

## Classroom and Syllabus Guidelines for Instructors Related to COVID-19

AS&E is committed to supporting instructors in promoting a safe and productive learning environment for all students in their classes. The College's Center for Student Conflict Management within the Office of the Dean of Students has developed guidelines and procedures for educating and sanctioning (if necessary) students who violate the [COVID-19 Community Commitment](#) with their actions whether inside and outside the classroom. The Center has modified the [CARE Reporting system](#) to assist all community members, including classroom instructors, in reporting actions inconsistent with the goals of the community commitment. (These are called "COVID-19 Concern Reports.")

The guidelines below build on this approach for in-person classroom instruction and are consistent with the strategies outlined by the University's Coronavirus University Restart Team. These guidelines support a safe learning environment in compliance with University and government requirements for COVID-19. All instructors are expected to implement these policies in a fair and equitable fashion, with recognition of how various social identities can shape how instructors understand and act to manage the classroom environment.

For courses with in-person elements, instructors should plan to do the following at the beginning of the semester:

- **Include a syllabus statement outlining COVID-related requirements (see sample statement below).** All students must comply with [COVID-related requirements](#) for masking. Additional requirements may be required for courses with laboratory, performances, or other activities that require more direct contact with other students. Instructors should outline these requirements clearly in the syllabus and may also add as a Blackboard posting or other class communication.
- **Review classroom requirements at the beginning of the semester.** Instructors should spend some time outlining COVID-19 requirements and any additional expectations for classroom behavior in the first class of the semester, with short reminders over the next few class sessions. Instructors should keep in mind that new students may add the course over the first few weeks of the semester.

If students fail to adhere to these requirements, instructors should do the following in order:

- **Remind the student of the requirement and that these requirements ensure the safety of everyone in the class.** This can be done in reference to University policies, e.g. "I am obliged to remind you that University policy requires you to wear a mask, and preferably double-mask. This requirement helps protect everyone in the class, so I would ask that you follow this policy and put on your mask."
- **Remind the student that failure to comply is a violation of course requirements and the COVID-19 Community Commitment.** Tell the student that they should review the syllabus and COVID-19 Community Commitment website later (on their own time) if they are unclear on the policies, but that they must comply with the request now.
- **Ask the student to leave the class if they are unwilling to comply.** Notify them that you will be submitting a [COVID-19 Concern Report](#) and that they may be subject to disciplinary action

through the Student Code of Conduct.

- If the student fails to leave, assess the level of disruption and exposure caused by the student's actions. Cancel the class session if the student's actions put other students at risk for exposure.
- Call Public Safety (585-275-3333) if the situation escalates and class dismissal will not resolve the situation. (Note that Public Safety is trained to de-escalate these types of conflicts.)

**Instructors with classroom assistants and teaching assistants** may use these student workers to check if students in the course have met masking requirements or related activities (e.g. completion of Dr. Chatbot for that day). This may take place when students enter the room or it can occur as a "sweep" of students once they take their seats. Instructors should consider classroom assistants and teaching assistants as empowered to remind students of their obligations under University and classroom policy. However, classroom assistants and teaching assistants should not be required to ask students to leave upon failure to comply with these rules; this is the responsibility of the instructor.

In the first class session or in large classes, it may be difficult for instructors to identify students who fail to comply with their obligations. Instructors (or classroom assistants or teaching assistants) may be able to determine this through photos on the course roster. If this fails, the instructor may ask for the identity of the student.

After the class, instructors should do the following:

- **For students who fail to comply:** submit a [COVID-19 Concern Report](#) with the Center for Student Conflict Management. The Center will follow up with conduct proceedings and the student will not be allowed to return to class in person until these are resolved. The student may continue to participate remotely through reviewing recordings of lectures, and may continue to complete required assignments.
- **For students who violated requirements, but responded to instructor requests:** consider sending a follow-up email to reinforce the policy and the need for compliance. This is also an opportunity to answer any questions on the requirements or direct the student to appropriate resources.
- **Report a class dismissal to the department chair:** this should provide a short description of the events leading up to the class dismissal, subsequent actions (e.g. submission of a COVID-19 Concern Report). Include the name of the student(s) involved.

The Dean's Office supports these efforts by instructors to ensure safety in their courses and compliance with University COVID-19 guidelines.

## Sample Statement (for Syllabus and/or Blackboard)

*This can be used for when students return to in-person instruction on campus.*

The University is committed to protecting the health and safety of the entire community – students, faculty and staff. For this reason, it is mandatory that everyone wear a mask in University buildings, including classrooms. **You must wear a mask appropriately (e.g. over nose and mouth) when attending class, and you must do this for every class session and for the entire duration of each class session. Double-masking or use of N95 or KN95 masks is strongly encouraged.** If you fail to do this, you will be politely reminded of the requirement and then asked to leave if you do not comply.

Students who refuse to adhere to requirement for mask wearing in the course will be in violation of the [COVID-19 Community Commitment](#) and will be referred to the Student Conduct system through a [COVID-19 Concern Report](#). Such referrals will lead to student conduct hearings and may result in disciplinary action.

Students who feel unable to wear a mask may contact the [Office of Disability Resources](#) to explore options for accommodations.