

# Recommended Guidance to Address Short-Term Absences Spring 2022

The University will offer classes in-person as planned during the Spring 2022 semester. Existing University policies and procedures, such as the **Policy and Procedures for Non-Creditable Sick Leave for Faculty Members** and **Academic Regulations for Students' Absences**, should primarily be followed. However, the COVID-19 pandemic may create special circumstances in which instructors and/or students are unable to attend classes in-person (e.g., quarantine/isolation, illness, caregiving).

This document offers institutional guidance on how to be flexible in addressing short-term absences related to COVID-19.

## GUIDELINES

Instructors should do their best to fulfill the commitment of an in-person or blended course by providing highly engaging face-to-face experiences for their students. In special circumstances in which instructors and/or students are unable to attend classes in-person, we ask instructors to consult with their unit head on how to best proceed. Instead of altering the mode of delivery altogether, we encourage instructors, to the extent possible, to leverage the creativity and innovation that was harnessed in recent semesters to provide flexible and adaptive learning opportunities. Instructors should also develop contingency plans to partially or fully pivot to remote instruction should the Prince George's County Health Department and/or University alter its COVID-19 guidelines in ways that impact in-person instruction.

Recommended alternative strategies if the INSTRUCTOR needs to be absent for less than 2 weeks:

1. Ask a colleague or Teaching Assistant to cover 1 or more classes in person.

2. Shift to synchronous online presentations (e.g. 1-2 live class sessions over Zoom - maximum of 2 weeks). All synchronous course activities should maintain the published course schedule.
3. Shift to an emergency asynchronous remote plan for very short, distinct periods (1-week maximum).

Recommended alternative strategies if STUDENTS need to be absent for less than 2 weeks:

1. Teach in-person while also providing asynchronous, equivalent options (recordings) for off-site participation by students due to short-term absences.
2. Teach in-person and, if you are **pedagogically and technologically comfortable**, broadcast instruction (simulcast) by using Zoom in the **classroom** for students who are off-site.

## RESOURCES

- A list of digital resources organized **by course activity** (lecture, labs, and hands-on activities) or **by tools available in ELMS-Canvas** may help instructors to communicate, share content, and assess student learning.
- The **Undergraduate Catalog** has additional guidance for instructors related to student attendance and participation in course activities.
- The university has established specific procedures for **instructors** and **students** who require COVID-19 Related Disability Accommodations.
- The **Teaching and Learning Transformation Center** or instructional designers in your college can help support instructors with course design and teaching practices. The **DIT Learning Technology Design Team** can assist with questions about instructional technology. Classroom configuration, resources, and technical capabilities vary across campus. To request support or report issues, please reach out to **classrooms@umd.edu**.