

Faculty Best Practices Guide for COVID-19

**A how-to from the Provost's Office
for faculty to address common or
anticipated COVID-related scenarios**



BEST PRACTICES FACULTY GUIDE FOR COVID-19

Throughout Auburn University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the University has remained focused on the health and safety of our faculty, staff, and students. This commitment has never wavered, and it remains a guiding tenet as the University prepares to enact a carefully planned and measured campus reopening. As students return to campus, faculty will face new situations that come with COVID-19 and managing their classes and students. All members of the campus community should follow the protocols outlined for fall reentry outlined in the A Healthier U plan. The following tenets guide the development and use of this document:

1. This document has been developed to give faculty due diligence guidance and protocols to follow in a variety of COVID-19 classroom, teaching, and instructional situations.
2. This document is not intended to capture every possible situation that may occur; however, it reflects the most common scenarios that may be presented.
3. This document is also subject to revision, as new guidelines from Alabama Public Health and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) become available.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

In the event of a positive diagnosis or disclosure of any medical information, **any student's identity should only be disclosed internally to those who absolutely need to know, and all medical-related information must be kept confidential and separate from any academic records file.**

All members of the Auburn University community must consider both their own and each other's health and safety. Therefore, there are a few basic principles of prevention and self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms that are expected for all faculty, staff, and students coming to campus. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, all faculty, staff, and students must follow strict personal and area hygiene practices, as stated in CDC guidelines. Refer to the Risk Management and Safety COVID-19 Safety Awareness Course for more information.

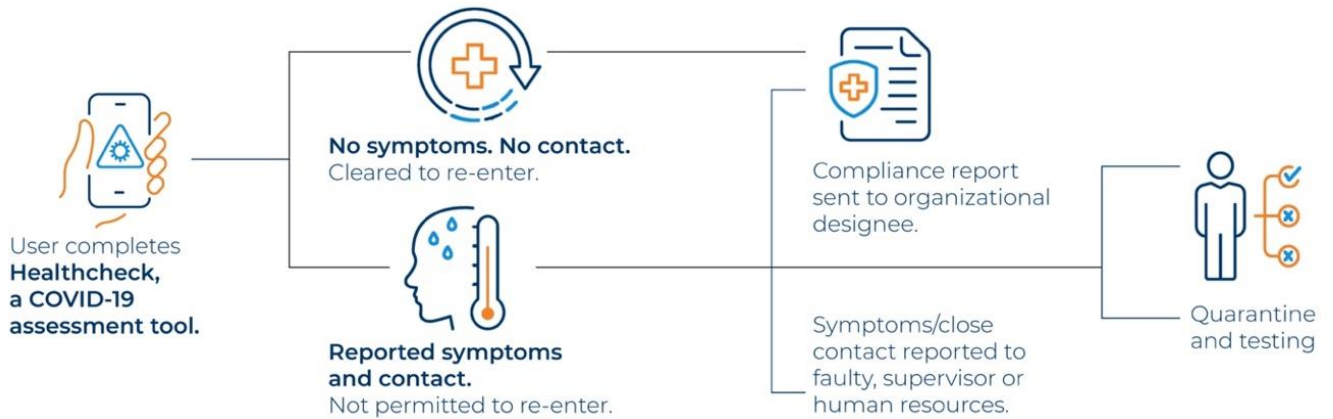
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND SCENARIOS

1. Should faculty encourage all students to self-screen before coming to campus?

Yes. All students coming to campus are required to complete the [GuideSafe™ Healthcheck](#) screener daily to determine if they (1) can travel to campus each day or (2) should contact a healthcare provider/remain at home. Students are expected to make responsible decisions following receipt of the Healthcheck pass. Faculty may ask students to show their pass each day.



REPORTING



After completing Healthcheck, students will be issued a pass for entry to campus. The pass is issued based on a proprietary risk algorithm. The pass will show if a student is clear to come to campus.

Students are instructed to monitor themselves for new or worsening symptoms, including the following:

- New loss of taste or smell
- Fever (>100.4°F)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose



This list does not include all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. It is strongly encouraged that faculty encourage students to complete their daily Healthcheck. For updated information on COVID-19 symptoms, refer to the [CDC website](#). ***It is important to note: Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus, although usually within 5 days.***

2. Will the university provide contact tracing?

Yes. In addition to the GuideSafe™ Healthcheck screener, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to download and participate in the Exposure Notification App. By voluntarily participating, the app facilitates anonymous self-reporting and automates alerts to those with previous proximity or close contact with a later positive COVID-19 person. The app is recommended, but not required.

Users of the app can anonymously share a positive COVID-19 test result—and be anonymously notified of potential previous close contact with someone who later reports a positive COVID-19 test result—without sharing anyone’s identity. The GuideSafe™ Exposure Notification App is a partnership of Apple, Google, the Alabama Department of Public Health.

The COVID Resource Center, in partnership with the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, will also be conducting contract tracing for students who report positive cases of COVID-19.

3. How should faculty advise students who (1) have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, (2) who have received a red pass, or (3) received a notification from the Exposure Notification or the AUMC/other health care provider?

Students who receive a message indicating (1) a possible exposure, (2) a red pass, or (3) who are instructed by a healthcare provider **should NOT report to class**. Students are encouraged to notify their instructor(s) or major professor (for Graduate Students), and the COVID Resource Center at (334) 844-6000 or covidresourcecenter@auburn.edu. Key steps for faculty:

- Students will be given instructions on how to proceed from their health care provider, whether personal or the AUMC.
- Students who use a personal health care provider other than the AUMC should follow those instructions but should be advised to **ALSO NOTIFY** the AUMC about their situation.

4. Are students who have missed class due to illness required to provide a doctor’s excuse upon their return to class?

The following modifications to the Policy on Class Attendance have been made for Fall Semester 2020:

While faculty may request documentation for absences for major examinations/projects/assignments and lab/clinical experiences, documentation requirements for other course expectations are suspended (as allowed in the [Academic Contingency Policy](#)). Faculty are encouraged to be as flexible as possible when working with students this semester, especially since student actions (e.g., isolation due to COVID-19 exposure) may be necessary but may lack formal documentation. Faculty are also encouraged to inform students of these expectations in writing at the beginning of the course.

5. Can faculty direct students to get tested for COVID-19?

No. Faculty may only *encourage* students to be tested if they report experiencing symptoms consistent for COVID-19 but *cannot explicitly direct* a student or student groups to (1) either seek or (2) not seek testing for COVID-19. The ultimate decision to seek testing is entirely up to the student and personal health care provider.

6. Can faculty direct students that fail to wear a face covering (1) to not enter or (2) to leave the classroom or instructional setting?

Yes. In addition to the [Order of the Alabama State Health Officer](#), every person is required to wear a face covering at all times when within six (6) feet of another person not of the same household, Auburn University requires face coverings in all campus buildings.

Classroom Expectations

- Faculty should first encourage students that come to class without a face covering to place one on before entering the classroom or instructional setting.
- If students continue to be non-compliant, faculty can ask the students to leave.
- It is important to remember that some students may be excused from wearing face coverings for medical or non-medical reasons. Failure to wear a face covering is not always a sign of willful disobedience to the Auburn University guidelines. Students seeking excuse from these guidelines may contact the Office of Accessibility to inquire about accommodations.

Sample Syllabi Language

Please see the Additional Sample Syllabus Language for Fall 2020 Courses for sample syllabi language.

7. If a student removes their face covering during class, can faculty inquire why?

Yes. Faculty should first evaluate the situation and determine if this is a medical emergency. People who feel faint or are having trouble breathing will naturally pull off their face covering. If indeed a medical emergency, this NOT a sign of willfulness.

- The first responsibility of the faculty member is to accurately assess the situation and assure the safety and wellbeing of the individual and the class.
- If it is determined that this situation is not a medical emergency, the faculty member should remind all students that Auburn University has designated face covering policy that includes faculty, staff and students in all buildings, classroom and instructional settings and those locations where social distancing rules (6 ft. separation) are not possible. If willfulness is determined, the faculty member should initiate procedures per the [Classroom Behavior Policy](#).
- In the event of a medical emergency please call 911.

8. Are faculty and staff required to wear face coverings when teaching?

Yes. Faculty and staff are required to wear face coverings at all times when teaching or as required by university policy. Face shields can be used by faculty who (1) may be required to verbally project loudly inside classrooms and (2) may have students with hearing and other impairments who rely on being able to see the instructors' mouth when speaking.

A face shield can be used while teaching; however, it should not replace a cloth face covering for use outside of class. Faculty are permitted to use a face shield in lieu of a cloth face covering while lecturing, as long as at least 10 feet of physical distancing can be maintained. Faculty should use a cloth face covering prior to lecturing, immediately following a lecture, and while moving around the

classroom interacting with students. Face shields should be used in combination with other safety measures, such as physical distancing, handwashing, and avoiding face touching.

9. Can faculty direct a student, who appears to be ill to leave the classroom?

Yes. A student who appears to be ill, but is not disruptive, can be directed to leave. Key steps for faculty:

- Remind students at the start of each class that if they are feeling ill, they are excused and can leave.

10. What should a faculty member do if a student passes out in class?

If a student passes out in class, the faculty member should immediately call 911 and stay with the student until emergency responders arrive and take control of the individual.

11. How should situations be handled, where social distancing requirements are not possible (e.g. clinical or laboratory settings)?

All of the same rules apply for face coverings and social distancing, when/where possible. For exceptions to these rules, please contact your unit head.

12. Will the university conduct on-campus temperature checks?

No. At this time, the university will not conduct daily temperature checks of students when they report to class on campus or other locations. All students are required to self-monitor, which includes taking their own temperature each day before coming to campus. Some higher risk environments (e.g., the AUMC, College of Veterinary Medicine, etc.) may choose to perform additional temperature screening upon entry for all individuals.

13. Will the university mandate testing (individual or sentinel) of Auburn University faculty and staff?

No.

14. What if a student does not want to come to class because they are afraid of being exposed to COVID-19 or are concerned about exposing a higher risk family member?

Students are expected to participate in class through the modality in which it is offered. If students are concerned about exposure to COVID-19, they should work with their faculty member to access the material and complete all assignments as required.

15. When can a student who tests positive for COVID-19 return to the classroom?

Students that tested positive for COVID-19 can be around others after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared and
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving* *Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation

Note: Most people do not require testing to decide when they can be around others; however, if a healthcare provider recommends testing, they will let you know when you can resume being around others based on your test results.

16. When can a symptomatic student who tests negative for COVID-19 return to the classroom?

A student who is symptomatic and was evaluated by a healthcare provider and test negative for COVID-19 can return to the classroom with the approval and/or clearance by the healthcare provider.

A student who is symptomatic and did not have an evaluation nor clearance by a healthcare provider cannot return to the classroom until the following three criteria are met:

- 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms AND
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
- there has been an improvement of symptoms of COVID-19

*Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.

17. When can a student who has had a close contact exposure with a known COVID-19 positive individual return to the classroom?

Anyone who has had close contact per the CDC's criteria with someone with COVID-19 should self-monitor and quarantine for 14 days after their last exposure to that person. If, however the student has had documented COVID-19 (positive test) and more than 10 days have passed since that test result, then the student does not need to self-quarantine and can attend classes.

18. When can students who were severely ill with COVID-19 or who have a severely weakened immune system (immunocompromised) due to a health condition or medication return to class?

Students who were severely ill with COVID-19 can return to class when cleared to do so by their healthcare provider. Students who are severely immunocompromised should consider themselves vulnerable to COVID-19 and should follow the guidelines of wearing face masks, physically distancing at least 6 feet or more from others, sanitizing hands frequently and wiping frequently touched surfaces. They should also consider not being in a classroom with others and utilize other modalities of learning that are being made available.