2020-2021 Instructional Guidelines: Some Practical Recommendations

December 2020
Version SIX

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing that conditions continue to evolve rapidly. This updated document contains recommendations, based on feedback from faculty and staff, deans and department chairs, and state and federal guidance, with the school year now underway.

The updated instructional schedule means all instructors need to prepare for online and digital instruction, with selected in-person instruction delivery based on campus educational priorities. Preparing for this “new normal,” which will last for multiple semesters (pending availability of a vaccine and effective treatments), has several practical implications for instruction. With planning for the Spring 2021 Semester already underway, we expect a significant fraction of our classes to be offered digitally.

1. Teaching and Learning Technologies (TLT) has upgraded over 100 general access classrooms with video capture systems. Check out the list of classrooms and a short video here: https://support.tlt.utah.edu/hc/en-us/articles/360046234671-Video-Capture-Classrooms-Fall-2020. In addition, about 40 home AV kits are available for checkout to support lectures from remote sites.

2. To support students who may have technology access challenges, the Marriott Library, UIT, and TLT have expanded the number of laptops and hotspots available for checkout; see: https://lib.utah.edu/coronavirus/checkout-equipment.php

3. Throughout each semester, instructors should engage Teaching and Learning Technologies (TLT) and the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) on pedagogical preparation and best practices for online, hybrid, and in-person instruction. TLT and CTLE continue to hold workshops and would be happy to schedule training with individual units. The appendix at the end of this document provides links to workshops and recordings.

4. Develop and post your course syllabus on Canvas and the associated schedule at least two weeks before the semester begins. All courses have an automatically created Canvas page, which can be auto-populated with key policies, ready for you to add personalized content. At a minimum, for your students’ benefit, you must use Canvas for your syllabus, important communications, and grades.

5. Include the following guidance with your syllabus:
   - Face coverings are required in all in-person classes for both students AND faculty.
     - Standard Language: Based on CDC guidelines, the University requires everyone to wear face coverings in shared public spaces on campus, including our classroom. As a reminder, when I wear a face covering, I am protecting you. When you wear a face covering, you are protecting me and all of your classmates. If you forget your face covering, I will ask you to leave class to retrieve it. If you repeatedly fail to wear a face covering in class, I will refer you to the Dean of Students for a possible violation of the Student Code. Note that some students may qualify for accommodations through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you think you meet these criteria and desire an exception to the face covering policy, contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA).
Accommodations should be obtained prior to the first day of class so that I am notified by CDA of any students who are not required to wear a face covering.

- Please note that face shields alone are not an acceptable form of face covering unless also worn with a covering or mask for the nose and mouth. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all face coverings, including those that are homemade, be made of two layers of breathable, washable fabric. These are approved for use on campus.
- The University of Utah is following CDC guidelines for quarantining and isolating during the pandemic.
- Please remind students to practice appropriate personal hygiene to reduce transmission of the virus, including:
  - Students are encouraged to wash their hands, use hand sanitizer and clean their desks with wipes, which will be available at the main entrances of classroom buildings and at “sanitizing stations” in multi-use buildings, including Marriott Library.
  - Read more information about the building cleaning schedule on coronavirus.utah.edu.
- If in-class attendance is a necessary component of the course for pedagogical reasons (e.g., laboratories, studios, or artistic training), state it explicitly in the syllabus.
  - Standard Language: Given the nature of this course, attendance is required and adjustments cannot be granted to allow non-attendance. However, if you need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this attendance policy due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA). CDA will work with us to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate.
  - Note: Many international students with F-1 visas are required to have an in-person component to their classwork during the school year. Faculty are expected to do what they can to accommodate this requirement of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.
  - The Office for Faculty is working with ASUU leaders to develop good practices for students talking with their instructors about adjustments they might need because of COVID (e.g., attendance, due dates, etc.). At their Nov. 30, 2020 meeting, the Academic Senate approved a resolution outlining ways for students and faculty to better communicate about course expectations and deadlines. Please be as open-minded and accommodating as is possible and reasonable as students approach with requests.
  - Encourage students to reach out for 1:1 discussions of their concerns and/or consult with advisors about courses, modality mixes and degree completion.

- Remember that all other in-person classes that are not experiential, you may strongly encourage, but not require, in-class attendance (i.e., students may elect not to attend class in-person with no penalty and do not need to seek an official accommodation to participate online, rather than in-person).
  - Note: It is current practice to allow students to attend class at their discretion.
  - The university is asking students, faculty and staff to stay home if they are sick.

University guidance notes: “If you feel sick with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing; or have been in contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19, please call your health care provider or an urgent care center and notify them of your symptoms. Your health
care provider will determine if you need to be seen in the office and if so, will provide special instructions to prevent exposing others.”

- Advise students to familiarize themselves with Canvas and any other electronic teaching tools you choose to use, with pointers to appropriate tutorials. The Canvas Getting Started Guide for Students can be helpful.

- Include a reminder that students must self-report if they test positive for COVID-19 via this website: https://coronavirus.utah.edu/.

- If you have been exposed, or are experiencing symptoms, self-report and follow university employee exposure guidance.

- Follow the Exposure Management Guidelines for responding to and managing student reports of COVID-19 infection—including classroom cleaning and closure protocols, contact tracing processes and reporting exposure to college and department leaders. The current guidelines are always available on coronavirus.utah.edu

- Faculty must accommodate the instructional needs of students who are quarantined or self-isolated due to COVID-19, or who have ADA accommodations.
  - In many cases, faculty teaching in-person or hybrid/in-person courses can record and post their live lectures to Canvas. A large number of general assignment classrooms now have “one-touch” recording capability that only requires plugging in a laptop and starting recording. See: https://support.tlt.utah.edu/hc/en-us/articles/360046234671-USB-Video-Capture-Classrooms-Fall-2020 for details on classroom recording.
  - **Note:** Be cognizant of copyright issues associated with instruction modalities. The law is different for in-person and online (synchronous and asynchronous) courses. Please review guidance here: https://coronavirus.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/10/TEACH-Act-online-courses.pdf

- If you plan to have one, **state the format of the final examination/project clearly,** recognizing that instruction and final examinations will be online after Thanksgiving. Put another way, if you plan to use proctoring tools such as ProctorU, inform students in advance.

- In addition, **describe how the course will operate during the weeks of “circuit breakers” and other breaks in in-person instruction (Fall—September 28-October 2, October 5-10, and November 30-December 3; and Spring—March 1-March 14)** when all classes will be online.

- Finally, **describe how all class materials can be accessed online.** ( Faculty requests for electronic course materials can be submitted via https://forms.lib.utah.edu/course-reserve-request/). The libraries will continue to underwrite student access to electronic course materials, subject to budget realities.

- **Experiential education guidelines:**
  - Deans should coordinate with chairs/directors (or designees) to establish any room capacity, cleaning guidelines, and PPE recommendations that go beyond the general guidelines for classrooms.
  - Limit capacity for in-person classes whenever possible to 50 or fewer students.
  - Experiential education should be limited to those activities that cannot be conducted remotely and that are essential to meet accreditation expectations and/or learning objectives of the course. Developing online content to support or supplement in-person
instruction is encouraged wherever such activities satisfy the learning objectives for the course.

- The time that individuals spend in close proximity in laboratories, design studios, and other experiential education should be minimized to the extent possible.
- If individuals will be within 6 feet of one another during a group experiential education activity, all must wear safety glasses in addition to a face covering and limit time that they are within 6 feet of one another.
- Research laboratory protocols, as described by the Office of the Vice President for Research, generally apply:
  - **Students in instructional laboratories must wear safety glasses in addition to a face covering.**
  - Students should sanitize laboratory workstations before beginning work.
  - Movement in and out of labs and studios to obtain materials or equipment should be minimized during the activity. Ideally, all needed materials should be available in the room at the beginning of the period.
  - Gloves and sanitizers should be provided in every laboratory.
  - Disposable face coverings should be available if the laboratory involves use of hazardous material.
  - If a student or instructor tests positive for COVID-19, the experiential education space will be sanitized by facilities and the unit should sanitize any associated equipment.

6. If you are teaching a portion of your class in person:
   - **Visit your classroom well before the first in-person meeting** to assess audiovisual infrastructure, chair placement, and teaching positions. Contact Teaching and Learning Technologies (TLT) at classhelp@utah.edu if you have questions or concerns. Finally, allocate time during the first week of class for everyone to adjust.
   - **Practice lecturing while wearing a face covering** and assess the necessary speaking volume. Note that TLT is equipping many classrooms with teaching technologies.
   - When notified of the need, **prepare online educational content for any students who may need to self-isolate** and are unable to attend in-person classes. Put another way, be prepared for all educational modalities at all times.
   - **Record lectures using Zoom and post them on Canvas** for those students who cannot attend online or in-person lectures. Remember to protect student privacy when posting any electronic content and remember that some students may be in different time zones.
   - **Create a seating chart** for your course and ask all students to sit in the same place for each class. This chart is essential in cases where students become infected. They simplify contact tracing and limit quarantines to just those in close proximity to the infected person.
   - **Bring a small number of spare face coverings to all in-person lectures**, recognizing that some students may occasionally forget to bring theirs. An adequate, though not unlimited, supply of extra, disposable face coverings will be available for departmental purchase on an as needed basis.

**Important Resource Links:**
- [https://facultycenter.utah.edu](https://facultycenter.utah.edu) (single point of contact for online webinars, teaching guides, and other resources)
• **https://ctle.utah.edu** (webinars and online boot camps, including recorded events)
• **https://tlt.utah.edu/covid19.php** (guide to preparing to teach an online or hybrid class, using the U’s teaching technologies)
• **https://tlt.utah.edu** (individual consultations for Canvas and other class technologies)
• **https://support.tlt.utah.edu** (online guides for teaching technologies, including Canvas, video systems, classroom A/V systems and examination technologies)
• **https://disability.utah.edu** (Center for Disability and Access)
• **https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701** (Canvas guide for students)
• **https://coronavirus.utah.edu** (COVID-19 self-reporting process; health and safety guidelines; academic planning; and HR documents)
• **https://forms.lib.utah.edu/course-reserve-request** (library reserve requests)
• **https://academic-affairs.utah.edu/office-for-faculty/faculty-instructor-dialogues/** (Faculty/Instructor Dialogues)
Teaching During COVID-19

Other Resources

- CTLE and TLT have developed a new website to answer most of your questions and direct you to services available to help with your teaching needs this fall. You can find it at http://facultycenter.utah.edu.

- If you have any questions about Canvas or other teaching technologies, the easiest way to get an answer is to attend TLT’s weekday office hours at 10:00 and 2:00 at https://utah.zoom.us/j/296099562#success.

- You can get answers to your non-technology teaching questions or get a consultation from CTLE by emailing them at info@ctle.utah.edu.

- Testing resources include:
  
  • *Canvas Exams* (includes randomized questions banks, time limited tests, and video recorded answer explanations). Canvas exams can be released at set times to in-class and remote students.
  
  • *Respondus LockDown Browser* add-on to Canvas (a custom browser that launches the Canvas exam, locks down the testing environment, and prevents access to other applications).
  
  • *ProctorU Review+ Remote Exam Monitoring* add-on to Canvas exams.