



**For Release:** Immediate – August 14, 2020  
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## **SUNY Poly Announces Participation in SUNY’s Efficient COVID-19 Pooled Testing Program for Arriving Utica Campus Students *Effort Complements SUNY Poly’s Robust, Proactive Fall 2020 Plan; News Release from the Office of Governor Andrew Cuomo Available Below for Additional Pooled Testing Details***

UTICA, NY – To further support the health and wellness of its faculty, staff, and students, as well as the surrounding communities, SUNY Polytechnic Institute (SUNY Poly) today announced that students returning to its Utica campus will be required to take part in a new SUNY initiative enabling efficient “pooled testing” for COVID-19. As students arrive, they will provide a testing sample; any student found to be part of a positive testing pool will follow detailed procedures and be individually tested in order to ensure all students who return to campus are COVID-19 negative.

“SUNY Polytechnic Institute is eager to be a part of this COVID-19 pooled testing initiative, made possible by the leadership of Governor Andrew Cuomo and SUNY, which is further enabling us to enhance safety right from the start of the fall semester for our campus and community,” said SUNY Poly Interim President Dr. Grace Wang. “We look forward to partnering with SUNY Upstate Medical University to facilitate timely testing results as our students return to campus. This can save valuable testing resources, which may be needed elsewhere, by allowing our institution to conduct follow-up testing only for smaller numbers of students who were part of any positive, pooled sample.”

Pooled testing will enable a number of students to be tested at a time by combining their individual samples that they each provide as they arrive on SUNY Poly’s Utica campus. Further details about this process will be shared with students early next week.

All of SUNY Poly’s Albany Campus students will continue to follow the protocols resulting from the institution’s partnership with the University at Albany. For the fall 2020 semester, this means that before their arrival to campus, they must provide proof of a negative SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) PCR molecular or antigen test result from July 26 or later, meaning, the test results were normal and showed the virus was not detected.

Testing is one component of SUNY Poly’s holistic set of protocols to foster health and safety, and complements population density reduction efforts; academic calendar adjustments; requirements such as six foot social distancing and wearing a face covering at all times, except when in residence or one’s office; along with detailed pre-arrival and daily screenings; as well as contact tracing and quarantine as needed, for example. Telehealth and telemedicine, including mental health resources, are also available. More details about SUNY Poly’s comprehensive fall 2020 plan are available at the following link, including updated FAQs: <https://sunypoly.edu/fall2020plan.html>.

***Please find relevant portions of the news release issued by the Office of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo below:***



For Immediate Release: 8/14/2020

## GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES NEW TESTING INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE COVID-19 DETECTION & CONTROL ACROSS NEW YORK STATE

### ***SUNY Approved for "Pooled Testing" Approach that Will Dramatically Increase Testing Capacity at SUNY Upstate Medical University***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced a series of new initiatives related to COVID-19 testing that will improve New York State's ability to detect and control the virus in communities across the state...

...The Governor also announced that the State University of New York has been approved by the New York State Department of Health to undertake pooled surveillance testing for COVID-19 - an innovative method where numerous samples can be run as part of one test. SUNY's pooled testing approach was developed and validated by SUNY Upstate Medical University's laboratory, and will use saliva samples, pooled in batches as small as 10 and as large as 25 samples. SUNY Upstate will be able to conduct at least 12,000 more daily tests as a result of this innovative approach.

"As New Yorkers remain vigilant in stopping the spread and our communities cautiously reopen, we continue to aggressively focus on testing in order to detect and control any new coronavirus outbreaks," **Governor Cuomo said**. "These new testing initiatives, analyzing wastewater for COVID, deploying mobile testing teams to address clusters at farms, and investing in new capacity using pooled testing, will be a critical part of our state's efforts to test, trace and isolate - and defeat the virus."

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### **SUNY Pooled Testing Approval using Saliva**

The State University of New York has been approved by the New York State Department of Health to undertake pooled surveillance testing for Covid-19 - an innovative method where numerous samples can be run as part of one test. SUNY's pooled testing approach was developed and validated by SUNY Upstate Medical University's laboratory and Quadrant Biosciences, and will use saliva samples, pooled in batches as small as 10 and as large as 25 samples.

The pooled testing allows for about 10-25 people to be screened in one test. The testing can be done using saliva rather than by swabs that are inserted in a patient's nose. Individuals administer the tests themselves, swabbing their mouths for 10 or 15 seconds each, and provide the saliva samples to medical personnel.

Their samples are combined into one, which is tested for coronavirus. A negative test means that all 10-25 people in the group are presumed at the time to be coronavirus-free. A positive test for the pool would mean every person in that group would need to be individually tested by a PCR test.

"In the coming weeks, SUNY will reopen higher education across the state with a portion of its 415,000 students and 90,000 employees returning on our 64 campuses," **said Robert Megna, SUNY Officer in Charge**. "Thanks to SUNY Upstate Medical's research team, and Quadrant Biosciences and the team at



SUNY System and SUNY Research Foundation, our testing capabilities are significantly expanded. It will be faster and more cost-effective for the surveillance testing we need as we start to resume on-campus living. We thank the Governor for his leadership and the New York Department of Health for approving this testing."

"SUNY Upstate Medical University appreciates the support of the state for the saliva-testing protocol we have developed with Quadrant Biosciences," **said Mantosh Dewan, MD, interim president of SUNY Upstate Medical University.** "Upstate's work with Quadrant Biosciences, a Start-Up New York company, has led to important breakthroughs in the development of saliva-based diagnostic solutions for neurological conditions such as autism spectrum disorder, Parkinson's disease and concussion injuries. The ability to transfer this innovative approach to assist colleges and universities with the unprecedented and complex work of preparing for the return of students to campuses across the state is an important part of New York's response to the COVID pandemic."

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For the full news release from the Office of Governor Andrew Cuomo, please visit: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-new-testing-initiatives-improve-covid-19-detection-control-across-new>.

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### **About SUNY Polytechnic Institute (SUNY Poly)**

SUNY Poly is New York's globally recognized, high-tech educational ecosystem. SUNY Poly offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in the emerging disciplines of nanoscience and nanoengineering, as well as cutting-edge nanobioscience and nanoeconomics programs at its Albany campus, and undergraduate and graduate degrees in technology, including engineering, cybersecurity, computer science, and the engineering technologies; professional studies, including business, communication, and nursing; and arts and sciences, including natural sciences, mathematics, humanities, and social sciences at its Utica/Rome campus; thriving athletic, recreational, and cultural programs, events, and activities complement the campus experience. As the world's most advanced, university-driven research enterprise, SUNY Poly boasts billions of dollars in high-tech investments and hundreds of corporate partners since its inception. For information visit [www.sunypoly.edu](http://www.sunypoly.edu).