

## Academic Affairs

The Academic Affairs Fall Planning Team has been working over the last several months to develop a plan for safely delivering courses during the upcoming 2020 fall semester, with guidance from the CDC, health agencies, and Governor Beshear's office. A summary of actions to-date and recommendations for the fall semester follows.

### 2020 Fall Semester and Winter Term Calendars

- Fall semester begins August 17, ends November 24.
- Winter term - two winter terms this year
  - Traditional 4-week Winter Term
    - begins December 14, ends January 8
    - online instruction only
  - New Winter Term
    - Begins Thursday after fall semester ends (December 3), ends January 8.
    - Primarily online instruction, but faculty can utilize the week of January 4-8 for face-to-face instruction, in-class learning activities, labs, studios, etc. and create a hybrid instruction model in their courses.
    - Note the 2021 Spring Semester begins January 11.

### Fall Semester Course Delivery Modes

- Face-to-face instruction, with limited seating capacity per social distancing protocols to maximize safety for faculty/instructors and students.
- Hybrid/HyFlex instruction
  - combination of face-to-face and online instruction, with goal of every student having at least 50% face-to-face instruction.
  - faculty determine the appropriate instructional delivery mix and communicate how the course will be delivered in course syllabus.
- Online instruction - normal asynchronous delivery.
- Online instruction for courses originally scheduled as face-to-face
  - Under certain conditions and in consultation with the Chair/Associate Dean, synchronous online class meetings may be held if course was originally a face-to-face course.

### Faculty Online Teaching Training/Workshops

- Four sessions offered throughout the summer.

### Face Coverings

- Faculty, staff, and students required to wear face coverings in all buildings and instructional spaces unless medical reasons preclude.
- Faculty and staff are asked to wear face coverings in buildings and instructional spaces.

### Safety Protocols - Buildings

- Hand sanitizer stations at entrance doors in all academic buildings.
- Signs in multiple locations in buildings indicating social distancing, hand washing, and face covering protocols.
- Signage indicating one-way entrance and exits (where possible).
- One-way (up/down) indicators in stairwells (where possible).
- One-way traffic indicators on floors in hallways.
- Social distancing/capacity signage at bathroom and elevator doors.

### Safety Protocols - Classrooms

- Hand sanitizer available in all classrooms.
- Sanitizing wipes available in all classrooms - faculty encouraged to clean instructor stations and students encouraged to clean desks/chairs/tables as they enter the classroom.
- Classrooms sanitized/cleaned at beginning of each day, with custodial staff providing additional sanitizing (as possible based on classroom schedule) throughout the day.
- Seating capacity in all classrooms reduced to ensure social distancing guidelines (6' diameter for students, larger instructional space at front of classrooms).
- Face-to-face courses scheduled using reduced classroom capacities to allow for 6' social distancing.
- Seats removed from classroom or seats marked as "Do not sit" to ensure social distancing guidelines followed. Faculty are asked to contact your Department Chair/Associate Dean if you have questions about changes to classrooms or your technology needs in those classrooms.
- Course sections with larger enrollments moved to larger spaces, when possible, on the MSU campus
  - Use of available larger classrooms in all academic buildings, cooperatively shared by all colleges/academic programs.
  - ADUC Ballroom and other larger spaces in ADUC converted to classroom layout and dedicated to Academic Affairs use for fall semester.
  - Button Auditorium and Button Drill Room used as classroom space.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Eats space converted to classroom layout.

### Other COVID-19-related Information

- Faculty with concerns about returning to campus to teach fall semester courses are requested to contact their Department Chair/Associate Dean by July 24<sup>th</sup> to ensure that the fall term course schedules can be finalized in advance of the beginning of the fall semester.
- We continue to ask faculty to be prepared to pivot to online instruction in all of their courses should COVID-19 situations necessitate.
- Contact tracing - faculty asked to utilize a student sign-in template for all face-to-face class meetings (additional information to follow).
- Student Excused Absences Statement - Typical policies that govern excused student absences in courses for student illness (i.e., UAR 131) are relaxed for the Fall 2020 semester. A statement is being developed and faculty will be asked to include an associated statement in their course syllabi (statement will be included in the MSU Syllabus Checklist template distributed to faculty prior to the fall semester).
- We ask faculty and those staff members teaching during the fall semester to communicate with students before the beginning of the fall term, especially if the delivery mode of their course(s) has changed.

- We ask faculty to be attentive to engaging students and making them feel connected to you/your courses. Like us, many of our students have felt isolated through the health crisis.

The Academic Affairs Team continues to evaluate fall semester academic affairs COVID-19 and course delivery issues and will be developing and will continue to develop processes and protocols as needed. Updates will be provided in the coming weeks as we monitor an ever-changing landscape.

Thank you for all that you do for our students.

Stay safe and healthy.

*Academic Affairs Fall Semester Planning Team*

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