, Alex Jensen, and Second-year Criminal Justice Major, Jennifer Huffman, both look forward to having experiences in the classroom again. Jensen has yet to experience classes in person at Seattle U, so he will be able to have a sense of normalcy in his college career.

"I'm super excited for in-person classes," Jensen said. "Being able to meet some more people and hang out with my friends more often will definitely be fun. I'm eager for things to get back to normal and it should just be right around the corner."

Huffman explained how she looks forward to being able to return to what the first two quarters of her college career were like last academic year.

"It is going to feel really weird though, I've been so used to 'hanging out' with my friends virtually over this past year," Huffman said. "It's been really hard this past year not being able to have in person classes, or go to sporting events, or even being able to walk around Cap Hill with my friends."

Resources:

Below is a list of resources to determine if you are eligible for the vaccine, where you can get vaccinated, regulations after you are vaccinated and more.

You can sign up to be notified when you are eligible for the vaccine.

To find a vaccination appointment in the state of Washington you can visit the Vaccine Locator.

Another resource for finding vaccines in the United States. You can also select which type of the vaccine you would like if you have a preference.

On the CDC's website, you can find links to finding an appointment in a particular state as well as more information about the vaccine.

The Washington Department of Health's website shares up to date information about who is eligible as well as a link to finding an appointment.

For general information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and a link to making an appointment is available on the King County's website.

The CDC has also provided a FAQ page for the COVID-19 vaccines.

Register your vaccination with Seattle U through this Safe Start form.

Guidelines from public health officials for after you have been fully vaccinated can be read at this page on the CDC's website.