



COURSE MANAGEMENT FOR TEACHING DURING COVID-19

We know you are all thinking about how teaching during the pandemic will affect your course planning, delivery, and structure. Course policies are an important part of that consideration. We hope this provides some helpful advice around key issues.



Syllabus Language for Masks and Face Coverings

Sample Syllabus Language:

Please wear a mask or other appropriate face covering to class. Wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth communicates the care and respect you have for yourself, the care and respect you have for those you live with, and the care and respect you have for other members of this classroom community. The best evidence we have, from public health professionals, is that wearing masks is one of the best ways to protect against the spread of COVID-19 and other airborne illnesses. For the safety of your classmates, if you forget your mask I will have a few available each day to distribute. If you choose not to wear a mask, you will not be able to attend class face to face. Students with medical conditions that inhibit their ability to wear masks should register through disability services.

Be sure to add to this language consequences for not attending face to face class OR options for meeting course objectives in an online environment.



Set Class Norms & Remind Students of the University's Conduct Policy

At a time when tensions are running high for everyone, it is a good idea to set course norms during the first week of class. Ask students to help develop these class ground rules and be sure to include the following topics in that conversation:

- Discuss how you will work together in the course, how respect will be defined, and how conflict will be resolved
- Describe the university's academic integrity policy and what academic integrity means for the course
- Remind students of the university's values and how they interact with your course goals, content, and policies



Attendance Policies

Please adopt attendance policies that encourage students to stay home when they are sick or if they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Adopting policies that penalize students who miss class during this public health crisis puts our students, faculty, and staff at risk. Fatal attendance policies (e.g. 9 absences = failure) should be abandoned while teaching during COVID-19.



Adopt Flexible Due Dates

Consider asking students to submit assignments over a range of days rather than on a specific date OR soften penalties for late assignments. Students may have more limited access to technology, may become ill, or may be caring for others in ways they didn't expect for the term. Students will need more grace during this crisis.



Consider a Syllabus Statement about the Likelihood of Changes to the Course

A statement that communicates the reality that course expectations, especially regarding face-to-face meetings, may change depending on the local realities of the COVID-19 virus. A statement like, "While I've made a sincere attempt to create a flexible plan for teaching during the pandemic, the reality is that I cannot predict the future. Course meetings, learning activities, and assignments may change if we need to move quickly to a different operational stage of the university's pandemic framework."



Practice Grace and Flexibility

Like you, students will be adapting to new instructional modalities and practices. Students or their family members may get sick, resulting in a change to their level of participation in face-to-face instructional. Providing students with opportunities to make up work or complete alternative assignments is likely to be necessary.