

## School of Earth and Ocean Sciences

### COVID-19 Policy on Non-Lab Shared Spaces

*Revised 01 September 2020*

As part of the University of Victoria's gradual campus resumption, every space within the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences – each laboratory and specialized facility, as well as all administrative and academic offices and meeting rooms – must have an approved Safe Work Plan in place that governs maximum occupancy, physical distancing and sanitation protocols. This policy standardizes the approach of SEOS to physical distancing and safe working procedures in departmental non-lab *shared* spaces.

A non-lab shared space is defined as any part of a University building that is accessible to all or many occupants. This includes, but is not limited to, entrance ways, foyers, seating areas, corridors, breezeways, stairwells, washrooms, meeting rooms, and kitchens and other multi-user sink/tea/coffee stations. There are departmental shared spaces and building common areas; in all cases, building occupants and visitors are expected to comply with COVID-19 protocols. Many of these areas will be signed to indicate maximum occupancy, traffic/directional flow, and whether they are open, closed or have restricted use. Furniture may be rearranged to limit or control occupancy.

It is the School's expectation that everyone operating in or passing through non-lab shared spaces in the Bob Wright Centre (and adjacent science buildings, unless otherwise posted) will comply with the following protocol.

- Maintain a minimum 2-metre distance between individuals at all times, subject to the point below.
- At this time, the University recommends that masks be worn in public indoor spaces such as hallways and other traffic areas where physical distancing cannot always be maintained. SEOS recommends that masks be worn at all times when moving throughout the building (outside of personal offices, workstations or labs). In common areas, it is impossible to foresee or control how many others are present or how they might move about. Even when wearing a mask, it is expected that physical distancing will be observed as much as possible; a mask is not a substitute for physical distancing.
- SEOS faculty, staff and students will be permitted to return to offices and workstations on campus, commencing September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020. To begin with, on-campus departmental personnel levels will be constrained to a range of 20%-40% of normal levels. Faculty, staff and students will continue to be encouraged to work from home, whenever possible.
- This return to (non-research) work on campus is guided by the departmental Safe Work Plan (copy available as a separate document). In order to ensure that occupancy levels do not exceed those recommended, and that contact tracing is possible if necessary, the School is introducing a check-in protocol. In addition, given the limited number and placement of designated safe workstations in graduate student office rooms, students will have to reserve workstation time in advance of coming to campus.
- Everyone is to conduct themselves in accordance with the [SEOS COVID-19 Expectations of Personal Conduct](#).

## **SEOS Safety Committee**

- If you have any questions or safety concerns, please contact the SEOS Safety Committee at [seossafety@uvic.ca](mailto:seossafety@uvic.ca).
- The Committee recognizes that policies governing the access to and use of space and facilities on campus will change in response to University-wide directives shifting to address greater or reduced levels of concern. The SEOS Home Page main (top) menu bar has been modified to include a “Health and Safety” page, where policies will be posted, along with any current notices/concerns. This page is limited to internal SEOS/BWC directives only. For University-wide notifications and/or Occupational Health, Safety and Environment postings, please link directly to those sites.

## **Building access**

- Apply hand sanitizer immediately upon entering the building; there are dispensers located at the main entries (foyer) to BWC. As noted above, SEOS recommends wearing a mask.

## **Elevators, Stairwells and Corridors**

- Try to minimize travel indoors by planning your route ahead.
- Elevators should be avoided whenever possible. If an elevator must be used, only one person is permitted at a time. If you do have to use the elevator, ask anyone wanting access to step aside and wait until after you have exited (whether on that floor or another floor).
- For stairwells and corridors that are  $\geq 2$  m wide (e.g. Bob Wright central stairwell): please pass oncoming individuals by staying as far to the right as possible.
- For corridors and breezeways/links that are  $< 2$  m wide with a clear sight-line: check that the way is clear before proceeding, and yield to those already in the corridor. Follow any directional signage posted.
- For corridors and breezeways/links that are  $< 2$  m wide with a blind corner: approach the corner carefully to ensure no others are currently present. Proceed only if the way is clear, and yield to those already in the corridor. Follow any directional signage posted.
- For stairwells that are  $< 2$  m wide: sight-check whenever possible to ensure no others are currently present. The stairwells will be marked as “yield stairwells”. Proceed only if the stairwell is clear. If you encounter another person in the stairwell, the person descending the stairs has the right-of-way (if you are ascending, please exit at the closest floor and wait until clear to re-enter).

## **Workplace operations**

- Wash or sanitize your hands each time you leave or return to your laboratory or office.
- Do not wear gloves outside of laboratories.
- Wear a mask when you are moving through corridors and stairwells.
- Clean and disinfect photocopiers/printers before and after each use. Cleaning instructions and supplies will be provided at each departmental copier/printer location (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor Ricoh units).

Paper clips and pens will be cleared away; bring your own if needed. Paper cutters, staplers and hole-punchers will remain accessible; clean and disinfect before and after use.

### **Communal spaces (e.g. kitchens, washrooms)**

- The SEOS kitchen (4<sup>th</sup> floor) will be accessible only for hand-washing and as a source of drinking water, with a maximum occupancy of one. Hand soap and paper towels will be supplied. This space is not to be used for food storage or preparation, or for dish washing. Communal microwaves, fridges, kettles and other appliances and utensils/dishes will remain unplugged, removed or taped-off until further notice. Signage will be posted. It is expected that all other SEOS space with sinks and counter areas used to support food/beverage preparation or storage will be managed similarly (this includes areas within research labs, project rooms, and graduate student rooms (A304, A306, B310, B311a, B313, B414)).
- Workers bringing lunches and other food or drinks for consumption on campus should pack them in suitable containers and take any leftovers and dirty dishes home for washing and/or disposal. Eating or drinking in laboratories is not permitted, and lab fridges are not to be used for food or beverage storage.
- Meals and breaks should be taken outside whenever possible. Avoid congregating indoors. Be aware that seating areas and surfaces in BWC foyer areas might not be routinely sanitized. Alternative options will be considered as winter approaches.
- Washrooms above the first floor have a maximum occupancy of two. As building occupancy increases, the Safety Committee will request that additional washrooms be opened. Signage is posted. Wash your hands before and after washroom use and ensure toilets are properly flushed (emptied) and paper products are disposed of in the appropriate bins. Washroom sinks are to be used for hand-washing only.
- Do not drink directly from water fountains. You can fill water bottles where a bottle re-filling station exists.

### **Conduct in other buildings on campus**

- Most buildings will have a policy similar to this one; if in doubt, follow the guidelines above.

*If a situation arises which has not been specifically addressed above, please use common sense – protect yourself; protect others. Let the SEOS Safety Committee know (at [seossafety@uvic.ca](mailto:seossafety@uvic.ca)) if you observe or experience anything that concerns you, or that you think should be formally detailed in this policy.*