

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ABOUT IN-PERSON COURSES AND COVID-19 PROCEDURES

September 24, 2021

Longwood is primarily a residential, in-person learning community at the undergraduate level. Faculty are active participants in the development of citizen leaders, and that development is accomplished most directly in the face-to-face classroom environment. Distance education modalities (including online and hybrid) are valued and appropriate for certain programs, particularly at the graduate level, and during intersession and summer sessions. Zoom has been an important pedagogical tool during the pandemic, but it is not a replacement or a substitute for the in-person experience. In accordance with definitions and procedures in the FPPM, this document outlines further guidance for holding in-person classes while we still grapple with the challenges of the pandemic.

COURSE CREATION AND COURSE SCHEDULES

All course schedules originate at the department level and are approved at the college level. The published course schedule is available to students and faculty through myLongwood.

In-person courses, as well as other course modalities, are defined at the time the schedule is constructed and approved. The published course schedule should include all class times and locations. More specifically, in-person classes are listed in the published course schedule with the physical rooms and days and times designated. In general, undergraduate courses should follow the guiding principle of in-person learning stated above.

FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

If a course has a significant or regular online component (including but not exclusive to online and hybrid courses), details about that modality are part of the course approval process and should also be indicated in both the published course schedule and in the course syllabus. Additionally, a faculty member's department chair and dean must approve any shift from in-person to remote instruction on an extended or regular basis prior to that shift.

Faculty members are expected to meet all their scheduled classes and begin and end classes at the days, times, and in the rooms indicated in the schedule. According to the FPPM, 2021-2022 (Section II. L. 1., p. 45), "the published class schedule must be observed by faculty members except in those instances in which changes have been approved....Changes in the schedule can be approved only by the college deans or by the University registrar under the direction of the appropriate college dean."

Students in traditional in-person courses may be occasionally expected to attend functions (such as field trips, workshops, etc.), or work on projects outside of class time. In those circumstances, faculty may compensate for such unscheduled time by reassigning some regularly scheduled class times in accordance with credit hour policy (FPPM, Section II. K.).

ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS, PERSONAL EMERGENCIES, OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Faculty who expect to be absent from any of their classes should get permission from their department chair or dean (if you are the chair who is going to be absent) and provide information about how the class time will be covered. Emergency absences should be reported immediately to the department chair. In accordance with the University sick leave policy (FPPM, Section III. EE.), faculty members must report absences due to illness to their department chair and to Human Resources (FPPM, Section II. L. 2., p. 45).

SHORT-TERM ABSENCES DUE TO COVID-19

In cases of temporary absences from class due to Covid-19 (e.g., instructor isolation or quarantine; childcare/family quarantine, etc.) where the faculty member is not ill, the faculty member should consult with their chair regarding continuity of instruction. In such a case, a faculty member may provide continuation of instruction through synchronous remote means for a limited time with the approval of the department chair and dean.

FACULTY ACCOMMODATIONS DUE TO COVID-19

A faculty member who seeks a semester-long accommodation due to health concerns related to Covid-19 should inform their department chair and should apply for an accommodation through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) process administered by Human Resources (HR). This process requires some time to be resolved, and faculty seeking an accommodation should acquire the appropriate paperwork from their medical professional and contact HR as early as possible, at least three weeks prior to the end of fall classes for accommodations for the spring semester. Any accommodations are effective for one semester and will need to be renewed for any further semester.

In the event that a faculty member's health status changes during the semester, the ADA process should be initiated as soon as possible.

Once the semester begins, if a faculty member has a student(s) in their class(es) receiving a university-approved exemption from wearing a mask meeting general university requirements, a faculty member may seek an ADA accommodation for teaching.

While the ADA process is underway, the faculty member will work with their department chair and dean in delivering safe means of instruction.