

Higher Ed
COVID-19
Community of Practice



AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Workshop Lesson Plan



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Your Guide to Creating a COVID-19 Prevention Workshop

As a student ambassador, you've made a commitment to educate your campus community about COVID-19 and help everyone stay healthy and safe. One way to do that is to lead a COVID-19 prevention workshop on campus.

By leading a workshop, you can teach other students how to follow campus guidelines, socialize safely, and cope with the stress of readjusting to campus life. You can use this lesson plan to develop your own interactive workshop.



Step 1: Decide who, when, and where

The first step is to decide **who** will be part of your workshop. You can choose to make your workshop available to all students or consider offering your workshop to a specific organization or group. Here are a few examples:

- Fraternity and sorority organizations
- Cultural or religious organizations
- Student government/student council organizations
- International student organizations
- Transfer or first-year student organizations
- Athletic teams
- Residence halls

You can even partner with campus organizations to plan and facilitate a workshop together.



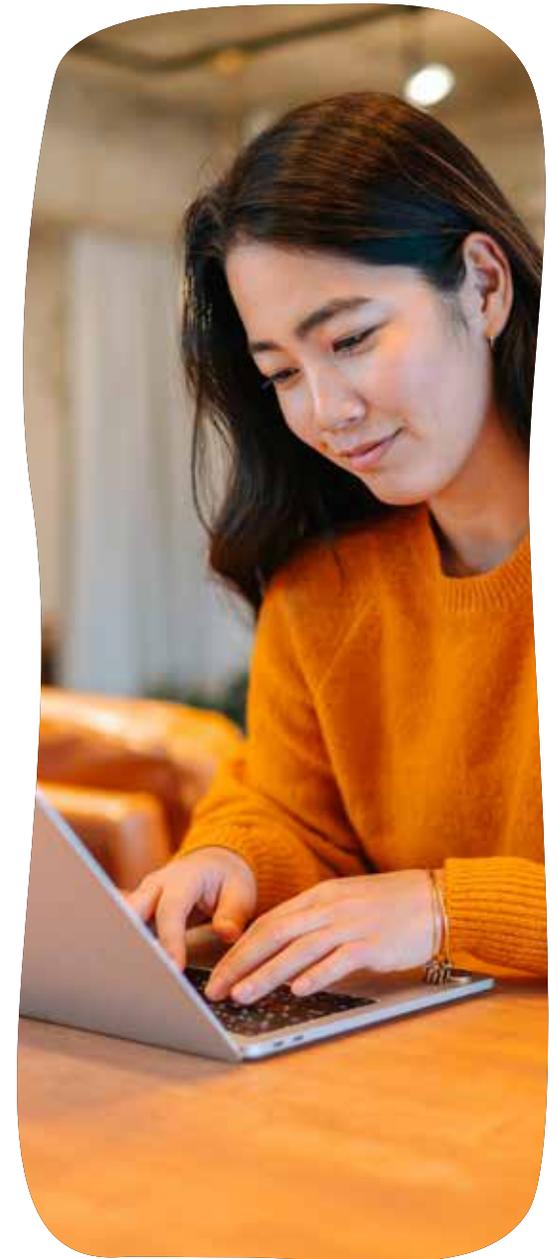
Once you've decided **who** will participate in your workshop, the next step is to figure out **when** it will happen. If you're partnering with a student organization, you can work together to find a time that works for their schedule.

If you're offering a workshop for all students on campus, look for a time that doesn't conflict with midterms, finals, school breaks, or social events (e.g., football games or other events that many people on campus will probably want to attend). Consider presenting your workshop more than once so that people can attend at a time that works for their schedule.

Finally, you'll need to decide **where** to hold your workshop. Consider giving people the option to join your workshop online as well as in-person. For example, you could livestream the workshop on your university's Facebook or Instagram account. Some people may not be comfortable attending in-person events, especially with large groups of people. Offering the workshop online will enable them to participate and make your workshop accessible to more people on campus.

Then, think about the physical space you'll need for your workshop. Consider how many people are likely to join, and be sure to choose a space that's accessible to all students. If possible, look for a space where you can easily arrange furniture or seating to meet your attendees' needs. [Learn more about choosing an accessible space for your event.](#)

Reserving a room in your student union, library, recreation building, or other common areas on campus is probably your easiest bet. If you're presenting a workshop for a specific organization or residence hall, you may be able to use their space for your event.



Step 2:

Choose topics to focus on

Next, it's time to decide what you'll talk about in your workshop. Yes, your workshop will be about COVID-19 prevention on campus — but what specific topics will you focus on? Think about what the people who are going to attend your workshop want to know about campus COVID-19 guidelines, getting a COVID-19 vaccine, or COVID-19 in general.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

If you're not sure what your audience wants to know, ask them! You can get input from other students by:



Posting a question or poll on your university's social media accounts



Asking student government/student council members to spread the word



Asking campus organizations to post on their social media accounts — or talk to members at their next meeting



Talking to friends and acquaintances on campus



CHOOSE TOPICS THAT MEET STUDENTS' NEEDS

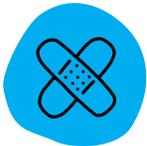
Here are a few example topics to consider:



Campus guidelines: Explain your campus's COVID-19 prevention guidelines (e.g., wearing a mask or physical distancing) and offer suggestions on how to hang out safely while following the guidelines.



Socializing safely: Discuss how to socialize safely, assess your personal COVID-19 risk, and set boundaries with friends and roommates. You can also talk about how to plan safe social events or adapt existing events and traditions to follow campus guidelines.



COVID-19 vaccines: Explain why it's important for students to get a COVID-19 vaccine, address misinformation, and help students make a plan to get vaccinated.



How to make health care decisions: Provide tips to help students make their own health care decisions, like when to go to the health center or get a COVID-19 test.



Taking care of yourself and others: Discuss how the pandemic has affected mental health and give students space to share their personal experiences. Offer strategies to help students care for themselves and their community as everyone returns to campus life.

You can choose to cover one or more of these topics in your workshop.



CHECK OUT THE VAX FORWARD DIGITAL TOOLKIT

For resources to help you educate students about the COVID-19 vaccines, visit vaxforward.com. The toolkit includes tips and talking points to address common questions and misinformation about getting vaccinated.

Step 3:

Create your workshop content

Next, it's time to create the content for your workshop. Below are a few sample lesson plans to help you get started. You can also reach out to your campus health or counseling centers for information and resources to share. You could even ask a staff member to help you facilitate the workshop.

HOW TO SOCIALIZE SAFELY

- Start by acknowledging that it's been a hard year for everyone, and students have had to adapt to changing rules and guidelines. Thank students for making an effort to follow the rules.
- Provide a quick reminder of your school's current COVID-19 guidelines (e.g., vaccine requirements, masking, and physical distancing).
- Emphasize that by working together and following the guidelines, students can keep the whole campus community safe from COVID-19. Let students know that there are many safe ways to socialize while following the rules.
- Provide guidance on how to stay safe from COVID-19 in the cafeteria, residence halls, parties, athletic events, and other common scenarios.



- Offer tips on adapting existing activities and traditions to follow campus guidelines. For example, limit the number of people who can attend, pass out masks, or provide the option to join events virtually or in person.
- Walk students through how to assess their own personal COVID-19 risk and how to decide what is safe and comfortable for them. [Check out these guidelines](#) on choosing COVID-safe activities from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Encourage students to set clear boundaries with roommates, friends, and family members. [These guidelines from the University of Texas at Austin](#) include some great tips on setting boundaries with roommates.



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS

- Start by acknowledging that the past year has been hard for everyone, and everyone is grieving in some way. Remind students that all losses are real and valid, whether they're grieving the loss of a loved one, dealing with health issues, missing old routines, or feeling the disappointment of missed opportunities and milestones.
- Let students know that it's normal to feel depressed, anxious, or overwhelmed — even when things seem to be changing for the better. Explain that returning to campus life may bring up new and unexpected emotions.
- Give students space to share how the pandemic has affected their lives. For this activity, consider placing students in smaller groups with a maximum of 5-6 people.
- Educate students about the signs of depression, anxiety, and other common mental health concerns. Your campus counseling center may have resources to share here.
- Encourage students to reach out to the campus counseling center when they need help. Let them know what hours the counseling center is available and show them how to make an appointment.
- Provide guidance on what to do in case of a mental health crisis (e.g., when to call 911 or get help from a resident assistant or campus staff member).
- Encourage students to care for the campus community through volunteer opportunities, mutual aid, or even doing something nice for a friend.



Step 4:

Make it interactive

Keep people engaged in your workshop by adding some interactive activities. Here are a few examples:



Pair and share: Ask students to get in groups of 2-3 people and share their personal experience with the workshop topic (e.g., socializing safely or getting a COVID-19 vaccine).



Use arts and crafts: Encourage students to draw out different scenes on large sticky notes (e.g., ways to slow the spread of COVID-19).



Make snowballs: Give students a prompt and a piece of paper to write down their opinion anonymously. Then, ask everyone to crumple up the piece of paper and throw it to someone else on the count of 3. Repeat this a few times, then ask everyone to uncrumple their “snowballs” and read what’s on the paper.





Get moving: Divide the room in half and ask “agree or disagree” questions. Ask students to go to the left side if they agree and the right side of the room if they disagree. Then, choose a few students to explain their perspective.



Host a game show: Ask for volunteers to participate in a Jeopardy-style challenge to test their knowledge of the workshop topic.



Do an instant poll: Post a “what would you do” question on social media and ask students to answer during the workshop, then share their responses in real time. For example, you could ask, “What would you do if you’re invited to a small gathering, but it turns out to be a big party?”



Try roleplay scenarios: Use roleplay to show students what to say in common situations (e.g., if a friend says they don’t want to get vaccinated).



Even if all your participants are online, you can still make it interactive!
Here are a few ideas:



If you're on Zoom, **create a poll** or simply ask students to share their opinions in the chat.



Create your own quizzes and games with Mentimeter or [Kahoot](#).



Invite everyone to draw on a digital whiteboard with [Google's Jamboard app](#).



PRINT IT OUT

Consider creating printed materials, like worksheets that people can fill in during your workshop or summaries of main ideas to take home. These materials can help students remember what you talked about and incorporate the main ideas in their daily routine.

To make printed materials more environmentally friendly, students can take pictures of your materials and recycle the paper or reuse the back of the page.

Step 5:

Promote your workshop

Once you've planned your workshop, it's time to promote your event and make sure everyone knows about it! Here are a few ways to get the word out on campus:



Post on your university's social media page or online event calendar.



Ask student organizations to post on their own social media pages or calendars. You can also ask organizations to make an announcement about the workshop at their next meeting.



Ask professors if you can visit their classes to make a short announcement about the workshop. You can also suggest that professors give extra credit for attending your event.



Post flyers or digital signs in common areas like the student union, cafeteria, or residence halls.



Spread the word with your friends and post on your own social media accounts.



Step 6:

Wrap up after the workshop

When the workshop is over, don't forget to clean up your space and put seating and furniture back in place. Within a week after your workshop, be sure to send thank you emails to anyone who helped you plan, facilitate, or promote it (e.g., professors, student organizations, campus health center or counseling center).

Meet with your fellow facilitators to talk about how the workshop went and identify areas to improve next time. You can also send out a survey to find out what participants thought of your workshop and what they might like to learn from future events.



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