Planning for Teaching During a Pandemic or Epidemic

Introduction and Mandate

University of Florida administration is advising all faculty to plan instructional activities that enable continuance of instruction in situations of high absenteeism or possible campus closure resulting from a pandemic or epidemic of contagious illness.

The decision to close the campus will be made by the president or his designee. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the president may consult with various individuals on and off campus, including the Office of Facilities, Planning, and Construction, the Office of Environmental Health & Safety, the City of Gainesville and Alachua County law enforcement agencies. Public safety is the primary consideration in any closure decision.

A decision to close the campus will be communicated through standard information dissemination processes and news channels.

It is the intent of current pandemic planning to maintain the processes and progress of teaching and learning even in the event of campus closure. The goal is to ensure health and safety while maintaining operations to minimize disruption to student progress.

Depending on the severity and timing of an epidemic outbreak at the University of Florida, the three most likely scenarios are:

1. High levels of absences due to illness which will require instructors to be flexible in delivering course content and providing for make-up activities;
2. Class cancellations due to instructor absence or large numbers of student absences; and,
3. Campus closure in which instruction will need to be moved entirely online for the duration of the closure.

Faculty should begin planning as soon as possible for as much as three weeks of online and/or independent student activities that will enable learning to continue in the absence of face-to-face instruction.

Faculty should be prepared for:

- Student absences
- Their own absence
- Delays in technical support in the event campus-wide closure
Tips for Moving Instruction Online

Required Steps
- Access your account in the E-Learning system (Sakai or Canvas)
- If you do not yet have an account, you can request a Canvas account at: https://lss.at.ufl.edu/
- Upload your syllabus
- Send messages to students
- Upload course content files (e.g., lecture notes, PowerPoint presentations, etc.)
- Review available resources on how to use web tools in your courses

Desirable Tools in e-Learning - http://training.it.ufl.edu/

Canvas
- Announcements
- Assignments
- Chat
- Discussions
- Quizzes
- Tutorials
- Updates

Sakai
- Announcements in Sakai
- Assessments, tests, and quizzes
- Assignment tool
- Chat room
- Discussions boards
- Sakai tutorials

Additional Help
- Take advantage now of online learning opportunities offered by UFIT Learning Support Services
- Walk-in support for e-Learning (Sakai and Canvas) is available now – 132 Hub. Have your questions answered now, since walk-in support would not be available during a university mandated closure
- Email your e-Learning questions to the UF Help Desk: helpdesk@ufl.edu
- Email the e-Learning Support Services group: learning-support@ufl.edu
- Call the e-Learning Support Services group: (352) 392 - 4357
- Utilize the Web-based tutorials: http://training.it.ufl.edu
Instructional Scenarios

Skills for lecture-based classes

- How to post documents, PowerPoint presentations, readings, and assignments in the E-Learning System
- Consider alternative activities to replace missed lectures, such as additional readings or viewing online resources that cover the same course content
- Record class lectures for students to view later

Options for recording presentations for later viewing at [http://citt.ufl.edu/](http://citt.ufl.edu/).

- Create a lecture using My Mediasite from home for students to watch and listen. My Mediasite is easy to use and will help you to produce a high quality home recording
- Include Camtasia or Jing screen recording software. Camtasia is relatively inexpensive and fairly easy to use, and Jing is available online (free for a limited version, or there is an inexpensive “pro” version)
- Create a narrated PowerPoint slide show from home for students to watch and listen
- Use tools like BigBlueButton to share documents, chat, and share desktops
- Refer to the Center for Instructional Technology Toolbox for other useful communication and collaboration tools

Skills for seminar class and discussions

- Use the E-Learning System's discussions and/or chat tools for class sessions
- Use web conferencing to hold online real-time meetings
- Telephone audio conference for small classes

Skills for lab classes

- Consider alternate labs that can be performed at home using common resources such as household chemicals or tools
- Locate virtual labs online for students to complete
- Use the Assignments tool in E-Learning to have students submit lab reports

Other instructional practices to consider

Distributing, collecting and grading assignments

- Post assignment instructions and grades on the course website
- Use the E-Learning System's Assignments tool to collect assignments electronically
- Use online tools to comment, grade and return assignments
- Offer online review quizzes, low-stakes quizzes, or tests as appropriate. This is especially appropriate for self-test, or review quizzes to which go official grade is attached
Managing student meetings and group work

- Offer students online tools for group work, such as the e-Learning groups tool. Use e-Learning's chat tool, instant messenger, or video chat to communicate one-on-one (VoiceThread, Skype, etc). You might also consider setting up collaboration sessions and have (or get) a webcam for your computer.
- Use the Announcements and Mail tools in e-Learning to tell students when you'll be available online, how to contact you, and to communicate with them on assignments.

A comment about pedagogy

The practices described in this document are targeted solely toward bridging the gap of course cancellations or a campus closure resulting from a pandemic. These practices do not reflect either research or experience on what makes for effective online teaching and learning. If you are considering continuing to teach one or more of your classes in hybrid or fully online format, we encourage you to explore resources related to effective online pedagogy.