



WELL U: POD FORMING GUIDE

You can help reduce the possible transmission of COVID-19 at Willamette University by limiting your social gatherings and contacts to a small group of people. Although the university has put many policies into place and expects community members to follow all published guidance and university policy regarding COVID-19, additional action on your part to create a "pod" may reduce the viral spread and promote contact tracing efforts.

The formation of this pod and the behaviors that the pod undertake should still be governed by the WellU Agreement and additional expectations laid out at willamette.edu/go/covid. The voluntary pod should be made up of about five or fewer students who agree on behaviors and practices and have discussed their intended action plan regarding COVID-19.

When thinking of whom you would like to form a pod with, think about students who provide you with a well rounded support network. They should also have a similar risk tolerance when it comes to managing their behaviors to protect themselves from COVID-19.

Identifying these shared behaviors and activities will help develop a more robust list of potential pod-members. The following exercises are designed to help you identify your personal approach to managing risk and start the discussion with others.

If you or a close/live-in family member friend has an underlying medical condition that puts either one of you more at risk for COVID-19 you likely have a lower risk tolerance regardless of your responses to the following exercises. Consider your personal circumstances when interpreting these activities.

IDENTIFYING PERSONAL BEHAVIORS AND ACTIVITIES

Willamette University through the WellU Agreement and other COVID-19 policies is committed to taking and showing care to each other by taking part in social distancing efforts, increased personal hygiene, and other modified personal behaviors to promote our on-campus health. Consider what you would do in the following scenarios and how you would like your pod to engage.

1. Do you hold an essential role that would require you to be in regular contact with people outside of your pod?
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
2. Are you likely to dine in at local restaurants at least once a week?
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
3. Do you plan to participate in organized in-person social gatherings that involve long conversation or singing? (e.g. Club meetings, worship services, family gatherings)
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
4. Are you likely to attend informal gatherings of up to 15 people?
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
5. Do you plan to work out in a gym or fitness studio at least once a week?
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
6. Are you likely to shop in person at local retail/grocery stores at least once a week?
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
7. Are you likely to leave campus regularly for self-care appointments? (e.g. haircuts, manicures, health visits)
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
8. Are you likely to attend outdoor demonstrations, protests, or other gatherings?
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE
9. Do you anticipate spending significant time with another group of people/family/pod?
 - a. YES NO MAYBE UNSURE

If most of your answers are in the first column (YES) – and if you or someone you are in close contact with do not have an underlying medical condition – you have a high risk tolerance. This means you are comfortable with personal behaviors that assume a range of acceptable personal risks.

If most of your answers are in the third column (NO) – or if you or someone you are in close contact with have an underlying medical condition- you have a lower tolerance for risk. This means you are not comfortable with personal behaviors that assume a range of acceptable risks.

If your answers fall across a range of columns or mostly include “maybe” – you have a medium risk tolerance. This means that you may be comfortable with some behaviors that assume health risks, but not others.

What is your risk tolerance: high, low, or medium?

Ask potential podmates to fill out this rubric so you can discuss and share your approach to risk.

MAP YOUR SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK

Your emotional and social well being relies upon a diversity and quality of support. In addition to your podmates, you may have others in your life that may contribute to these supports socially distanced, virtually, or through other methods. You can meet potential podmates by participating in Bearcat Buddy activities, Willamette Wednesdays, Housing Programs, or engaging with others on class Facebook or Instagram pages.

When forming your pod at Willamette, consider people who provide these varied types of social support:

- **Emotional Support:** meeting your emotional needs. Bolsters self-esteem and the ability to overcome challenges.
- **Practical Help:** tangibly assists in completing tasks in daily life, such as cooking or studying.
- **Discussing Points of View:** shares ideas on how to handle a present situation or task, affirms an individual's perspective, or respectfully challenges to refine individual perspectives.
- **Information Sharing:** provides additional unknown information to allow an individual to make the best decision moving forward.

Which people in you campus network provide you with each of these four types of support? In which ways?

Emotional Support	Practical Help

Discussing Points of View	Information Sharing

CREATING YOUR POD

Once you have identified a potential group of members that provide a varied support system and similar risk tolerance, plan to have a group conversation. Pod cohesion and success depends on clear, consistent communication with shared expectations of behavior. Consider how you will talk about personal risk taking, primary prevention strategies, and continued support of podmates throughout the year/semester. This conversation should include anticipated issues, activities, and times of the academic year (e.g. mid-semester break, study days, commencement).

1. Based on shared expectations of behaviors, activities, risk tolerance, and varied social needs, who are potential members of your pod?

2. What form of social support do you offer each other?

3. What shared behaviors, activities, and public health practices have you agreed upon, which go beyond Willamette's WellU Agreement?

4. How will you discuss conflicts that arise from not meeting these shared expectations?
