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## NEWS/FAQs

While you've been receiving a lot of details about our plans for our fall COVID-safe reopening, here are answers to a few frequently asked questions.

### What do you mean by a "bubble approach" to COVID risk management?

Oliverian is--for these times--blessedly isolated and self-contained, which allows us to create a protective "bubble" against infection once staff and students pass through our thorough 28-day onboarding process (summarized below). Once we complete this process, we can judiciously relax some of our stricter protocols to foster a more normalized environment than would be possible with, for instance, an in-town location, a day-school population, or a high volume of rolling admissions. To protect this bubble, we will strictly limit campus traffic and require any new (or returning) students and staff to go through their own 28-day onboarding process. Our standard onboarding process includes the following:

1. PRE-ENROLLMENT: Fourteen days of infection precaution measures, with a negative COVID test and nurse-administered questionnaire for both staff and students
2. ENROLLMENT: Staggered, low-density student arrivals spread over three days
3. POST ENROLLMENT: Fourteen-day on-campus detection and control process to include:
  4. a school-administered PCR test
  5. initial single room assignments
  6. limited interaction between "family groups" aka dorms
  7. strictly limited off-campus activity and on-campus traffic
8. BUBBLE PHASE: Cautious normalization after first fourteen days on campus to include, as appropriate:
  9. Increased family-group (dorm to dorm) interaction
  10. Some relaxing of in-dorm protocols
  11. Roommates
  12. Some outdoor off-campus activities
  13. Continued daily health checks, masking, social distancing, limited group sizes, hygiene reminders & education, surface sanitizing
  14. "Pool testing" for early and ongoing infection detection
  15. All new students admitted after the initial fall onboarding process will have to go through their own 28-day process

**Do I have to wear a mask?** Yes, any time you are indoors in a common area and any time you are outdoors but unable to socially distance.

**Will students have a Thanksgiving break?** Students, staff, and staff families will celebrate a fun, warm, and lavish Thanksgiving feast on campus this year with turkey (or tofurky for our non-meat eaters) and all the

trimmings!

**Will I have a roommate?** Students will be in single rooms for the first 14 days on campus, with most moving to doubles after that phase to free up singles for the onboarding of new students.

**What test do you use and what will they cost me?** Oliverian requires students and staff to have a negative COVID test (PCR if possible) within ten days prior to their first day on campus\*, which families are responsible for arranging. During the first fourteen days on campus\* Oliverian will administer a PCR test. Oliverian is a state approved testing site and will charge families \$220 per test (we estimate up to three tests per student for the school year--possibly more in cases of symptoms, exposures, or out of area travel).

*\*including following school breaks and/or any emergency travel out of the area*

**What if:**

- **I have to go home or travel out of the area?** You will have to go through the 28-day onboarding process to return; we will offer distance learning and support during the at-home portion of this process.
- **I want to visit my child:** You will need school approval and will have to complete the first 14 of our 28-day onboarding process--including a negative PCR test--prior to your visit.
- **Someone gets sick:** We will follow CDC and state requirements regarding quarantine, testing, and outside medical support to prevent spread and treat the infected person(s). We have dedicated quarantine facilities and a relationship with local hospitals and pediatric practices.

Dear Oli Family,

In early June, 1978, my family packed up the station wagon and headed north from Palo Alto, California, up the 101 toward Bonanza, Oregon and my Uncle Rabbit's 12,000-acre Black Canyon Ranch. Rabbit collected horses and raised cattle on the ranch and, once a year, let his nieces and nephews pretend to be cowboys and cowgirls.

This year, though, our trip started a week before my school year ended. I was only allowed to leave school early on the condition that I promise to finish and mail a final book report by the end of my second week at the ranch. The ranch was my favorite place on earth, so I promised.

But despite my scholarly intentions, every day started with Uncle Rabbit's eggs and bacon and toast instead of my pre-breakfast study session. Then a succession of hunting, fishing, motorcycle riding, frogging, horseback exploring, and canoeing with my cousins. If Del, the wizened, trail-dusted ranch manager and former rodeo star, was in a good mood, I might even herd some cattle or rope a calf.

At the time, I guiltily viewed all this activity as an evasion, an avoidance, an irresistible obstacle to my learning, to my "should". It took as much energy to manage the burning anxiety of my unread book, unwritten paper, and unkept promise as it did to hunt, ride, and rope all day. After dinner--my last opportunity of the day for schoolwork--I collapsed into an early and fitful sleep--as exhausted by anxiety and guilt as by all that activity.

Only now, 42 years later, do I fully understand that the ranch was not an obstacle to my education. It was my education. How many 13 year old Palo Alto kids knew how to write a book report? All of us. How many knew how to heel a calf, hook a trout, skin a rattlesnake, feather a clutch, or catch and cook cuisses de grenouilles sauvages a la provencale? Just one. If I'd possessed the wisdom of that perspective at the time I might have enjoyed my ranch education without the torture of book-report ambivalence.

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As we prepare for the start of school, we can either view the idiosyncrasies of the last six months and the next three?, six?, twelve? months--masks, COVID tests, physical distancing, quarantines, et cetera--as obstacles to our education, or the path to it.

Most deep learning starts not by asking, "What do I know and what can I do?" but, rather, "What don't I know and what can't I do?" Novel circumstances--like cattle ranches and pandemics--tend to expose those learning objectives organically and can, therefore, lead to deeper growth than more conventional circumstances. I suspect that will be the case as we welcome you back on Sept 10- 14 and begin a type of schooling we don't yet know how to do--with masks, hyflex, family groups, social distancing, COVID tests, bubbles, etc.

How many Oliverian faculty and students know how to write a book report? All of us. How many of us know

how to navigate uncertainty, put others before ourselves, read peoples' eyes, creatively respond to changing circumstances, invent, teach and learn both independently and in community, live harmoniously at close quarters, and cherish--or at least tolerate--stillness? Soon, I hope, the answer will be the same as for the book report: all of us.

With the right mindset, this weird time is not the obstacle to our education. It is our education. And a precious one at that.

Warmly and hopefully,

*Will*

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