Interim reservation policy for meetings, conferences and seminars involving visitors/guests

OBJECTIVE:

To provide guidance to the Knoxville campus during this interim period, summer through fall, to reserve space and schedule an event on campus involving outside visitors or guests.

General Policy:

Currently, all events on campus through July 31, 2020 have been cancelled or postponed. As the fall semester approaches, colleges and departments are planning events to enhance the student experience inside and outside the classroom. Other events are on hold which support the growth and mission of the University. Presently, the campus guidelines mirror the local guidelines in which we are limiting mass gatherings to 50 or less. However, this restriction on the attendance limit may change in the coming weeks based on guidance from the CDC, or State and local governments. If the limits are removed or raised, the campus Policy Group or designee shall react accordingly to revise these restrictions.

The primary focus at this time is to identify all available space on campus to accommodate the change in the academic calendar for fall. This involves substantial changes in the timetable. Therefore, it is imperative all academic sections to first be assigned adequate space for instruction this fall. Consequently, the scheduling of all other events are on hold until such time the fall timetable is complete.

Once all the assignments of each instructional and lab sections are complete, the scheduling of other events shall be available to all campus units. It is still uncertain when this project shall be complete, but a general announcement to the campus is to be conveyed once it is appropriate to commence scheduling of other events.

As departments begin requesting the assignment of space for meetings and other events of less than 50, if this activity involves visitors, the visiting individual(s) must complete a form with detail information, similar to the form currently being utilized by our employees during our return to work phase 1 plan. The form is to be
submitted to the sponsoring party for the events, and it is the responsibility of the sponsor to review and approve at their discretion, based on the information provided by the visitor(s). This approval by the department/sponsoring event should occur before the visitor arrives to campus.

The above interim policy is specifically drafted for smaller events of 50 or less, and not for mass gatherings. Large gatherings such as, but not exclusively, would be the freshmen picnic, orientation or admissions recruiting event. These mass gathering requests shall be handled on case by case basis. Under these events, the visitors would not be approved on an individual basis, but the event would be approved by a campus wide committee, as recommended in the Re-Imagining Fall Task Force, Visitors Sub-Committee. These events, again on a case by case basis, a committee would approve the event, not the patrons, but would identify the mitigation factors to implement for the specific activity, factoring in the attendance, location or other criteria based on CDC, state and local guidelines in effect at the time. In order to provide guidance and assistance in planning large events, it is important to utilize the CDC guidelines for planning large events and consider the mitigation elements outlined in the link below.