



TIGER
STRONG

PREPARED BY

**The Risk Mitigation in
On-Ground Instruction
and Research Work Group**

JULY 2020



Guiding Principles

To identify and assess options to mitigate risks in conducting instruction and research in a face-to-face setting.

Identify best practices that can equip our students, faculty and staff to effectively work remotely if necessary.

The following recommendations have been adopted based on current conditions and understanding of COVID-19. It is imperative that future decision-making be informed by our evolving understanding of the risk to students, staff and faculty.

We recognize that there are faculty, students and staff concerned with returning to campus in any capacity. However, it is also recognized that many students want or need some in-person experiences this fall. This is a challenging, unprecedented position for higher education.

The committee interpreted its charge as falling under the CDC's "More Risk" category ([cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html)), which is between fully online and business as usual instruction. As time progresses, operating under the "More Risk" guidelines may or may not be possible.



AFTER RESEARCH, CONSULTATION AND COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK, THE ON-GROUND RISK MITIGATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE:

Prevention, Preparation and the Campus Culture

- A culture of protecting others must be established. Policies help, but the culture will ultimately develop through communication campaigns, signage and education. The Faculty Senate may want to assist with the composition of a syllabus statement that addresses the protective culture.
- Face masks or face coverings must be worn at all times by all faculty, staff, students and campus guests/vendors/etc. in all University of Memphis classrooms, public spaces and campuses (Cental Campus, Lambuth, Millington, Collierville, Law, etc.). Everyone must follow this rule.
- Failure to follow any in-person rules may result in the loss of right to physically attend classes or be on campus. Instructors must enforce rules and must contact the Dean of Students after a student offense is repeated. Faculty who are not wearing face masks or face coverings in their classrooms should be addressed by their chairs.
- Sanitizing stations will be placed in classrooms so faculty and students may wipe down workspaces.
- Instructors must adopt flexible physical attendance policies. Strict physical attendance policies with grade penalties this fall will create an environment that increases health risks to others.
- Instructors and programs must develop contingency plans to support a transition to 100% remote learning if required (faculty or students who are quarantined or in the event Shelby County or the State of Tennessee require remote work).
- Departments must be prepared to develop teaching plans in case faculty need to take sick leave.
- An online web collection method should be created for faculty, staff and students to self-report if they have tested positive for COVID-19.



Enrollment and Room Management

- Classes with more than 90 enrolled students will be moved to an online or remote delivery. Students and faculty will be notified of this change by the Registrar's Office by mid-July.
- The Provost's Office will work with the individual departments and with the Registrar to reassign available classroom spaces to maximize the number of classes in which all students can meet simultaneously.
- Unless indicated as WEB or TWY (definitions follow in next section) or unless otherwise noted, all fall 2020 sections in which social distancing prevents all students from attending sessions at once will be considered hybrid, which includes remote access and on-ground instruction.
- Allowed physical attendance in classrooms will be no more than 1/3 maximum room capacity and will follow the Space Planning Office's guidelines. See the Registrar's Office webpage for this information: memphis.edu/registrar/faculty/scheduling.php
- Thirty students will be the maximum number of students allowed in any physical session unless approved by the Provost. These requests must be submitted to the college's dean.

Special Accommodations

- Faculty seeking remote instruction as an accommodation consistent with ADA guidelines will provide medical documentation as well as a plan to provide quality remote instruction to Human Resources.
- Students seeking accommodations consistent with ADA guidelines will present medical documentation to the Office of Disability Resource Services which will work with the academic departments to provide reasonable accommodations.



Definition of Terms

Actual student enrollment

The actual number of students enrolled in a class section in Banner.

Asynchronous classes

All required activities can be completed at times that fit each student's schedule as long as they are completed by a specified deadline.

Hybrid

Classes with a mix of on-ground and online instruction. The classes will meet at the regularly scheduled times, but safety considerations dictate that only a percentage of the class can attend a given section so that the basic course materials, including lectures, must also be remotely accessible. Any synchronous activities, in the classroom or remote, will take place during the published class times

Maximum student enrollment

The maximum number of students who can possibly register for a section. Maximum student enrollment is in Banner on each section.

On-ground

Classes that meet in person with the attendance of all enrolled students in the section during the regularly scheduled hours.

Remote

Classes taught 100% online with no face-to-face meetings and involve both synchronous and asynchronous elements. Class times exist in the schedule (students may be expected to log in during these set times) and sections are indicated as remote by REM building code on section.

Room capacity

The number of allowed individuals in a physical classroom is found in the EMS classroom scheduler.

Session

A meeting time for a section. For example, a class that meets three times a week has three weekly sessions.

Synchronous classes

Activities such as lectures and discussions in which students are all expected to participate at the same time.

Web classes

Classes that are taught 100% online. These are M50 and 410 sections. There are no class days or meeting times and no in-person sessions. Web classes are asynchronous – no set times.



Academic Calendar

The adjusted dates for fall 2020 will be as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| August 17 | Classes begin Monday, August 17 |
| No Fall Break | |
| November 17 | Last class Tuesday, November 17 |
| No Study Day | |
| Wednesday, Nov. 18-Tuesday, Nov. 24 | Final Exams |
| Monday, December 7 | Grades Due (to allow time for students to complete papers and projects remotely during the week after Thanksgiving) |

(13 full weeks plus two class days minus one holiday = 66 class days plus 5 exam days)

ALL OF THE NEW FALL 2020 DATES HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED ON VARIOUS WEBSITES (SUCH AS THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE ACADEMIC CALENDAR) AND DATES ON CLASS SECTIONS IN BANNER HAVE BEEN UPDATED TO DISPLAY NEW DATES. REFUND RULES HAVE BEEN ADJUSTED TO REFLECT THE CHANGES.

Enrollment, Attendance and Room Management

- The allowed physical attendance in physical classrooms will be 1/3 of maximum room capacity for any session held to ensure students are able to space out. Seating capacity data provided by the Office of Space Planning will also be used in classroom assignment and assignments will be managed by the Registrar's Office in consultation with departments.
- Sessions involving more than 30 students present must be approved by the Office of the Provost to assure that there is not undue traffic in lobbies, hallways or restrooms.
- Classes with possible maximum enrollment of more than 90 will be held only online or remotely.
- Except for WEB classes and on-ground classes in which enrollment is no larger than 1/3 of the available seats in the classroom (or 15 students), all fall 2020 classes will need to adopt a hybrid format.
- It remains a best practice to require attendance, but attendance policies need to be implemented with special flexibility this fall. Attendance policies need to be formulated in such a way as not to force or even encourage any student to come to campus who should be in quarantine due to possible exposure or with symptoms of an illness. Therefore, penalties for insufficient attendance will need to be suspended for the fall term. Attendance should still be taken, however, to alert advisors and retention specialists to students at possible academic risk and to assist contact tracing.
- Room assignments will be reviewed continuously by the Registrar's Office, and departments will be guided to minimize confusion on enrollment and allowed physical attendance for sessions. Space planning will be consulted for guidance.
- Departments should not request to decrease the maximum capacity of academic classrooms. Space Planning oversees seating numbers for academic classrooms.
- Any revised classroom assignments should be in Banner no later than one week prior to start of classes on Aug. 3, 2020. Students will receive communication to check their schedules for any updated room assignments. Additionally, upon the update of a new classroom assignment, students receive automatic communication through the system.
- If a class requires personal protective equipment (PPE) beyond a face mask or face covering, students will receive an email from the Registrar's Office stating the requirements. Departments will be responsible for providing this information to the Registrar's Office one week prior to classes beginning.
- Special circumstances will be reviewed and discussed to decide the best accommodations.



Examples of Allowable Class Attendance in Sessions

| Max enrollment possible in class | Max Number allowed in individual class session | Room Must Hold |
|----------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Small (up to 15) | | |
| Meeting once weekly | 15 | 45 |
| Meeting twice weekly | 8 | 24 |
| Meeting three days weekly | 5 | 15 |
| Medium (16-30) | | |
| Meeting once weekly | 30 | 90 |
| Meeting twice weekly | 15 | 45 |
| Meeting three days weekly | 10 | 30 |
| Large(31-90) | | |
| Meeting once weekly | NA | NA |
| Meeting twice weekly | 30 | 90 |
| Meeting three days weekly | 30 | 90 |

Environmental Data Review and Sanitization

Masks and Face Coverings

All individuals must wear a face mask or face covering at all times except when eating or when alone in a private office.

Entrance Signage

Signage will be posted at entrances of buildings and at other central locations where they are likely to be viewed by students, faculty and staff, instructing them to go home if they are sick. While the CDC has many print resources ([cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html)) available, branded UofM printable communications are available from Tiger Copy & Graphics. Visit memphis.edu/coronavirusupdates/prevention/printables.php to view and order.

Density

Since almost all larger class sections will be moving to a hybrid format and the very large sections will be fully remote, the density of student traffic in the academic buildings should be substantially reduced, in most cases, by over two-thirds.

Elevators

Elevators represent a challenge to social distancing both as persons wait for the elevator and ride it. We recommend no more than four people per elevator (in each corner, with corners marked for this purpose) as well as marks on the floor in front of each elevator indicating where people should stand with appropriate distancing. Smaller elevators may only be able to accommodate one person. Out of consideration for students, faculty and staff with accessibility issues, we would ask that elevator use be reserved for those who cannot use the stairs.

Stairwells

All stairways should be marked as one-way unless they are sufficiently wide to allow two people to pass on the stairway and respect social distancing.

Hallways

All hallways should be marked as one-way unless they are sufficiently wide to allow two people to pass in the hallway and respect social distancing. Students should be encouraged not to linger or congregate in hallways before or after classes.

Bathrooms

All bathrooms should be modified to limit waiting. Outside waiting may be acceptable when it is not blocking a hallway and the waiting line is clearly marked with spacing for social distancing. Inside waiting should be prohibited with signage. We recommend closing bathrooms that cannot be made to conform to these requirements.

TAF Labs

In addition to adequate spacing for social distancing around workstations, there will be signage for handwashing/sanitizing before and after workstation use, and wipe-down cleaning products for students to use. Printers will have waiting space marked on the floor.

Because TAF labs are used for instructional activities, ad-hoc workshops and by students independently and continuously, they present a greater challenge for cleaning than a regular classroom and possibly a greater challenge for cleaning than a dining space because of keyboards, mouses and other electronic fomites.



Managing Safe Learning Spaces

Instructional and Research Spaces

- Face masks or face coverings will be required by all faculty, staff and students in the classrooms and on campus. Students without face coverings a first time will be asked to leave the class. Further violations will be referred to the Office of Student Accountability. Students who choose not to follow the face covering requirements will forfeit the right to be on campus.
- Social/physical distancing is required in all in-person learning environments. Exceptions require approval from the Provost's Office.
- Instructors will monitor to assure that students sit only in the approved seats/lab workstations. Compliance will be enforced in a manner similar to the enforcement of face covering mandates.
- Sanitization stations will be available so that faculty, students and staff may wipe down their workspace.
- In the lab learning environments, departments are encouraged to determine if/ what pre-lab, post-experiment work can be accomplished remotely or in an adjacent non-lab classroom space to optimize use of reduced lab-work spaces.
- Plexiglass protectors are being reviewed for placing on lecterns, lab stations and between computer workstations.
- Signage will be posted in buildings as a “checklist” to instruct students who may have certain symptoms to return home, seek medical care, and not physically attend any classes until they are well or have been tested.

Shared Apparatus, Equipment, Samples, etc., in Labs, Studios and Simulation Spaces

- Departments will develop plans to minimize queue for reagents, samples, apparatus, equipment, glassware, microscopes, etc., within studio and lab spaces. (Specifics will vary by course and lab/studio configuration, equipment, etc.)
- Stocking and restocking glassware and reagents at lab stations between lab meetings.
- Creating a traffic pattern to route students directly from individual work station to equipment.
- Identify best practices for shared samples and equipment (including microscopes).

Physical Plant Needs for Faculty and Student Safety in Classrooms

- Establish equipment/space cleaning procedures and responsibilities.
- Identify equipment that cannot be disinfected and create a protocol for use.
- Coordinate with the Registrar's Office to maximize the use of high-demand studio and lab spaces while allowing for cleaning time and "rest" time.
- Increase checks to ensure soap is in the restrooms for student and faculty use.

Hybrid Instructional Options

As hybrid classes will be remote for as much as two-thirds of the class, faculty will employ best practices for effective remote and online learning. To lessen the number of students in the physical classroom, faculty could consider various options for teaching on-ground sessions to include, but not limited to, the following:

- *Different Weekly Lectures/Rotation of Students* – Assign all students to groups for weekly in-person sessions. Group assignments will be fixed. Students assigned to attend a physical session on, for instance, Mondays, will only attend physically on Mondays. The remainder of the class can log in to join the lecture *virtually* on days when they are not scheduled to physically attend. Faculty will teach a different lecture in every session and progress as usual in their course material.
- *Same Weekly Lectures/Rotation of Students* – Assign student groups (as explained above) and teach the same lecture for each in-person session during the week to students (no more than 1/3 of room capacity.) Students will all experience the same lecture each week physically and additional classwork will be done remotely.
- *Flipped Classroom* – "Flip the classroom" so that all lectures are recorded and viewable in eCourseware. Host in-person sessions for students (no more than 1/3 room capacity) during regularly scheduled class time for activities, discussions, etc.

Contingency Plans

Instructors and programs will develop contingency plans to support a transition from hybrid to 100% remote learning if required (faculty or students who are quarantined or in the event Shelby County or State of Tennessee require remote work).

Departments must be prepared to develop teaching plans in case faculty need to take sick leave and must have classes covered.





Information Promotion/ Communication to Campus Community

Communication and education will be important to the success of our safe return to campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

COVID-19 Safety

General safety modules concerning COVID-19 will be required by all faculty, staff and students to complete. Signage on campus will promote healthy choices and instruct anyone with particular symptoms to return home and not attend any classes.

Attendance

Students will not be encouraged to attend in-person class sessions if they are ill or exhibiting symptoms. Faculty will exercise appropriate flexibility in the enforcement of attendance policies.

Syllabi Statement

A statement for all syllabi that outlines the rules for creating and maintaining our safe campus environment will be established and included on all fall 2020 syllabi. References to Disability Resources for Students (DRS) will also be included in syllabi.

Room Changes

An automatic message is sent out to students when a room assignment changes. These messages will continue and could be expanded with additional information as needed.

Special Accommodations Requests

Requests for Special Accommodations from Faculty and Students

The institution is taking all necessary precautions to minimize risk to include careful scheduling of classes, sanitizing and cleaning, education promotion and more. However, it is understood that some individuals may be unable to attend on-ground sessions this fall.

The University will provide a process for faculty and students with medically documented reasons (or medically documented reasons for individuals under their care) that prevent them from attending face-to-face classes to request accommodations for remote instruction.

If faculty or students identify as someone who may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 due to age or underlying health conditions, or have family members in the “high risk” category, accommodations will be granted to the extent feasible. (The Centers for

Disease Control (CDC) has provided additional information on who may be at high risk for severe illness at [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html)

Faculty with any requests and concerns should contact Human Resources. Students should contact the Office of Disability Resources for Students. These offices will work with the students, faculty members and department chairs to develop appropriate accommodation plans.

Faculty requesting such accommodations must also provide a plan to their department chair outlining the steps they are undertaking to assure that the class will meet appropriate standards for remote instruction. For classes that were originally scheduled on-ground, this may include synchronous elements.

Accessibility Concerns

- This semester, it will be especially important to make a brief reference to Disability Resources for Students (DRS) for accommodations in every syllabus and to work closely with them to develop accommodations.
- For students seeking remote instruction as part of their accommodations, a first option would be to see if there are online or hybrid courses that allow them to continue to make full progress towards their degree. For hybrid courses, attendance in the regular sections in person will not be required for these students. For fully online courses, DRS will work with the faculty and the department to develop appropriate strategies for the student to complete the course remotely whenever possible.
- Students with hearing loss should be contacted before fall term begins to see if they need special accommodations related to social distancing, face coverings, face shields and other reasons that could make it difficult for these students this term. Captioning options and software should be researched.
- The Orientation and Mobility (O&M) training for way finding should occur by mid-July if there are new patterns for hallways and campus paths. New routes must be obstruction-free.
- Other students seeking accommodations may have very different needs, especially in WEB or hybrid classes. DRS will work with the faculty member and the department to develop appropriate accommodations.



Reporting and Testing

Central Reporting and Assistance for Individuals with COVID-19 Diagnosis

Faculty and staff who have tested positive should notify Human Resources for support and appropriate follow-up actions. The Dean of Students Office is the contact office for students who have tested positive. Additional information will be provided by the Dean of Students Office on the health status reporting process.

Testing

The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) is partnering with the University of Memphis to provide COVID-19 testing for UofM students returning to campus this fall. Read the full release at memphis.edu/mediaroom/releases/2020/july/covidtesting.php



#StillDrivenStillDoing

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS POLICY ON NONDISCRIMINATION CAN
BE FOUND AT [HTTPS://MEMPHIS.POLICYTECH.COM](https://memphis.policytech.com). UOM37FY1920/21