

North Central College partners with SHIELD to provide safe in-person learning
Feb 22, 2021

North Central College has successfully implemented a ‘learn from anywhere’ education model, providing students with both flexibility and a sense of normalcy during these unprecedented times by offering in-person, online and hybrid classes to fit their individual needs. While other colleges have been forced to adopt a fully online model for the 2020-21 academic year, North Central College has been working closely with community partners to make the campus as safe as possible, including implementing contact tracing, enhancing sanitization and disinfection measures and increasing COVID-19 surveillance testing.

Updates to the education model are possible in part due to North Central College’s partnership with SHIELD Illinois, which has allowed the College to launch a new COVID-19 surveillance testing program for the spring 2021 semester. North Central College is included in the [27% of higher education institutions providing on-site testing](#) for the 2020-21 academic year. The easy-to-administer saliva-based testing yields results within 24 hours, which allows the College to test a higher number of students, faculty, and staff at a quicker rate. Testing has since increased by 20% from the fall 2020 semester.

Dr. Peter Barger, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning and Co-Chair of the COVID-19 Institutional Response Team, said, “We are proud to partner with SHIELD Illinois to move towards our goal of offering our students the safest and most beneficial learning experience possible. These tests allow us to narrow the window for COVID-19 exposure by more quickly identifying and isolating positive cases, creating a safer campus community for all.”

North Central College mandates that all members of the campus community provide a negative test result prior to returning to campus. Students who are required to self-isolate or quarantine due to a COVID-19 diagnosis, symptoms or exposure will do so at home. Resident students who cannot or should not return home will be provided with a private dorm room, bathroom, and kitchenette for this purpose. Residence Life staff will facilitate food delivery and other necessary services. [COVID-19 protocols and procedures are continually updated](#) based on recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and the Illinois Department of Public Health.