

Pandemic Planning – Academic Planning

What is Expected of CoE Faculty and Instructors

All CoE Faculty and Instructors should take the following steps when preparing for the fall semester classes;

1. Provide information as part of the course syllabus regarding course policies in the case of a campus closing or suspension of classes:

Starting in the fall 2009 semester, you should include the following statement in the syllabus of each course that you teach:

“In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course.” (describe how your students can get information remotely here)

2. Establish, announce, and test a means of contacting students and teaching teams:

Three methods of communicating with students are commonly used and well supported: Blackboard Vista (which is recommended by the Provost’s Office), course websites, and e-mail. ITAP generates a Blackboard site and an e-mail list for each course. Websites are typically set up by the faculty member. Information on Blackboard Vista may be found at <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/tlt/blackboard/> and a course e-mail list may be requested at <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/tlt/emaillists>.

For your communication method of choice, you should test your ability to make an important course document (e.g., the syllabus or an assignment), available to students using the method that would be available during a disruption. This test should be set up from your home, to emulate the conditions when the campus is closed to faculty as well as to students. At the beginning of the Fall Semester 2009 faculty members should ask the students to retrieve and acknowledge receipt of a document, to test their access capabilities and to enable students to resolve issues with browsers and connectivity. Instruction teams for larger courses, including team teachers and teaching assistants should also be asked to test their connectivity and provisions for maintaining communication between the team and with students. It is important that discussions of possible emergency preparation between teaching teams for large courses take place early in the semester.

3. Be prepared to work from home:

You may need to communicate with students, other instructors and teaching assistants about the status of the course from home, if the university responds to a pandemic with an emergency closure. Consider the computer and internet infrastructure you will need to do so. Maintain a copy of critical course records (e.g., grades) away from campus in case you are not able to access campus facilities or servers. Blackboard Vista’s grading tool includes an electronic grade book that allows each student to track their individual grades as well as providing automatic calculation of statistics and maintaining backup copies of recorded grades.



Laboratory courses may be particularly burdened by an interruption, but alternatives to the practical hands on activities of a lab should be in mind in case extended interruptions are required. Replacement of lab activities with datasets and observations from prior offerings of the particular lab activity may be necessary to provide materials for student laboratory reports and to fulfill at least some laboratory course objectives. Laboratory instructors may want to consider preparing in advance by having examples of materials from preliminary laboratory trials or prior laboratory course offerings accessible at home in paper form or electronically.

4. Review grading structure:

We recommend that you review the course grading structure for your course to avoid the situation where a high fraction of the grade is concentrated at the end of the semester or where attendance is weighted heavily.

The above steps as well as the attached document enumerates specific actions that will help make adjustments easier and avoid problems that could arise in the administration of courses, including controversies over grading, should there be a campus closing for an H1N1 pandemic or other emergency. I am asking that all CoE faculty and instructors to implement these actions for the fall 2009 semester.

Please recall that in earlier communications from the Provost all faculty members were asked to include information on emergency procedures (e.g., in the event of fire, tornado, or shooter in the building) and consequences of cheating in the syllabus and discuss them with students at the beginning of the class. This semester's course evaluations in Engineering will include questions about whether cheating policies, emergency procedures, and how to get information about the course during a disruption were included in the syllabus and discussed in class. Students will be asked whether the method for obtaining information about the course during a disruption was tested.

Purdue's resource for Campus Emergency as well as pandemic influenza plan is located at the following urls:

<http://www.itap.purdue.edu/ilt/faculty/>

http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/pdf/Pan_Flu_Plan_v2_-FINAL_15%20Dec%2008.pdf.

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/update.htm>

