



Fall 2021 Classroom/Instruction Protocols

(Updated 8/26/21)

The following guidelines apply to specific aspects of the face-to-face instructional environment for the fall of 2021. These protocols are meant to complement, rather than replace, other similar protocols that spell out larger community expectations and norms.

Faculty Testing:

All faculty who are teaching in an in-person capacity in the fall, or who plan on coming to campus to work, will need to take part in COA's planned testing regimen. This will require coming to campus on Tuesday, September 7, unless you have arranged for an alternative testing day or have a documented recent PCR negative result that you can provide to the COVID-19 coordinator.

In addition, COA will be instituting randomized testing of our in-person teaching faculty on a weekly basis every Monday. Those faculty who are unable to participate in this testing schedule, or who already are part of a regular testing regime through another organization, should contact the COA COVID-19 coordinator Amanda Mogridge (covid19coordinator@coa.edu) to discuss various options for alternative testing dates and/or third-party testing verification.

In-Person Classroom Protocols:

Based on the current level of COVID-19 transmission in our community, in-person classes are required to comply with the following guidelines:

1. All students and faculty will be required to wear masks while indoors and in COA vehicles and college-related transportation. This mandate is subject to revision based on the changing nature of COVID's presence in our community. All masks must meet COA's masking standards. Clear face shields can be worn in class but should not be considered a substitute for face masks. The same masking protocols for indoor space use will NOT apply to outdoor classes as long as the outdoor spaces provide adequate ventilation. Non-vaccinated exempt students may have additional protocols that they will need to follow as part of their exemption agreement.
2. Students and faculty will not be permitted to eat or drink while in class. Classes longer than 85 minutes should, at a minimum, offer students a 10-minute break to allow students to leave the space as needed. At their discretion, faculty can also plan for more frequent "masking breaks" to allow students to move outside, drink water, etc.



3. Faculty will be permitted to host in-person meetings in their offices as long as all participants are masked.
4. Outside guests will be allowed to visit classes as long as they are vaccinated and comply with all of the other standard masking directives. The faculty member who is sponsoring their visit is responsible for verifying their vaccination status.
5. Unlike last year, the college will return to our usual schedule of 1:25 blocks (vs the 1:15 blocks we had last year).

Exposure Procedure, Spread Mitigation:

The following protocols address how to handle situations in which a student or faculty is symptomatic, has tested positive for COVID-19, or has been exposed (via close contact) to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

1. **Student or faculty with COVID symptoms:** Any COA community member who is experiencing COVID-related symptoms, should immediately quarantine themselves, report their symptoms through the CoVerified app, and also report their symptoms directly to COA's COVID coordinator who will then advise them as to next steps. All community members who experience symptoms should remain in quarantine until they are approved to return from quarantine by the coordinator.

In the case of students who are experiencing symptoms, they should also alert their respective instructors that they will not be coming to in-person class sessions until cleared by the coordinator and should arrange for any potential accommodation to attend classes virtually or to modify assigned classwork for virtual participation or submission. Instructors will also be notified by the coordinator of any student who is quarantining due to symptoms.

Faculty members who are experiencing symptoms should alert their classes that they will be teaching remotely until they can also get clearance from the coordinator.¹

¹ There are several instances outlined in this document in which a faculty member will need to quarantine, but the students in one or more of their classes will not. In those instances, the faculty member may choose to move all aspects of the class online. Alternatively they may also choose a form of hybridity in which they are instructing remotely but some or all of the students continue to appear in person. Faculty should determine what makes the most sense for their respective classes.



2. **Student or employee tests positive for COVID-19:** Any COA community member who tests positive for COVID-19 will immediately need to isolate themselves from others. Students should refer to the relevant student life protocols for how this isolation process works. If for whatever reason they have not already been alerted, the infected individual should notify the COVID coordinator immediately as to their positive test result. Anyone who has participated in in-person class sessions with the infected individual within the previous 7 days will be considered as potentially exposed.

As part of the larger contact tracing program, the COVID coordinator will then notify those exposed community members that a student in their class has tested positive and instruct them to immediately quarantine themselves.² **All in-person classes that the infected student is part of will shift to online status, or some equivalent alternative arrangement, until such time as the class is tested and “cleared” to return to in-person status by the coordinator.**

Any student who is a participant in those classes will be required to quarantine and notify their other instructors (where applicable) that they will not be able to attend in-person classes until cleared by the coordinator. Faculty members will also notify their other, non-exposed classes (where applicable) that they will be teaching remotely until the faculty member is cleared by the coordinator.

Instructional Continuity Planning

All faculty teaching in the fall need to have plans in place for various contingencies in order to provide for potential disruptions due to one or more students contracting COVID-19. There are three general scenarios in which this might take place:

- An individual student or several students will need to miss class time either due to illness or (in the case of F2F classes) due to a mandatory quarantine. In some cases this could persist for up to two weeks or more. Faculty should be prepared to accommodate students who may need to be away from class during this time. This may mean (in the case of F2F classes) providing an online access option for those students who cannot attend class in person due to quarantine. **Faculty should clearly state in their syllabi that they will not**

² Due to privacy considerations, the COVID coordinator will only notify faculty and students that someone in the class has tested positive. They will not identify that individual. As with any term, under certain circumstances faculty may be notified that a student in their class is no longer able to continue with a class (permanently or for a particular duration) due to health related issues. This fall will be no different in that regard. Similarly, at no time should a faculty member disclose or confirm any health information about a student to any other community members.



penalize students in their grading and evaluations due to a student's absence for self-quarantining or isolation due to exposure to or contracting COVID-19. Students will still be expected to arrange with their instructors to access course materials and keep up with their assigned work while in quarantine.

- In some cases it might be necessary to shift an entire F2F class online for a period of time if a student in that class test positive for COVID-19. This shift to online instruction would continue until clearance is provided by the COVID coordinator. Classes may need to remain online for up to two weeks or more, depending on the degree of spread. Instructors teaching F2F classes should be prepared in advance to move their entire course online if this situation arises.
- There is also the possibility that the college may need to enact more sweeping measures to either close campus or, at the very least, shift all classes online for a defined period of time. This may involve a preliminary two week pause in which all in-person classes are moved online pending a reassessment of the situation. However, it is also possible that this pause may be extended throughout the term. Regardless, instructors teaching in-person classes should be prepared to shift their entire course online at any point in the term with the least amount of disruption as possible.
- Those instructors who have offices on campus should be aware that if they are required to quarantine for any reason (exposure, symptoms, positive test) they will NOT be allowed to return to campus, even to gather materials from their office, until they receive clearance from the COVID coordinator. We strongly recommend that all faculty who work from campus should utilize cloud based (or other forms) of backup for their digital work and should consider storing the necessary materials for teaching their classes this term in a central spot or container in their office. This will make it easier for the relevant staff to potentially assist in retrieving materials from your office and transporting them to wherever you will be quarantining or isolating.

Syllabi Language

As we did last year, we are requiring faculty to make explicit that no student will be adversely affected (in terms of their grade or narrative) by having to quarantine or isolate as a result of any of the scenarios listed above. Sample language you may wish to use:

Students who are required to quarantine or isolate as a result of possible exposure to COVID-19 will not be penalized (both in their final grade or narrative evaluation) for



having to potentially miss in-person sessions or other face to face class activities. I do expect that affected students will be in contact with me to arrange for reasonable accommodations, including online access to synchronous sessions, individual self-directed assignments, or any other possible mechanism to maintain "learning continuity" in the class.

The specific language included in syllabi will vary depending on the nature of your course and your plans for accommodating students who are in these various situations. The main goal of this language is to make clear that compliance with the college's quarantine and isolation requirements, so long as students are maintaining communication with the faculty member about options for continuing their work, will not adversely impact their grading and evaluation.