

Dear Deans,

We are writing to share plans for course instruction for the Academic Year 2021-2022. This memo and associated information will be posted to [Teach Anywhere](#).

Stanford is planning to return to the traditional three-quarter academic year with mostly in-person operations beginning Fall 2021. The academic calendar can be found [here](#).

Our plans to return to in-person instruction are shaped by the rapidly improving health conditions, high rates of vaccination among our community members, low prevalence of COVID-19 on campus, and Stanford's comprehensive COVID-19 testing and safety protocols.

We envision that Fall quarter instruction will look much like our pre-pandemic operations. Academic policies including grading basis that were changed for 2020-21 will expire at the end of Summer quarter 2021.

Below we provide an overview of Stanford's academic plans and what you can expect starting Fall quarter. Although some details remain to be worked out, we are sharing this with you now to help guide your planning. Please read through the document carefully.

Please distribute this letter to your faculty, lecturers, and staff within your school.

Sincerely,

Sarah Church, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

Mary Beth Mudgett, Senior Associate Dean, Educational Initiatives, School of H&S

Richard Webber, Associate Vice Provost & CTO, Learning Technologies & Spaces

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**Instruction Plan for Academic Year 2021-2022:**

**Vaccination Policy**

Starting in Fall 2021, Stanford has instituted vaccine requirements for all coming to campus. Specific requirements for students and employees vary and will be posted on health alerts. Please see the policy [here](#). Stanford will accommodate those who cannot take the vaccine for medical and religious reasons. Students (undergraduates, graduates and professional students) in these situations will be able to request an exception and, once it is approved, will be required to undergo regular COVID-19 testing. Other requirements may also apply. Stanford faculty, staff and postdoctoral scholars who are not fully vaccinated or who do not disclose their vaccination status will be required to continue regular COVID-19 testing and, possibly, additional requirements aimed at keeping our community safe. Further information regarding the implementation of vaccine requirements, including the process for providing documentation prior to campus arrival and requesting exemptions, will be provided to the community in the coming weeks.

### **Student Testing Upon Arrival**

The working plan is to test all students for COVID-19 upon their arrival. Vaccinated students will be able to engage in campus activities provided that they test negative for COVID-19 upon arrival. Students testing positive on arrival will be isolated until they receive a negative test and will then be subject to a period of restricted activity for a length to be determined by the university. We anticipate that the prevalence of students infected with COVID-19 will be very low because students are required to be vaccinated before arriving on campus. Any student who is not able to obtain a vaccination at their home location will be instructed to arrive early to campus. Upon arrival, unvaccinated students will be vaccinated, tested for COVID-19, and have restricted activity for at least six days and until a negative test result is obtained.

### **Start of Instruction**

With the caveats above, we expect that almost all students that are able to come back to campus will be able to fully engage in classroom instruction and campus activities at the start of the quarter. All in-person instruction will therefore start on the *first day* of the Fall quarter, Monday September 20, 2021, except for the Schools of Medicine and Law who have earlier start dates. As in a typical year, we anticipate that a limited number of students will need academic accommodations upon arrival for a variety of reasons, not necessarily due to COVID-19 safety protocols. Instructors are encouraged to reach out to enrolled students to share course syllabi and guidance for how students can manage absences and complete assignments.

### **In-person Instruction**

With a high level of immunity against COVID-19 among community members and COVID-19 safety protocols in place, Stanford plans to resume the majority of its course instruction fully in-person without social distancing. Why only the majority of courses? A recent inventory of Stanford's classrooms indicates that 22 classrooms (13 seminar, 9 lecture), approximately 12% of inventory, are unavailable for the next academic year due to planned building construction, renovations, and lack of mechanical ventilation necessary for current COVID-19 compliance requirements. We also expect a larger number of matriculated students to arrive this year due to deferrals last year. These two factors may impact our ability to schedule all courses in-person. In response, Stanford plans to schedule as many courses for in-person instruction as possible and, if necessary, offer a small portfolio of courses online.

The number of courses delivered in-person will ultimately depend on instructor flexibility and our ability to maximize the use of classrooms throughout the day. A revised [classroom meeting pattern](#) will be used to schedule courses. We encourage instructors to be as flexible as possible when scheduling their courses to maximize the full use of classrooms and limit scheduling conflicts at popular times. In addition, we highly recommend instructors to work with their Student Service Officers (SSOs) to submit course scheduling requests early this year, especially for Fall quarter. This will help expedite the room assignment process and enable the Registrar's Office staff to work with SSOs in a timely manner to finalize course scheduling and make adjustments if needed.

If spaces within your department can be made available for course scheduling, please notify Helen Chu ([helenchu@stanford.edu](mailto:helenchu@stanford.edu)) in Learning Technologies & Spaces (LTS) as soon as possible.

It is also important to note that we will continue to use outdoor canopies throughout the year as needed. Canopies have been primarily used for informal meetings or to increase available spaces for discussion sections and office hours.

### **Online Instruction**

Stanford plans to offer a small portfolio of online courses. These will include courses that are normally taught online and a limited curriculum for *first-year international undergraduate students only* that are not able to attend in-person instruction in the Fall due to visa issues. If some courses cannot be scheduled in classrooms, then a small number of courses that worked well in the online format will be offered either entirely online or in a hybrid format (i.e., parts of the course offered online or in-person). For example, courses that primarily use a lecture format could deliver the lectures online and meet in-person for discussion sections and office hours.

Departments and programs will be asked to recommend a small number of courses that can be prioritized for online instruction this year, if necessary. **There will be a process managed through the schools to select courses for online instruction.** More information regarding this process will be provided the week of June 7, 2021.

We have learned that a number of course elements have been improved by the incorporation of online technology into the teaching process (e.g., online collaboration tools, group discussions, virtual office hours). We encourage instructors who are interested in retaining some of these innovations as they resume in-person instruction to work with the Center for Teaching and Learning. A consultation with CTL can be arranged [here](#).

### **Teaching Assistants**

Departments and programs should inform students who will be serving as Teaching Assistants of the university's expectation that they are to be on campus for in-person course instruction for academic year 2021-22. Rare exceptions will be allowed for courses that need to be offered fully online due to scheduling limitations.

### **Course Grading**

[Academic policies](#) that changed for course grading in 2020-21 will lapse after Summer quarter 2021. For next year, departments and programs should reassess the grading requirements for their majors and minors and provide guidance to instructors to help them decide on the grading basis for their courses.

### **Classroom Safety**

Beginning Fall quarter, instructors should plan to use classrooms based on their normal seating capacity without physical distancing. The university is closely monitoring county, state, and federal regulations to ensure face covering policies align with what is permissible in various indoor

campus locations, including classroom settings. Face covering requirements will continue to evolve and be dependent upon new regulatory guidance regulations.

All of Stanford's classrooms used for in-person instruction for academic year 2021-22 are being serviced by mechanical ventilation systems that help minimize the potential for airborne virus transmission. Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in campus buildings are designed to provide outdoor air exchange consistent with building code requirements and consensus industry standards, including continued use of high efficiency air filters and increased outdoor airflow into the building. Facilities groups continue to conduct routine preventative maintenance to ensure the systems are performing as designed.

Note: Due to the priority to maximize outdoor air supply in classrooms, temperature control in some classes may be imperfect when hotter and colder weather are observed, as such, you may expect warmer in-class temperatures during hot days, or cooler in-class temperatures during cold days.

### **Course Scheduling and Timelines**

The Registrar's Office will open course scheduling starting June 7, 2021. Because of the new standard meeting patterns, **all old meeting patterns will be removed. All courses offered online for 2020-2021 will be reverted back to in-person.** Instructors should work with Student Service Officers (SSOs) to identify new scheduling times and grading options for their courses. **All bulletin and course scheduling submissions for Fall quarter 2021-2022 are due by July 30, 2021.** Official room scheduling by the Registrar's Office will begin thereafter. Course scheduling for the Schools of Medicine, Law and Business will occur earlier. Explore courses is expected to open in early August for students to review course offerings for the academic year 2021-22. Enrollment for Fall quarter opens September 1, 2021.

If the Registrar's Office finds that classroom scheduling is an issue for any courses, instructors will be contacted by August 16, 2021. Explore courses will be updated at that time to designate which courses will be offered online.

### **Space Sharing and Managing Local Events**

Due to the unprecedented class size and lower inventory of classrooms, all classrooms will be prioritized for course activities (e.g., classes, discussion sections, office hours, review sessions, exams). Prioritizing classrooms for teaching and learning means that many departmental functions (e.g., guest speakers, thesis defenses, faculty and staff meetings, and program activities) will likely need to be held online this year. We encourage units to review local inventories now and foster a culture of shared spaces to be able to coordinate and prioritize use of spaces for in-person events. Please note that the Registrar Office will not officially schedule non-course activities and events until after the 2nd week of the quarter, which is standard practice. We encourage units to plan ahead in case in-person activities are not feasible.

### **Classroom technology**

We have learned that simple recording kits would be useful for some instructors. We are piloting a program this Fall to provide simple recording kits and will make these available on a sign-out basis. These kits are intended for use by instructors who have the occasional need to record a class session for pedagogical purposes. Instructors who may need to teach large lectures online (>80) with small breakout groups may request the Wallenberg Learning Theater or similarly equipped teaching studios. If you are interested in using these special teaching studios please contact LTS at [classtechsupport@stanford.edu](mailto:classtechsupport@stanford.edu). Your students will continue to be able to request loaner laptops, tablets and other equipment through the Lathrop Learning Hub [here](#). The [iPads for Teaching and Learning program](#) promotes effective teaching, learning, and research by awarding iPad devices for loan to select faculty members, instructors, and students. Submit applications [here](#).

### **Course Preparation**

The Center for Teaching and Learning will be offering the TEACH symposium from August 30 - September 3, 2021. This symposium will have new workshops to help instructors prepare for the return to in-person instruction this Fall. Save the date because [registration](#) opens July 30, 2021. CTL will also be offering June Course Clinics on Friday June 11 and 18 from 10 am to 12 pm on Zoom. Drop in at any point to talk with campus teaching experts about preparing for Summer or Fall planning. [Register](#) to receive the Zoom links.

### **Circumstances That Would Change Our Current Plans**

Stanford has developed contingency plans in case there is a surge in COVID-19 infections or emergency situations (e.g., wildfires and earthquakes) affecting the health and safety of our community. If conditions warrant, it may be necessary to move all or most of the instruction online. Instruction teams are thus expected to develop back-up plans to be prepared for these possibilities.

### **Information Regarding Fall Planning & Policies**

Moving forward, all updates on academic planning and policies will be communicated via the schools and posted on the Teach Anywhere site, <https://teachanywhere.stanford.edu/>.

### **Town Halls for Fall Teaching Plan**

We will be holding two town hall meetings to discuss the Fall teaching plan. These meetings will occur on Thursday June 17, 2021 at 1:30-2:30pm and Thursday June 24, 2021 at 1:30-2:30pm. The zoom link is below:

<https://stanford.zoom.us/j/99923033075?pwd=MmZDZEtzSmVQajFCV0J2YXNpZEFzZz09>