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To: LIBNEWS-L@LISTSERV.ILLINOIS.EDU
Subject: Weekly Update #54: New Masking Environment
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Attachments: [Outlook-h5otlawc.png](#)

Colleagues,

Happy Monday!

We would like to thank everyone who has contacted us with comments, suggestions, concerns, and notes of support regarding the shift in campus masking policy. We have heard from campus that the direction the Library has set is consistent with campus expectations. Given the boundaries of the campus policy, we can all work together to create an environment that is as supportive and collegial as possible.

As we move into the first day of the policy, we'd like to reiterate or perhaps clarify a few core points, as a supplement to [last week's COVID-19 update from campus](#):

- Masking will be required in Library classrooms or classroom-like spaces, **during class sessions**.
- At other times, we may ask others (patrons, other staff users) to mask up **ONLY** when working in confined spaces. While 'confined spaces' is somewhat subjective, the campus message from last week provided guidance for one-on-one situations in offices.
- In the Library, this means that you can ask people to mask, step back etc., in smaller spaces, such as enclosed staff offices or small conference rooms. If you choose to do that, you'll want to have an alternative for those who don't want to mask, such as moving to a larger room, open area, or Zoom.
- Confined spaces do not extend to open staff or user service areas, such as at user service desks.
- We encourage staff working in a particular area to discuss their own preferences and to agree on common practices (e.g. whether to mask or not), but no one should be coerced or pressured into agreeing to a particular direction.

Overall, we want and need to be gracious in handling all choices, not just the choices of those who choose to mask. Personally, I plan to mask when in the presence of others who choose to mask, but I understand and respect that not everyone will want to do that. We need to defer to each other's choices graciously, understanding we can't require things of each other, only ourselves.

We encourage all of you to keep things positive. Messages like "Hey, it seems like we are going into a tight space, mind if we mask up?" (or something similar) are friendly and easy to respond to.

Again, thank you all for your service to campus faculty, students, and staff. Do not hesitate

to reach out to your colleagues, supervisors or to members of the administrative group, if we can help answer questions or provide support, as we navigate through this upcoming week.

Thanks,

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