FAQ on Mask Wearing

Requirements
Consistent with our Mask Policy, everyone is required to wear a mask (two-layer cloth or disposable medical) when on campus, or off campus in public spaces, especially when social distancing of at least six feet is not possible. Rules and guidelines of federal, state, and local governments apply. Specific exceptions to mask wearing are listed below.

Why do I have to wear a mask?
You are required to wear a mask to reduce the spread of infection from you and to protect yourself from the virus spread by other people. When around people besides your immediate family or your roommate, we require you to wear a mask, even when you are practicing social distancing.

When is it okay not to wear a mask?
You should always have one at the ready, but you may remove your mask under special circumstances, such as when:

- Alone in a private, enclosed space (e.g., an office or your own residence hall room)
- Eating or drinking, and only when observing at least six feet of social distance
- Engaged alone in outdoor work with greater than six feet of social distancing (for example, mowing or weed eating)
- Engaged in outdoor exercise so long as you are alone
- Swimming if you are maintaining a distance of six feet
- Sitting alone outside, but a mask should be at hand in case you encounter other people

Will masks be provided?
Most members of the campus community will have their own cloth masks, but the College will supply disposable medical masks on a limited, as-needed basis, for students and employees who do not have access to a mask or do not have the resources necessary to purchase one.

What type of mask should I be wearing?
You should wear a cloth (at least two layers of material) or disposable medical mask that covers the mouth and nose.
Further information: Masks with greater filtering capacity are also becoming available to the consumer, including the KN95 masks and the NIOSH-approved N95 masks. The Oklahoma Department of Health does a good job of explaining the differences between a KN95 and N95 mask, and you can read this information at this link:  https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/kn95s

Recognizing that many of the N95 masks need to be restricted for use only by medical personnel on the “front lines” of COVID-19, this type of mask is becoming more widely available and you may be able to purchase them from one or more online retailer. To benefit from the full protective properties of the N95 mask, it must be sealed properly.

How should I wear my mask?

Your mask should always FULLY cover your nose and mouth. Your mask should also fit snugly against your cheeks so that air is always filtered through the mask, not sneaking in and out through gaps in the sides of the mask. Do not remove your mask to speak (!) or allow your mask to drop down past your nose.

What should I do if I see someone not wearing a mask (or not social distancing)

We must monitor each other's behavior and speak up when someone is not wearing their mask or observing proper social distancing.

Sometimes people just forget, and a friendly reminder will do the trick. So something like: “I care about you, so I need to remind you to wear your mask” or “I care about you, and I think you’re sitting/standing too close together.” It takes courage to address someone who may not like being reprimanded, but we all need to practice “tough love” during this pandemic! If your friendly reminder is ignored or rejected, or someone or group repeatedly violates the Social Contract, use the Social Contract Reporting Tool.