

# Harvard invites freshmen to campus, but classes stay online

July 6 2020, by Collin Binkley

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In this Aug. 13, 2019 file photo, students walk near the Widener Library in Harvard Yard at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. The Ivy League school announced Monday, July 6, 2020, that as the coronavirus pandemic continues its freshman class will be invited to live on campus this fall, while most other undergraduates will be required learn remotely from home. (AP Photo/Charles Krupa, File)

Harvard University's freshman class will be invited to live on campus

this fall, while most other undergraduates will be required to learn remotely from home, the Ivy League school announced Monday.

University officials decided to allow only 40% of undergraduates on [campus](#) in an effort to reduce density and prevent the spread of COVID-19. All freshmen will be invited, along with some other students who face challenges learning from afar.

All classes will be taught online, however, regardless of where students live. Students living on campus would live in dorm rooms but continue taking their classes remotely, the university said.

In deciding which students to invite, Harvard's president said he "could not help but recognize the unique position that first-year students find themselves in, making the transition to college in these strange times."

"They have not yet begun to build their Harvard network of faculty, advisors and friends," Lawrence Bacow said in a campus letter. "Even with the many adaptations that will be in place this fall, we see enormous value in having them on campus in our residential system."

If the same capacity limits are in place for the spring term, freshmen would likely return home and seniors would be invited to finish their final term on campus, Bacow wrote.

Harvard joins a growing number of universities announcing plans to bring back only a portion of their students. Yale University last week said 60% of its students will be invited for the fall.

Along with the capacity limits, Harvard says it will require all students on campus to undergo regular virus testing. All students will be tested upon arrival on campus, officials said, and then once every three days. Any students who test positive will be placed in isolation. The university

says it has space to isolate 250 students at a time.

Campus buildings will be barred to outsiders, and even to Harvard undergraduates who do not live on campus.

Students who lack the technology to learn from home or face other challenges will be able to apply for permission to return to campus, Bacow said. A panel of faculty and staff will review applications and decide which students should be invited back.

Colleges across the nation struggled with remote instruction last spring after the coronavirus prompted abrupt campus closures. Harvard said it's taking measures to improve remote learning for the spring and it's recruiting graduate students to work as teaching fellows.

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