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Colleges, universities largely maintaining COVID protocols

By Bobbie Hayse Messenger-Inquirer
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Eddie Kenny

Colleges and universities in the county area are largely maintaining their COVID-19 protocols from last year for the spring 2022 semester, which is beginning for most of them.

Officials from Western Kentucky University-Owensboro, Kentucky Wesleyan College, Brescia University and the Owensboro Community & Technical College say classes will all be in-person, but there are virtual and remote learning opportunities available should students need them. Their protocols for handling the omicron variant include masking in buildings and in crowds.

KWC is requiring students who are not fully vaccinated to submit a negative COVID-19 test result before returning to classes. Beginning Monday, Jan. 10, Brescia will also have testing requirements for unvaccinated individuals.

Western Kentucky University is asking all of its school community to report or update their vaccination status at app.wku.edu/vaccine. Brescia and OCTC are not requiring vaccines for students and staff, but are strongly encouraging them and providing opportunities to receive the vaccine.



Tim Caboni

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Kentucky Wesleyan has required its staff to be vaccinated, “with medical and religious waivers considered with proper documentation,” said Eddie Kenny, KWC vice president of advancement.

He said all students should refer to the school’s COVID Response Team messaging regularly, which is updated often at kwc.edu/coronavirus/.

Lauren McCrary, Brescia vice president for executive affairs and chief of staff, said the most notable change this spring semester is the school's technology upgrade that allows for most classrooms to provide remote learning opportunities.

Bernie Hale, OCTC director of communication and marketing, said the school is continuing its recommendations for all other protocols, like safe distancing, hand washing and, especially, staying home when sick.

In a letter sent to WKU staff, WKU President Timothy Caboni said the strategies employed by the school's COVID-19 Task Force have proven effective, "but sustained diligence is required to best protect our Hilltopper family."

"The ever-changing nature of the pandemic and the arrival of new variants require continued flexibility and adaptability," he said.

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