

In-Class Instruction Guidelines to Protect Against COVID-19

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Return to campus life and community

As government regulations and public health advice continues to evolve, the University looks to provide a greater number of on-campus, in-person instructional activities, where possible, while adhering to applicable regulations (capacity limits, distancing requirements, PPE, etc.). The health and safety of instructors, teaching support staff and students remains a top priority. In addition to the health and safety measures in place, a key element of the planning process for a return to in-person instruction is classroom management. The following guidelines have been developed to support the safe resumption of in-class instruction.

In addition to normal classroom management strategies, such as understanding how you will run your classes and setting ground rules with students, the following provides guidance and key considerations on how to prepare for and undertake in-person instruction in the COVID-19 context.

Additional questions can be directed to your department head or dean's office.

WHAT SHOULD I DO BEFORE MY FIRST CLASS?

Understand and integrate the UWindsor COVID-19 Safety Plan prevention measures

Familiarize yourself with [general COVID-19 prevention measures](#) (e.g. hand hygiene and respiratory and cough etiquette) and [self-screening](#) protocols – all faculty, staff, and students are required to engage in these practices prior to entering any campus buildings.

- Ensure students know they are required to wear masks while in all common indoor spaces in all campus buildings. This includes hallways, lobbies, elevators and other common use facilities.
- Students will be asked to wear masks while in classrooms and teaching laboratories. Depending on class size, physical distancing requirements may or may not be required. Where possible, room occupants should be encouraged to leave space in accordance with health guidelines.

Review the [University's Non-Medical Face Mask Policy](#)

- The policy requires masks to be worn indoors in all common-use spaces on University property, including by instructors in classrooms. Certain activities and individuals, including people with an underlying medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask, are exempt from this policy but [will not be permitted in classroom or labs](#). For information, faculty and staff should review the following [Workplace Accommodation Resources](#). Students should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#).
- As noted in the University's Non-Medical Face Mask Policy, you have discretion to remove your mask while lecturing behind a plexiglass barrier, as long as you are distanced (two metres) from students, including those in the front row of a classroom. In such a case, students would still be required to wear masks.
- Masks will not be required in learning and teaching environments if an instructor has received approval for an exception on the basis that wearing masks would materially impair the effectiveness of the learning activity (e.g., music performance). If instructors recommend that masks are not required in a particular class, they must ensure that the learning activities are carried out safely according to public health and University guidance. Approval for an exception to wearing masks/face coverings in your class should be directed to your dean's office. The dean's office in consultation with Health & Safety will review the request.

Review your department safety plan

- Review your department [COVID-19 Safety Plan Checklist](#) for classroom cleaning and hygiene practices and supplies, ensuring awareness of any instructor or teaching support staff responsibilities. Questions regarding this safety plan should be directed to your department head, dean or the contact identified on the Safety Plan Checklist.

Visit and prepare your classroom

- When your faculty/department indicates that classrooms are ready for the term and may be entered, visit your classroom to familiarize yourself with the room and equipment.
- Assess the physical distancing setup (where applicable) and the directions for movement throughout the classroom.
- Plan for any materials you will be required to bring into the classroom each session, such as a [wireless microphone](#), chalk, whiteboard markers, erasers, etc. Questions related to teaching materials should be directed to your department head or dean.
- On the first day of class, complete a numbered seat listing (using class lists and seating charts) for every class and lab and ensure compliance throughout the semester. Visit the [Classroom Seating Protocols](#) page on the Return to Campus website for more information.

Connect with your teaching team

- Connect with the members of your teaching team (co-instructor(s), course coordinator, GA(s)/TA(s), technical support staff), to discuss the teaching plan and ensure they are familiar with the prevention measures, [self-screening practices](#), [space logistics and considerations](#), and [mask protocols](#).

Connect with your students

- Reach out to students enrolled in the in-person course sections to share your expectations for them, including in-class behaviour, participation, and interaction with you and the teaching team.
- Prepare students for the safety practices of the in-person experience, including the general COVID-19 prevention measures and [self-screening practices](#), [space logistics and considerations](#), and [mask protocols](#). A [campus orientation presentation](#) (PowerPoint) and [video](#) have been prepared to inform students on expectations. Instructors may wish to share these resources with their students in advance of classes.
- Ensure students are aware that the University has [suspended the need for a doctor's note or medical certificate](#) for absences if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. The Illness Reporting form will be open in [UWinside Student](#) during normal term dates up until the end of the Winter 2022 semester. It may be a good idea to provide this link directly in course syllabi: <https://www.uwindsor.ca/returntocampus/475/reporting-illness>
- If your course is using a dual-delivery model (Hy-Flex) and you are uncertain how to contact only those students enrolled in an in-person section, contact the Office of Open Learning or your department head.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO SHARE WITH STUDENTS DURING THE FIRST CLASS?

Orient students to the space

Guide students where to sit in the re-organized space and encourage them to leave space where possible. Students should be reminded that the spot they choose will be assigned to them for the duration of the semester.

Ensure they are familiar with the flow of traffic in the room (there should be clearly marked signs showing which direction to enter/exit the room, move through aisles, etc.). If cleaning supplies are available, such as a hand sanitizer dispenser, note their location(s).

Remind students of the institutional safety measures

- Reiterate your expectations for in-class behaviour, participation, and interaction with you and the teaching team. A [campus orientation presentation](#) (PowerPoint) and [video](#) have been prepared to inform students on expectations. Instructors may wish to share these tools with their students in advance of classes.

Review the course structure and types of activities

Describe how class time will be structured, and what kinds of learning activities students can expect to experience during class sessions.

HOW SHOULD I ADDRESS COMPLIANCE ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE IN MY CLASS?

What do I do if a student does not comply with the safety regulations put in place?

- It is recommended that you approach these situations in the same manner you would approach any other classroom management issue – making expectations clear and providing education or reminders about the non-medical mask [policy](#).
- The University's approach to addressing compliance will focus primarily on educating members of the community about these measures and their importance including the benefits of non-medical mask use with regard to community transmission of COVID-19.
- Faculty members, instructors, and grad/teaching assistants are not individually responsible for ensuring that students are adhering to the Health & Safety policies and protocols related to COVID-19. Faculty members, instructors, and grad/teaching assistants should consider whether they are able to diffuse the situation as a course management issue or, if such behaviour is significantly disruptive, raises significant health and safety concerns or involves conduct falling within other University of Windsor policies procedures, rules, regulations, or practices, the faculty member, instructor, or grad/teaching assistant may request assistance from any other unit in the University implicated by the conduct and policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and practices at play.

What do I do if someone in my class says they feel sick?

If an instructor, librarian, staff or student experiences a COVID-19 related symptom on campus and immediate medical assistance is not required, the individual should take the following actions:

- Instruct the individual to go home.
- Report their sickness to their manager/supervisor/course instructor etc. in accordance with departmental processes. Email Health & Safety at safety@uwindsor.ca who will conduct a remote assessment, contact tracing and provide further direction.

Instructors, librarians or staff who become aware of a probable/confirmed COVID-19 case amongst students, contractors or visitors should also contact Health & Safety.

The Health & Safety team will work with the appropriate offices to do their best to inform those who have had contact with the individual in UWindsor campus workplaces, in keeping with public health directives (for cases which are probable/confirmed as per Occupational Health Nurse/Public Health). All contact tracing for the University must be conducted by Health & Safety. Departments and faculties cannot conduct contact tracing themselves.

What do I do if someone in my class requires immediate medical assistance?

If a student says they feel sick and requires assistance, call emergency services (911). Campus Police have developed COVID-19 procedures when responding to incident and emergency calls.

- Notify Campus Police - Emergency: [519-253-3000 ext. 4444](tel:519-253-3000)
- Verbally assess the individual from two metres away.
- Establish at the scene a safe, designated isolation area for the individual to wait at least two metres away from you and others until Campus Police and EMS arrive.