

Instructor Letter – Looking ahead to Spring Quarter Instruction
March 3, 2022

Dear Spring Quarter Instructors,

We are writing to share information to support your Spring quarter 2021-22 course preparation. If you taught earlier this year, some of this information will be familiar to you.

In-person instruction. Course instruction will begin in person on Monday March 28, 2022. Only a small number of pre-approved courses will be offered online (e.g., courses normally offered online, courses negatively impacted by masking, seminar courses hosting speakers from around the globe, and instructor medical exceptions).

Given the trajectory of the pandemic, we do not anticipate large numbers of student absences that would create a need for a course to move online for a short period of time. However, if that situation changes, and you feel that you need to move your course online, please confer with your department chair.

Course policies and syllabi. On the first day of classes, please review your course policies and syllabus with students so that they can make informed enrollment decisions and be aware of policies related to absences and making-up missed work. Also, please remind your students that they are expected to be in residence to attend class and sit for in-person assessments.

Exceptions for in-person instruction. Medical exceptions for instructors to teach online for the full quarter require chair or supervisor and dean approval. Deans will forward requests to the Provost for final approval. Instructors who already have approved medical exceptions to teach online may continue to teach online for Spring quarter, but should notify their Dean or unit lead of their plans and identify the course (number and title) that will be offered online.

Course enrollment and classrooms. Students began enrolling in courses on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. Instructors with questions about their room scheduling should coordinate with their department staff. Given constraints on classroom space this year, instructors may need to be flexible to find a classroom and schedule that meets their requirements.

Academic gatherings. Departments and programs may continue to host in-person academic gatherings (e.g., speakers and other presentations, meetings with prospective students, candidate job talks, etc.) following [current guidelines on Health Alerts](#).

Mask mandate. Starting March 2, with certain exceptions, face coverings will no longer be required but will continue to be strongly recommended on-site, regardless of vaccination status.

In classrooms, face coverings will continue to be required through the beginning of Spring quarter. However, individuals may remove face coverings while speaking. The university will monitor conditions and re-evaluate this requirement after the beginning of spring quarter.

We are issuing additional information and guidance:

- Students must wear a mask in class and the instructor may ask a student to leave the class if they refuse to do so.
- An instructor may choose to speak without a mask.

- Instructors have discretion to set expectations with the class about what constitutes “when speaking”. For example, an instructor may wish to allow students to remove masks if they are making a presentation to the class, while still asking them to continue wearing their mask when asking a question.

Rapid Tests and Color Testing Requirements. Rapid antigen tests will be provided to students in advance of spring break so that they can test prior to return to campus. Stanford is working to secure a supply of rapid tests for faculty, staff, and postdocs who are on campus. Details, once confirmed, will be shared with schools and departments.

Effective March 1 ([Health Alerts](#)), fully vaccinated faculty, staff, and postdoctoral scholars are no longer required to complete regular surveillance testing. Testing following travel or after exposure to COVID-19 continues to be recommended. Student testing requirements for Spring quarter are detailed [here](#).

CTL Spring 2022 Course Clinics. The Center for Teaching and Learning will be hosting two drop-in office hour clinics for instructors on March 18 and 25. More information can be found [here](#).

Instructor meeting start of Spring quarter

On Thursday, March 31 at 1pm we will host an instructor meeting on Zoom. Please use this [link](#).

Wishing you all the best as you prepare for Spring quarter.

Sarah, Mary Beth, Suzi, & Laura

Sarah Church - Freeman-Thornton Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Mary Beth Mudgett - Senior Associate Dean for Educational Initiatives, H&S
Suzi Weersing - Associate Dean of Graduate & Undergraduate Studies, H&S
Laura Schlosberg - Assistant Dean, Curriculum & Academic Support, H&S

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- The [Teach Anywhere](#) website offers guidance on safety in the classroom; a rule of thumb is to design course materials so they can be shared easily with students if the need arises.
- The [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) is available for [consultations](#).
- The [Teaching Commons](#) website is a central source of information and resources on teaching and pedagogy.
- [Learning Technology & Spaces](#) can help with questions about teaching technologies and classroom spaces. Loans for voice amplification can be found [here](#).

GUIDANCE FOR SPRING QUARTER:

We encourage you to continue to refer to Teach Anywhere for guidance. Please reach out to your department leadership when you have questions (e.g., chair, director, or DUS).

How can instructors manage course absences due to isolation?

Please see this [document](#).

How to handle a student who reports they are COVID positive and requests to take an exam remotely?

Please refer to options detailed [here](#) on Teach Anywhere.

Can an instructor require students to wear a specific type of face covering?

No. Instructors should remind students of the preferable face covering types that provide higher levels of protection. The university guidelines are: To best protect yourself and others, wear a well-fitting, high-quality face covering. N95 respirators, KN95 masks, KF94 masks, and double masking (e.g., cloth face covering over a disposable surgical mask) provide a higher level of fit and filtration. Surgical masks and double-layer cloth face coverings remain acceptable though they do not provide the same level of personal protection.

Instructors may use masks that they have purchased themselves or they can request masks from their home department or program.

Are students working in teams within a classroom high risk close contacts?

No, classrooms remain safe due to masking. This includes students working on team assignments. If a student tests positive for COVID, then they should be provided with guidance for how they can contribute to group work during their isolation period.

Do instructors need student permission to record their course meetings?

No. If the streaming and viewing of the recorded sessions are limited to in-class use (e.g., when the recording is made available via Canvas and the access is limited to students in your class), instructors do not need to obtain consent from students.

As stated in the University's [Consent to Use of Photographic Images](#) policy, when a student enrolls in a course, they agree to the University's use and distribution of the student's image or voice in photographs, videotapes, electronic reproductions, or audiotapes of classes. **This student consent policy does not extend to the students in your class, and they may not record or livestream classes without yours and your students' consent.**

Instructors should, however, provide advance notice and be transparent with students about whether their course will be recorded.

If an instructor plans to share the content outside of their class (e.g., make it public), they will need to obtain consent from the appropriate Dean's or Vice Provost's office.

Can a student record a class or create a zoom link to allow others to participate in real time?

No. Only members of the teaching team should set up a zoom link, or record the class, as discussed above.

Can an instructor post their lectures to YouTube or other websites?

No. Due to statutory and regulatory compliance issues associated with public posting of recorded lectures (e.g., student privacy, copyright), instructors should not post video content on any site other than their Stanford Canvas course site. Within Canvas, Zoom and Panopto are available for posting a course's videos.

Is an instructor required to provide exams remotely for students who choose not to return to campus this quarter?

No. Winter quarter instruction is almost exclusively in person. Only a few courses are being taught online. Students will need to be present to take in-person assessments (e.g. midterms and finals). Instructors should remind students how their assessments will be delivered.

How should instructors manage student absences?

Instructors should be prepared for students who are unable to attend in-person classes. Guidance for how to manage student or instruction team absences can be found [here](#). [CTL is also available for consultation](#) to develop contingency plans.

Instructors are encouraged to remind all students of the course policies and provide guidance for how they can handle any class absences. **Instructors may not require that students provide a note from Vaden, a medical provider, or an academic advisor if they report that they are ill and unable to attend class or sit for an exam.**

It is important not to penalize students who cannot come to class because they are in isolation or quarantine. In particular, **you should not ask students to drop the course before having students evaluate their options.** If there are concerns about a student's performance or ability to complete a course, please reach out to [Academic Advising](#). They can work with students on a plan to support their success.