

2021-22 Assisting Students in the Classroom During COVID-19 General Tips and FAQs for Instructors

UNCG is dedicated to ensuring that all students have access to education and campus life, especially during COVID-19. The following FAQs and general tips are designed to assist faculty in addressing issues that may present in the classroom.

FAQs and Response Tips for Instructors		
WHAT IF	THEN (Recommended Solutions)	WHO (For Guidance/Referral)
What if a student refuses to attend the in-person class because they just learned that one of their classmates tested positive for COVID-19?	Students should be advised that if they need to quarantine, they will be advised to do so by health officials. However, faculty can enter into a discussion with the student about being able to participate in class through Zoom, Panopto, or something similar. The Dean of Students (DOS) and Dean of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) recommend faculty permit submission of work online when students cannot be in class.	Dean of Students Office (DOS) or Dean of Undergraduate Students (DUS)
What if a student is told by a health care provider or health official that they must be quarantined?	DOS and DUS recommend faculty support remote participation in class, as capacity permits, and accept assignments remotely. Faculty are urged to be flexible with attendance requirements in these situations. For students quarantined near the end of the term, faculty members should consider assigning an "I" (incomplete) grade. <u>DOS will not issue excused notes for absences, nor letters to faculty for students that are able to communicate with their faculty members.</u>	DOS
What if a student, not registered with OARS, asks for accommodations, due to a disability?	Any student needing accommodations due to a disability should connect with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) by completing and submitting the Welcome Form found on the middle of this webpage: https://oars.uncg.edu/student-services/register/ . OARS will then reach out to the student to schedule a virtual meeting. They may also contact OARS at OARS@uncg.edu , or call OARS at 336/334-5440 to schedule a convenient virtual meeting.	Office of Accessibility Resources & Services (OARS)

<p>What if a student requests accommodations for reasons other than disability. (For example: They live with someone at high risk who has not been able to be vaccinated, etc.)</p>	<p>Undergrads should email concerns to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Dr. Andrew Hamilton, ahamilton@uncg.edu. Graduate students should talk with their instructor to see if they are willing to accommodate online attendance and/or see if another section of the class is being taught online, before reaching out to the Interim Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Greg Bell, gcbell@uncg.edu.</p>	
<p>What if a student is feeling sick?</p>	<p>The health and safety of our students are of utmost importance. Therefore, if a student feels ill or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19, they should complete a COVID-19 Self Reporting form, contact Student Health Services, and their instructors immediately. The student should stay home and contact Student Health Services or their healthcare provider for medical advice.</p>	<p>Student Health Services (SHS)</p>

	<p>Any student with a compromised immune system or underlying health conditions that place them in a high-risk category should work with their academic advisors and instructors to find alternative ways to make degree progress. If their condition impacts one or more major life activities, they should connect with OARS to discuss reasonable accommodations. Most "high-risk" conditions are considered disabilities.</p>	<p>OARS</p>
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<p>What if a student requests disability-related accommodations?</p>	<p>Treat the request like you would any other ADA accommodation request. Accommodations might include additional protections to limit contact with others. It is the University's goal to create a learning experience that is as accessible as possible. If a student anticipates any disability issues related to the format, materials, or requirements of their courses, they should contact OARS to explore a range of options to remove barriers in the course, including receiving official accommodations. If a student has already been approved for accommodations through OARS, they should contact the instructor early on to ensure instructors have read the accommodations. Any concern about approved accommodations should be directed to OARS. Please do not negotiate accommodations with students.</p> <p>Students may request accommodations at any point during their education. A student who encounters disability-related barriers in the context of online education (or other campus environments) is encouraged to reach out to OARS to discuss accommodation possibilities and other ways they may be supported.</p>	<p>OARS</p>
<p>What if a student asks, "Is it mandatory or recommended that I wear a face covering?"</p>	<p>All individuals are required to wear face coverings in classrooms, lecture halls, and any other instructional areas and campus locations, in a manner consistent with health and safety standards and any requirements instituted by state authorities. Since a person infected with COVID-19 may not exhibit symptoms for several days, he or she may unknowingly spread the virus when interacting with others. Wearing a covering is one way students can help keep our community healthy. For more information, please visit: PROTECTING OUR CAMPUS: UNCG FACE COVERING POLICY</p>	<p>DOS</p>
<p>What if a student refuses to wear a face covering in class?</p>	<p>Students who are not properly wearing a face covering will be asked to leave the classroom; they may return when they follow this basic public health recommendation.</p> <p>For the safety of the community, the instructor has the right to end that in-person class session if a student who is not properly masked will not leave the room. See also helpful tips for managing disruptive behavior when dealing with a student who refuses to wear a face covering.</p> <p><u>Classroom Enforcement Options and Reporting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First occurrence – Faculty should address the student privately prior to the start of class and hopefully provide a face covering then or suggest they go pick one up. ● Second occurrence – Faculty completes the COVID Concerns Reporting Form, which prompts the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities to initiate outreach to the student (assumes faculty still addresses it in class). ● Third occurrence – Faculty completes the COVID Concerns Reporting Form, which prompts review for a formal conduct 	<p>Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR)</p>

	<p>response by the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (assumes faculty still addresses it in class).</p>	
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<p>What if a student requests an exception to wearing a face covering in class?</p>	<p>All individuals on campus must wear a face covering. If a student cannot wear a protective covering due to a documented medical issue, like trouble breathing or because they are unable to remove the covering without assistance, the instructor should direct the student to contact OARS who will review exception requests to determine if remote attendance is needed. Requests/needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. More information for students about the services provided by OARS and the accommodation process may be found at https://oars.uncg.edu/</p>	<p>OARS</p>
<p>What if a student wants to wear a face shield instead of a face covering?</p>	<p>For now, face shields do not meet CDC guidelines for providing adequate protection as a substitute for wearing a face covering unless they are the kind with attached cloth around the edges; such as those found here. Therefore, face shields should not be worn in place of a face covering. Those who want to wear shields <i>in addition</i> to face coverings are welcome to. Faculty are also permitted to wear a face shield only during classroom instruction and may consider doing this particularly when students need to be able to see the instructor's mouth.</p>	<p>OARS</p>

<p>What if the instructor determines that any reasonable accommodations, approved by OARS, are not possible?</p>	<p>If instructors believe any accommodation may result in a fundamental alteration of their course or program objectives or is otherwise not possible to implement, they should consult with OARS. If, after a thorough review by experts in the field/program, in conjunction with OARS professionals, it is agreed that an accommodation is a fundamental alteration, alternatives should be explored. If no reasonable alternatives are available, the student may need to take the class after COVID concerns have passed or may not be otherwise qualified to take the course or program. This decision must be made by a group of individuals knowledgeable in the field and OARS professionals.</p>	<p>OARS</p>
<p>What if a student says they can't get an appointment with their doctor right now?</p>	<p>Students may not be able to access their health care provider to have the provider fill out ADA paperwork or may simply not be willing to put themselves at risk of exposure by visiting their health care provider. These students should be directed to OARS who will engage them in an interactive process to determine if provisional accommodations are needed while awaiting formal or updated documentation.</p>	<p>OARS</p>

<p>What if a student qualifies for academic accommodations and has concerns about the impact that remote instruction may have on them?</p>	<p>Please contact OARS for any questions or concerns related to requests for accommodation, approval of services, or equitable access to educational programs.</p>	<p>OARS</p>
<p>What if a student is displaying symptoms?</p>	<p>If you have someone in your class who is displaying symptoms of COVID 19 (fever, cough, or difficulty breathing), advise them to stay home/go home, complete the COVID-19 Self Reporting form, contact Student Health Services or their health care provider, and attend class remotely if they feel well enough to do so. It is also important to understand that not everyone who sneezes or coughs is infected with the coronavirus. We should all practice good hygiene by covering our nose/mouth when sneezing or coughing with a tissue or inside of the elbow, washing hands frequently, and wiping down frequently touched surfaces (keyboards, doorknobs/handles, phones, etc.).</p>	<p>SHS</p>
<p>What if a student is sick and misses class, do they need a doctor's note?</p>	<p>See UNCG attendance policy. Faculty should work in good faith with students to allow them to make up exams/assignments missed during an illness in the interest of public health. DOS does not issue excused notes for class absences. If the student misses classes due to a manifestation of their disability, they may have accommodation for additional absences and, if so, should not be penalized for those absences. They would still be required</p>	<p>DOS OARS</p>

	to complete all coursework.	
Can an instructor still schedule exams with accommodations with OARS?	<p>Due to health and safety concerns and social distancing, OARS will work with the instructor to administer exams on-site. Instructors likely are using other methods of assessment, such as Canvas. If a student is eligible for extended time on exams, Canvas can be adjusted to account for the appropriate amount of accommodated time. Students are encouraged to have OARS send their accommodation letters to instructors as soon as possible so this accommodation can be met.</p> <p>For in-person testing, instructors should determine if they are able to provide the student's authorized testing accommodations within their own space. If instructors are unable to provide those accommodations, students may schedule testing within OARS space, with appropriate advance notice. OARS has limited testing space and will advise if they have reached capacity, so that alternative arrangements may be made. Additional advance notice is required if testing is needed outside of M-F, 8-5 hours, to allow time for OARS to arrange appropriate proctor scheduling.</p> <p>Please visit the OARS website for contact and additional information.</p>	OARS
Can a student or instructor make an appointment to meet with an OARS staff member?	Virtual consultations are available for students or faculty. Please contact OARS at 336.334.5440 to schedule an appointment.	OARS
What support can the University provide a student who is immunocompromised and worried about remaining on campus?	<p>If you have reason to believe a student may be especially susceptible to the coronavirus, have them contact the Gove Student Health Center at 336.334.5340 during regular business hours M-F. SHS will work closely with students to discuss how they can best protect themselves against the spread of disease.</p> <p>Most diagnoses of immunocompromised conditions are considered disabilities and those students should connect with OARS to engage in an interactive process to determine the need for reasonable accommodations.</p>	SHS OARS
How can I create a culture of care for high-risk students?	<p>Sample Syllabus Statements</p> <p>Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time at the University, you may experience a</p>	DOS and or DUS

	<p>range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336.334.5874, visiting the website at https://shs.uncg.edu/ or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive.</p> <p>For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, the Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting https://shs.uncg.edu/srp or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu.</p> <p>2. It is my goal to create a learning experience that is as accessible as possible. If you anticipate any issues related to the format, materials, or requirements of this course, please contact me so that we can explore potential options. Students who may need accommodations due to a disability should work with the Office of Accessible Resources and Services to discuss a range of options to remove barriers in this course. Please visit the OARS website for additional information. If a student has already been approved for accommodations through OARS, they should contact their instructors to ensure that accommodation letters have been received. Implementation or other questions or concerns about accommodations should be directed to OARS.</p>	OARS
<p>What are the Final Exams Guidelines for students with disabilities?</p>	<p>Faculty should have received accommodation letters for students with disabilities who are enrolled in their course(s). Be sure to review the accommodation letters if you are providing an online exam. The most commonly used accommodation is extra time on exams. Be flexible. The length of time a student sits and views a computer screen can be problematic and students may need to use the restroom or stretch during a long exam. Clearly communicate expectations in a timely manner to all students (e.g., who to contact for technical issues, how the exam will be proctored, technology requirements, and testing platform). If you have questions about considerations for students with disabilities, please contact OARS.</p>	OARS
<p>What if a student in my class is impacted by an extenuating circumstance that prevents them from completing the final exam during the established time period. What should I do?</p>	<p>Similar to cases in which you might assign a grade of "Incomplete," you should use your discretion to determine the extent of the problem and if possible, require documentation of the issue. Understand that technical problems might also be an extenuating circumstance. Using your best judgment and interest in the student's academic success, you may arrange an alternative time period and date(s) that are suitable for the student and you. DOS does not provide excuse notes for absences or missed assignments.</p>	<p>DOS</p> <p>OARS</p>

	If the extenuating circumstances are due to the manifestation of a disability, please do not request documentation from the student, but do refer them to OARS for assistance.	
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What if a student has different accommodation needs in the context of course delivery?	These students should be referred to the OARS. Any new or changed academic accommodations will be communicated to instructors via email in an accommodation letter.	OARS
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Be Proactive, Ask How You Can Help Before Taking Action

General Tips

- Be aware that facial gestures and lip-reading are primary components of communication for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Contact OARS if clear masks are needed.
- Sign language interpreters cannot wear coverings while actively interpreting. Ensure that the interpreter is six feet or more apart from others.
- Maintain eye contact with people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.
- Be prepared to provide verbal instruction to help an individual who is blind or visually impaired with positioning themselves for safe distancing.
- When wearing a face covering, alternative communication forms may be required, which may include writing/texting to communicate effectively.
- Remember to incorporate wheelchair maneuvering clearances (a five-foot radius) and accessible routes when planning for social distancing in a physical space.
- Ask – in writing – if the information was understood; repeat critical information or otherwise ask meaningful questions.
- Remember that some individuals might not be able to see the floor stickers and posters that instruct social distancing of six feet, so be prepared to provide instructions.
- Plexiglass shields should be at a height that provides a face-level barrier for wheelchair users. If this is not the case, work with the wheelchair user to provide service without compromising safety for either of you.
- Provide verbal cues of items in your space, including plexiglass shields and floor stickers for social distancing, if indicated.
- Be helpful and provide resources, but avoid providing medical advice.
- OARS is now available as a referral selection on Starfish.

*This document was prepared by a Student Affairs Workgroup, with input from Student Success, then reviewed by members of the Faculty Senate and the Provost's Office