



## FALL 2021 - UPDATED GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY

The Office of Academic Affairs provided Deans and Department Heads guidelines for preparing for the fall semester on February 26, 2021. This document provides an updated set of guidelines on mitigation strategies, course delivery modes, teaching and learning expectations, communications, and classroom scheduling. For more details about the Fall 2021 plan, see <http://www.uwyo.edu/uw/news/2021/08/uw-moves-forward-with-fall-semester-plan,-indoor-mask-requirement.html>.

### Mitigation Strategies

1. Given growing concerns about the rise of COVID-19 cases related to the Delta variant, the Board of Trustees approved a temporary mask mandate for indoor spaces on campus, beginning Monday, August 16, 2021. This includes classrooms, studios, and laboratory spaces. It does not include outdoor spaces you use for your classes.

Note: President Seidel has asked Dean David Jones to convene a committee comprised of scientists and clinicians, with representation from the senates, to develop a set of health science-based recommendations for further consideration. It is expected that the Board of Trustees will consider these recommendations, including any associated with extending the mask mandate, at their next meeting on September 15-17, 2021

2. There is ongoing need for continued vigilance. Therefore, where possible, classroom practices should incorporate as much social distancing as is feasible.
3. At this time, the University strongly recommends but does not require COVID-19 vaccinations.
4. The University is currently developing a mandatory education seminar on the science of the virus and vaccine. As more details become available to our office, we will share them with you.

### Communication about COVID-19

1. It is important to respect and protect student privacy in the context of FERPA and COVID-19 by not disclosing personally identifiable information. This means that faculty should avoid telling their class that a student has tested positive. Instead, faculty should remind students to remain vigilant and to stay at home if they are not feeling well and/or if they receive a positive test, are in isolation, or are in quarantine.

2. Faculty may encourage but not require students to get vaccinated. Refer students to the Student Health Service patient portal to upload documentation once they receive the vaccination. More information can be found at: <http://www.uwyo.edu/alerts/campus-return/vaccination/index.html>.
3. Encourage students to check their email regularly for COVID-19 updates.

### Course Delivery Modes

1. The deadline for making changes to the fall schedule has expired. Changes in mode of delivery will not be made without approval from the Office of Academic Affairs.
2. The standard practice for requesting a schedule change when an unexpected and/or exceptional event necessitates a change after the schedule deadline, such as mode of delivery, Unit heads should reach out to their Vice Provost for education (Dr. Jim Ahern for Grad – 5000+ and Dr. Steven Barrett for undergraduate – 1000-4000). An example of this type of event is when an unexpected resignation of an instructor occurs, and the replacement instructor does not live locally - thus, necessitating a change from face-to-face delivery to online delivery. The Provost's office will review the request and make a final determination. If a determination is made to support the requested change in modality, the Vice Provost will work with the Office of the Registrar to make the necessary changes. **No communication should be sent to students about a change in the class until final approval is given by the Office of Academic Affairs.**
3. If faculty members need a COVID-related accommodation (e.g., high risk for COVID or caring for someone who is high risk), they should work through HR and the interactive process to determine if they qualify for an accommodation such as teaching a class online.

### Face-to-Face Classes

1. Classes scheduled for face-to-face delivery will not be required to have a HyFlex component (i.e., synchronous delivery).
  - a. Faculty may choose to provide content for students who are unable to attend in person via either synchronous (e.g., live streaming/Zoom) or asynchronous methods utilizing video or audio recordings.
  - b. To the extent possible, in-person assessment of student learning (i.e., testing) will be scheduled.
2. Students who enroll in face-to-face classes must plan to be present on campus to attend the class unless the instructor has incorporated HyFlex into the course and they have received permission from the instructor to complete the course from a distance.

## Teaching and Learning

1. To the extent possible, course materials must be available online through WyoCourses, regardless of mode of instructional delivery. *Some class materials, including hard copy and digital textbooks, may not be available for inclusion in WyoCourses. Course syllabi should note if any class materials are not available online and provide instructions on how to access them.*
2. Class attendance policy (for any instructional delivery mode) is guided by [UW Regulation 2-108](#), which specifies that instructors must clearly state in their syllabus\* the requirements for class absence and/or participation and the impact of absences/participation on course grades.
3. Faculty must communicate with students about course delivery and expectations early and often.
4. All reasonable efforts must be made by faculty to accommodate students who are impacted by COVID-19, including those in quarantine or isolation and/or whose caregiving duties have been affected by the pandemic, to ensure that teaching and learning is not disrupted. This includes making course materials and assignments available for completion in an alternative modality and/or providing alternative testing arrangements if needed.

## Scheduling, General

1. The ultimate responsibility for the fall schedule lies with the Unit Head, who may modify course assignments (i.e., instructor assigned to a given course), if needed. The Provost is the final authority over the schedule.
2. Fall classes will continue to run on the adjusted course time schedule (e.g., 20-minute passing periods).

## Classroom Scheduling

1. Lecture halls and other spaces may retain the current infrastructure designed for social distancing between the faculty member and class (e.g., distance from lectern to front row of seats, plexiglass barriers, etc.) in the event social distancing is ultimately required or needed.

\* Sample language for your course syllabi can be found on the Academic Affairs COVID RESPONSE website: <http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/announcements/pandemic.html>.