



Seasonal Respiratory Illness In-Class Instruction Guidelines for Instructors

The health and safety of instructors, teaching support staff, and students is a priority. The following information has been developed to assist instructors in planning for the academic year for seasonal respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19, flu, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), etc.. Additional questions can be directed to your program administrator, Chair, or Dean's Office.

Prepare for absence

- Each term, you should devise a plan with your unit head (Chair/Director) about how to proceed with class instruction in the event you become unavailable.
- If you have symptoms, do not attend class. Follow these procedures: [Procedures in the Event of Symptoms/Confirmed case of COVID-19 or Other Respiratory Illnesses](#).
- You must also report the absence to your unit head so that your contingency plan can be implemented.

What should I do before my first class?

Review preventive measures

- Familiarize yourself with [general COVID-19/Respiratory Illness prevention measures](#) (e.g., hand hygiene and respiratory and cough etiquette).
- Encourage students to be [primary series vaccinated](#) and to obtain booster shots (3rd, 4th, etc.). For additional information, please visit [UofT's COVID-19 and Flu Vaccines webpage](#).
- Encourage students to complete the [provincial self-assessment tool](#) before coming to campus.
- Masks are not required. We ask everyone to respect each other's decisions, comfort levels, and health needs. For more information on masks, please also refer the [COVID-19 General Workplace Guideline](#).
- Physical distancing is not required.
- A box of masks (available from [MedStores](#) or contact your Dean's office) is recommended in case a student becomes sick while in class and is awaiting transportation.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in high-traffic areas of University buildings, such as lobbies and classrooms. Know who to contact for replenishment or contact your local facilities group: [UTM](#), [UTSC](#), [UTSG](#).

Employees who would like to discuss workplace accommodations should speak to their supervisor. For more information regarding workplace accommodation, please also contact [Health and Well-Being](#). Students requiring academic accommodation should visit the [Office of the Vice-Provost, Students](#) page.

Course Outline Requirements

- Every course outline should be designed with a plan that considers alternate arrangements for:
 - A short-term (e.g., one-week) cancellation of in-person classes, whether for the course or University-wide;
 - A longer-term cancellation of in-person meetings, whether for the course or University-wide;
 - A cancellation of in-person (midterm or final) examinations.
- You should include as much detail as possible in your plan to make students aware of possible scenarios. Where there are program, department, or faculty-wide contingency plans in place, you should ensure that your course plans are consistent with them.
- Outlines should also describe accommodation that will be available for students who cannot attend classes due to self-isolation.

Connect with your teaching team and students

Connect with the members of your teaching team (co-instructor(s), course coordinator, TA(s), technical support staff), to discuss the teaching plan and ensure they are familiar with the [prevention measures](#), space logistics, and other applicable considerations.



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Reach out to students enrolled in the in-person course sections to share your expectations for them, including in-class behaviour, participation, and interaction with you and the teaching team. Prepare students for the safety practices of the in-person experience, including the [general COVID-19/Respiratory Illness prevention measures](#), space logistics, and considerations.

What's important to share with students during the first class?

Orient students to the space: If cleaning supplies, such as a hand sanitizer dispenser, are available note their location. Sanitizing supplies are available in high-traffic areas of University buildings, such as lobbies and classrooms.

Remind students of safety measures: Remind students not to come to class or other in-person activities if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or are required to self-isolate. They can use the [provincial self-assessment tool](#) and follow the instructions provided where applicable. Provide a visual and verbal reminder of the [general COVID-19/Respiratory Illness prevention measures](#) and any other protocols required by your Faculty/division. Feel free to adapt the [PowerPoint presentation](#) provided to use on your first day of class or within Quercus. Add to this a reiteration of your expectations for in-class behaviour, participation, and interaction with you and the teaching team.

Review course structure & activities: Describe how class time will be structured and what kinds of learning activities students can expect to experience during class sessions.

Students should be reminded to consult their divisional registrar's office for support with seeking academic consideration in the event of absence due to influenza-like illness or required self-isolation. Students in participating divisions may use the [ACORN Absence Declaration Tool](#) to create an official record of the absence that can be used to support a request for academic consideration, without the need to present additional supporting documentation. Beginning September 2023, the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool may be used *once per term for a maximum period of seven consecutive calendar days*; the tool cannot be used to seek academic consideration for any matters requiring a petition (such as missing a final exam or final assessment).

If a substantial number of students are away at the same time with influenza-like illness, it should be reported to the appropriate Chair or Head as directed by your Faculty. The authority to move a course online or make any other alterations rests with the Dean or delegate. They may consult with the [Environmental Health & Safety](#) and faculty stakeholders before making a decision to move a course online or implement any other mitigating action within a class or cohort of students.

How should I manage issues that arise in my class?

What do I do if a student doesn't comply with the safety regulations put in place?

Follow similar existing processes for non-compliant behaviour in a classroom or teaching lab [e.g., student not wearing proper personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect from chemical hazards].

What do I do if someone in my class feel sick? Or if I require immediate assistance?

Be familiar with procedures on what to do if an individual experiences an influenza-like illness/COVID-19 related symptom, has COVID-19, or has had an exposure: [Procedures in the Event of a Confirmed/Symptomatic Case or Known Exposure to COVID-19](#).

- Establish at the scene, a safe, designated isolation area for the individual to wait at least 2 metres away from you and other passers-by until Campus Safety and EMS arrive. Remember to avoid face to face conversations within 2 metres, stand to the side of the individual and if required, when assisting with assuring individual is comfortable while waiting for EMS.