



## University Relations

1700 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706  
wisconsin.edu • facebook.com/uwsystem • twitter.com/uwsystem

[universityrelations@uwsa.edu](mailto:universityrelations@uwsa.edu) or 608-263-1700

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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News Release

# UW System campuses preparing for return of precollege and youth programs this summer

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MADISON, Wis.—University of Wisconsin System universities are preparing for the return of precollege and youth programs to campuses this summer with safety protocols in place and in consultation with local and state health authorities.

After widespread cancellations of such programs in summer 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Wisconsin's public universities are re-introducing the programs this year as a result of renewed demand, more advanced knowledge of how to contain virus spread, and increasing vaccinations across the state.

"UW System is taking steps to safely bring youth back to our campuses for these learning opportunities so they can continue their personal growth and experience what our universities have to offer," said UW System President Tommy Thompson. "Our health and safety protection efforts for youth programs is a promise not only to the public that entrusts us with their resources, but to the families who entrust us with their students."

The return of precollege and youth programs is consistent with UW System's plans for the fall 2021 semester, for which Thompson set a goal of at least 75 percent of classes offered in person.

"The pandemic is not over, but we can safely begin to return to pre-pandemic operations, including summer programs for youth and a strong majority of in-person classes this fall," Thompson said. "We are creating a culture of responsibility on our campuses."

The UW System is supporting system campuses in implementing COVID-19 mitigation strategies for precollege and youth programs by assisting in the development of mitigation protocols and planning guidance.

UW System's goal is to make sure each UW System campus provides a safe environment for minors who participate in youth camps, activities, and programs on campus by mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

UW System's Office of Compliance and Integrity works with precollege liaisons on each campus who advocate and implement youth protection policies and best practices.

The UW System has created COVID-19 guidance for all youth programming in accordance with guidance from Public Health Madison and Dane County; the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,

Trade and Consumer Protection; the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the American Camp Association; and other federal, state, and county agencies.

Some of the steps the UW System is taking to help campuses safely restart precollege and youth programs include:

- Training and implementation around pre-arrival testing, symptom screening, face coverings, physical distancing, hygiene measures, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- Developing a systemwide youth testing program.
- Supporting campus precollege liaisons in building customized reopening plans for minors on campus.
- Providing guidance to campus youth program staff and administrators on how to establish and enforce specific processes for programs to meet youth protection standards.
- Offering monthly professional development opportunities for all youth-serving staff and precollege liaisons.
- Providing standardized templates for informing parents and participants of possible spread of COVID-19 and how to mitigate the spread.

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*The University of Wisconsin System serves approximately 165,000 students. Awarding nearly 37,000 degrees annually, the UW System is Wisconsin's talent pipeline, putting graduates in position to increase their earning power, contribute to their communities, and make Wisconsin a better place to live. Nearly 90 percent of in-state UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after earning a degree. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System institutions also contribute to the richness of Wisconsin's culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.*

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Mark Pitsch, UW System

608-265-3419

[mpitsch@uwsa.edu](mailto:mpitsch@uwsa.edu)

[universityrelations@uwsa.edu](mailto:universityrelations@uwsa.edu)