

Fall 2021 Instructional Guidelines: Some Practical Recommendations August 2021 (DRAFT)

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing that conditions can evolve rapidly. The University of Utah will continue to follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local health departments. We are working within the legal parameters set by [SB 107](#), [HB 308](#) and [HB 1007](#) during the 2021 Legislature, including:

In-person Instruction Prioritization:

“For fall semester in 2021, an institution of higher education shall offer a number of in-person courses that is at least 75% of the number of in-person courses that the institution of higher education offered for the analogous semester that began immediately on or after August 1, 2019

COVID-19 Vaccine Amendments:

“A governmental entity may not require, directly or indirectly, that an individual receive an emergency COVID-19 vaccine.”

And, Face Covering Requirements:

An institution of higher education...may not require an individual to wear a face covering to attend or participate in in-person instruction, institution-sponsored athletics, institution-sponsored extracurricular activities, in dormitories, or in any other place on a campus of an institution within the system of higher education at any time after the end of the spring semester in 2021.

Recommendations for Instructors: Standard Language

With those constraints in place, please consider using the following standard language in your course syllabi and Canvas pages:

*University leadership has urged all faculty, students, and staff to **model the vaccination, testing, and masking behaviors** we want to see in our campus community.*

These include:

- *Vaccination*
- *Masking indoors*
- *If unvaccinated, getting weekly asymptomatic coronavirus testing*

Vaccination

- **Get a COVID-19 vaccination** if you have not already done so. Vaccination is proving highly effective in preventing severe COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalization and death from coronavirus. Vaccination is the single best way to stop this COVID resurgence in its tracks.
- Many in the campus community already have gotten vaccinated:
 - More than 80% of U. employees

- Over 70% of U. students
- Visit <http://mychart.med.utah.edu/>, <http://alert.utah.edu/covid/vaccine>, or <http://vaccines.gov/> to schedule your vaccination.

Masking

- While masks are no longer required outside of Health Sciences facilities, UTA buses and campus shuttles, **CDC guidelines now call for everyone to wear face masks indoors.**
 - Check the CDC website periodically for masking updates—
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>
 - Treat masks like seasonal clothing (i.e. during community surges in COVID transmission, masks are strongly encouraged indoors and in close groups outside).

Testing

- **If you are not yet vaccinated, get weekly asymptomatic coronavirus tests.** This is a helpful way to protect yourself and those around you because asymptomatic individuals can unknowingly spread the coronavirus to others.
 - Asymptomatic testing centers are open and convenient:
 - Online scheduling
 - Saliva test (no nasal swabs)
 - Free to all students returning to campus (required for students in University housing)
 - Results often within 24 hours
 - Visit alert.utah.edu/covid/testing
- **Remember: Students must self-report if they test positive for COVID-19** via this website: <https://coronavirus.utah.edu/>.

Also consider including:

Student Mental Health Resources

- Rates of burnout, anxiety, depression, isolation, and loneliness have noticeably increased during the pandemic. If you need help, reach out for [campus mental health resources](#), including counseling, trainings and other support.
- Consider participating in a [Mental Health First Aid](#) or other [wellness-themed](#) training provided by our Center for Student Wellness and sharing these opportunities with your peers, teaching assistants and department colleagues.

Required Protocol for Instructors: Exposure

Follow the [Exposure Management Guidelines](#) for responding to and managing student reports of COVID-19 infection—including contact tracing and reporting exposure to college and department leaders.

If you have been exposed, or are experiencing symptoms, [self-report](#) and follow university [guidelines for exposure](#).

ADA Accommodations

The University of Utah will continue to accommodate students, faculty, and staff through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- Faculty seeking an accommodation to teach remotely should contact [Human Resources](#).
- For courses classified in the schedule as “in-person,” faculty must host live classes at the scheduled time in the assigned classroom. They have discretion to determine whether to offer additional modalities: (e.g., live-streaming a class meeting or creating a recording for students to access at home). However, this is not required.
- ***Include the following guidance in your syllabus:***
 - ***If in-class attendance is a necessary component of the course for pedagogical reasons (e.g., laboratories, studios, or artistic training), state it explicitly.***
 - ***Use this standard language:*** “Given the nature of this course, attendance is required and adjustments cannot be granted to allow non-attendance. However, if you need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this attendance policy due to a disability, please contact the [Center for Disability and Access \(CDA\)](#). CDA will work with us to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate.”
- Faculty must accommodate the instructional needs of students who are quarantined or self-isolated due to COVID-19, or who have ADA accommodations.
 - a. In many if not most cases, a faculty member’s regular, pre-COVID-19 approach to accommodating students who miss class or assignments because of an illness will be sufficient.
 - b. If a student is self-isolated for a longer period of time due to a COVID-19 infection, faculty are encouraged to draw on their most successful strategies from 2020-2021 to accommodate the student. If necessary, faculty may want to consult with the Center for Disability Access (CDA)
 - c. Each course and each student’s circumstance will be different. Please be as open-minded and flexible as is possible and reasonable when students need COVID-19 related accommodations and as you plan your courses and assignments.

Teaching Resources

1. CTLE and TLT have developed a website to answer most of your questions and direct you to services available to help with your teaching needs this fall. You can find it at <http://facultycenter.utah.edu>.
2. The Office for Faculty has a collection of teaching-related articles. You can access them here: <https://uofu.box.com/s/xfuk06p9mdg7tx8b1pcr5rc8gzy55u9r>.