

For Instructors: Suggestions for responding to health-related and teaching-related issues in Fall 2021

This document responds to common questions and concerns raised by instructors about health-related and teaching-related issues for Fall 2021. This document will be updated over time as information becomes available.

Responding to Covid Exposures

#	Scenario	Possible Responses
1	A student or TA tells me they have Covid and there's potential that other students, TAs and/or staff may have been exposed in a lecture/lab. What do I do? What can I say to the class or other affected individuals?	<p>Any response to students in a class should be made through the Head of Department/School, rather than individual faculty members on a course-by-course basis. The response below would be in line with the current public health guidance and arrangements, but there is no obligation for us to notify students in the class. Close contacts of the person with Covid-19 will be notified by the Public Health team. People with Covid-19 may be asked by Public Health to notify the people within their potential contacts who are considered to be at low risk given the nature of the exposure/contact.</p> <p>If the student gives permission, the Head/Director may contact those in the class, without identifying the student/TA/any other person, saying something such as the following, as an example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I have been advised that a person infected with COVID-19 may have been present in your class XXXX123 on September 13-17, 2021 between 0900-1030 hrs. ● This potential exposure does not mean you were exposed, are infected with COVID-19, or that you will become infected. I am telling you this as a precaution. ● If you do not have symptoms and have not been contacted directly by Public Health, please self-monitor for the COVID-19 symptoms.* ● If you do not hear from Public Health, you likely have not had close contact and are considered to be at very low risk of having been

		<p>exposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● New illness related to this exposure may occur up to 14 days from the last date of exposure. Therefore, we recommend self-monitoring every day for signs of illness until Friday, October 01, 2021 .● If you are currently symptomatic or develop symptoms, please seek testing right away. The BCCDC has information on when and where to seek testing.● If public health determines that you may have had close contact, you will receive a call from Public Health to provide further instructions.● If you are identified as a close contact, you will be given specific direction to monitor or self-isolate for 14 days from the last date of possible exposure.● If you develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19, please seek testing as soon as possible.● If you're worried and don't have symptoms, you can get tested at the rapid antigen screening program in I.K. Barber Learning Centre. See https://www.housing.ubc.ca/rapidtest/ <p>Please remind students to do their daily health self-assessment. Include a statement about this on your syllabus (see separate document for syllabus statements template)</p> <p>*Key symptoms of COVID-19 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Fever or chills● Cough● Loss of sense of smell or taste● Difficulty breathing <p>Other symptoms may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sore throat● Loss of appetite● Extreme fatigue or tiredness● Headache● Body aches● Nausea or vomiting● Diarrhoea
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2	<p>If a student tests positive for Covid-19, will the instructors and the other students in the course be informed? How would they be informed?</p>	<p>Other students and the instructor(s) may be informed, by Public Health authority, if they are close contacts or if Public Health determines that a full class or learning group should be informed. See answer to #1.</p> <p>This website has the Return to Campus documents: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/studying-during-covid-19 And the link to the latest PDF (September 3rd) is here: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/covid19-return-to-campus-guidelines-web.pdf</p>
3	<p>If a student has Covid, can I ask the student for permission to notify the rest of the class?</p>	<p>If a student tells you they have tested positive for Covid, you may follow the points in Question 1 in this section.</p> <p>Note that notifications of close contacts are handled by Public Health. The outline of this procedure is on page 19 of the Post-Secondary Return to</p>

		<p>Campus Guidelines (Sept 3rd) at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/covid19-return-to-campus-guidelines-web.pdf</p>
4	<p>What happens if an instructor/supervisor finds out they may have been exposed to Covid?</p>	<p>Contact your local health authority and follow their guidance. You will probably be asked to use the BC Covid-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine next steps.</p> <p>This page is helpful to determine whether isolation or monitoring is the right approach: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation</p> <p>All positive cases and contact tracing are handled by public health authorities. For information from the Return to Campus guidelines, see Attachment 2 on p 19 of this doc (Sept 3rd): https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/covid19-return-to-campus-guidelines-web.pdf</p> <p>UBC information about how to respond if someone discloses they have Covid or have been instructed to self-isolate is here (including contact information): https://srs.ubc.ca/covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing/</p> <p>Sentence of interest: <i>Contact Safety and Risk Services at 604-822-2029 or email ready.ubc@ubc.ca and a safety expert will provide guidance on any immediate follow-up measures.</i> Please note that the response from ready.ubc may not be immediate depending on capacity.</p>
5	<p>If the instructor is exposed to Covid-19 and needs to self-isolate, what are the options for course instruction?</p>	<p>Follow the directions from Public Health, e.g. BC Covid-19 SElf-Assessment Tool: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation</p> <p>Normally, if vaccinated, you would self-monitor rather than isolate (as of 23 Aug, 2021) and can thus continue teaching in person.</p> <p>The instructor would inform their department head and determine the appropriate next steps through discussion, e.g. the course could move online or</p>

		<p>a substitute instructor or senior TA could teach the course.</p> <p>It is unlikely an entire course will need to be moved online for the entire term. This will happen on an individual course basis and in consultation with the department head.</p>
6	A TA or staff member tells me they have Covid. What do I do?	<p>If the TA may have exposed others in a class setting, follow guidance above in Question 1. Check that the staff member is following guidance from their health authority.</p> <p>Inform your Head. You or they will notify Lindi Frost or Mike Vizsolyi (for staff or student employees), or Mark Trowell (for faculty). The admin will manage/coordinate the public health response.</p> <p>UBC information about how to respond if someone discloses they have Covid or have been instructed to self-isolate (including contact information) is here: https://srs.ubc.ca/covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing/</p> <p>In reality you/Department admin would have to make an evaluation as to asking other members of staff or TA team (close contacts) to step away from course duties. Eg. if a TA works on Monday morning then Tuesday afternoon, you may not get productive feedback from public health officials before Tuesday to make a decision on replacing TAs/staff who are in supervisory roles.</p>

Responding to the mandatory mask mandate

#	Scenario	Possible Responses
1	Will instructors be required to wear masks while lecturing?	As per the Sept 1 BCCDC Public Health Guidance (http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Public_Health_Guidance_Campus.pdf) , instructors (and other presenters) are not required to wear masks when behind

		<p>a barrier or more than two metres away. However, we urge you to set a responsible example to students by masking if at all possible.</p> <p>Some faculty have tested out masks and mics and say that it works pretty well, especially N95s and some others listed below. (Cloth masks are the most muffled):</p> <p>Mask recommendations from your colleagues:</p> <p>https://layfieldmedical.com/product/95pfe-l3-respirator-ear-loop/</p> <p>https://shop.vitacore.ca/collections/frontpage/products/can99-respirator</p> <p>https://72hours.ca/collections/n95-mask/products/ecan95-particulate-respirator-mask-box-of-10-ready-first-aid</p> <p>https://72hours.ca/collections/n95-mask/products/n95-mask-particulate-respirator-pack-of-20-benehal</p> <p>The Public Health Office official order 2 September 2021 about face coverings (for whole province) is here: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-face-coverings.pdf</p>
2	<p>What do I do if during a lab/tutorial/lecture session, a small number of students show up without a mask?</p>	<p>Inform the student that masks are mandatory, as per the Public Health Officer's orders. Advise students where they might get a mask if they have forgotten/lost theirs (e.g. Advising Offices, Nest, Departmental Offices, Deans Offices etc.). If you have extra masks with you, hand them a mask.</p> <p>Ask the student if they happen to have a mask with them, and if they would please put it on for the safety and comfort of others in the class, and to comply with the PHO mandate. Emphasize collective responsibility. Refer to the syllabus and any other former discussions with the class about masks.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that some people may have health or other conditions that inhibits their ability to wear a mask. Guidance from BC's Human Rights Commissioner is clear: if a student identifies that they are unable to wear a mask based on a protected ground under BC's Human Rights Code (such as a disability or a medical condition) they should be accommodated to the fullest extent possible.</p>

		<p>Ahead of the start of classes, the Centre for Accessibility (CFA) is putting in place a centralised process for students who need to request an exemption to the mask mandate, on one of the medical grounds for exemption detailed in the PHO Order on Face Coverings (COVID-19). (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-face-coverings.pdf)</p> <p>In the spirit of making our classrooms both a safe and inclusive environment, it is recommended that faculty members take some time in first class meetings to set out expectations of the mask mandate, whilst acknowledging there may be valid medical circumstances for which an exemption is given. Students who are seeking such an accommodation should be directed to contact the Centre for Accessibility, (info.accessibility@ubc.ca) who will review the request in accordance with Policy LR7 (https://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/files/2019/02/policy73.pdf). After review, the student will be provided with a letter of accommodation to share with faculty members teaching courses in which they are registered. In the intervening time, faculty are asked to welcome these students into classes and ask them to sit at a distance from others.</p> <p>Work is also under way to create signage for teaching spaces that will remind students about the mask requirements, where they might obtain one if they have forgotten theirs, and what to do if they are unable to wear a mask.</p> <p>If a student is not seeking an accommodation and is maskless you should remind them of the mask mandate and advise where they might obtain a mask. In the public classroom environment, clear and consistent reminders of expectations coupled with peer pressure from other students will very likely help to either get the student concerned to leave or put on a mask. It is very unlikely that the situation will escalate to the point where it disrupts the class; if it does it should be treated as an instance of non-academic misconduct and dealt with accordingly. You also may ask them to leave. Presumably this situation is</p>
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		<p>unlikely to escalate to the need to call security.</p> <p>We have seen that students are very good about complying with Public Health orders in the classroom setting, for those who had some in-person instruction over the last year and through large scale orientation activities currently under way. We expect that students coming in this fall will continue to understand why and how they are to wear masks.</p> <p>Links: Mask Wearing Guidance from BC's Human Rights Commissioner https://bchumanrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/BCOHRC_Jul2021_Mask-Policy-Guidance_Stage-3-Update_FINAL.pdf</p> <p>Non-academic misconduct calendar entry: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,750,0</p>
3	<p>Students will want to eat and drink in class. The mask mandate says that students are allowed to remove their mask to eat and drink in appropriate areas. Is the classroom considered an appropriate area?</p> <p>Instructors may need a drink of something too. What is the guidance for this?</p>	<p>You may say in your syllabus - and tell the class - to please not eat in class. If people need to drink water/coffee/tea/etc, you can ask them to please keep their masks on between sips. Until further guidance is available, the same would go for the instructor.</p>
4	<p>If a student informs the instructor that they cannot wear a mask and they provide documentation to the instructor, what can we say to the other students that are commenting that they are uncomfortable?</p>	<p>You can remind the class that there are some people who cannot wear masks for various reasons (including things like anxiety, PTSD, etc). We do need to be accepting and inclusive of those individuals and maintain a respectful environment. It's true that this may be challenging.</p> <p>You may be in a classroom where the student without a mask can sit at a distance away from others.</p>
5	<p>What do we do if a student is refusing to wear a mask and does not have an</p>	<p>If a student refuses to comply, ask them to leave and to contact you later to discuss. Hopefully peer pressure would help either getting them to leave or put</p>

	exemption?	on a mask. Presumably this situation is unlikely to escalate to the need to call security.
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Responding to people showing symptoms or being sick

#	Scenario	Possible responses
1	A student is coughing a bunch in class and seems to be sick. Can we ask them to leave?	<p>Start with an educative approach; remind them that every student is required to do a Covid-19 self-assessment before they come to campus each day. Coming in sick is a violation of the student code of conduct and you can ask them to leave. If they feel they are experiencing viral-like symptoms they should leave the class.</p> <p>In a broader sense, the way we are responding to sick people is no different than our approaches pre-pandemic, however people certainly have a heightened sensitivity to it. Pre-pandemic, many students pre-covid would come to class or labs sick. We should do things to discourage this. For instance, set up flexible marking schemes, like not making clicker questions worth marks, or some type of scaling such that a student can miss (a reasonable) time and still get full marks.</p> <p>Just because someone has coughed or sneezed does not automatically mean they are sick. Discussion about chronic coughing that is not related to being sick should be discussed and these issues should be recognized. We should encourage students to come forward with these issues so you (i.e., the student and instructor only) can discuss them.</p>
2	<p>A student is frequently coughing in the classroom/lab, but they have told the instructor it is a non-contagious cough (asthma for example), but other students are uncomfortable.</p> <p>Can we remind students that there are</p>	Yes (see response above).

	examples of non-contagious cough and that they should not assume that the student is sick?	
3	If someone is sick or have symptoms, can we ask them if they have covid?	No. This is a breach of privacy. You can ask the student if they feel they meet the standards of the daily personal health assessment, and encourage them to complete the health assessment if they have not done so.
4	A student has shown up for a test/exam and is sick. What do I do?	<p>A student should hopefully never be put in this position. We should really try to make it clear to students that we will - as we always have - make concessions for illness. The current UBC policy is that self-declaration is enough for most cases: https://science.ubc.ca/students/advising/concession#types</p> <p>The simplest solution is to move the weight of the quiz/test to the final exam. Multiple quizzes/tests allow you to have a policy where you can drop the lowest quiz grade(s). This gives flexibility, but still allows students a chance to experience high-stakes assessment.</p> <p>For repeat/strange cases you can ask them to provide proof.</p> <p>You can also let them know that writing a quiz while sick will probably lead to worse performance. This is a good thing to emphasize on first day (that they'll likely do worse if they write sick)</p> <p>If they do come, ask them to leave. Mention that they are not in any condition to perform their best during the exam.</p>
5	My class is scheduled to give group presentations or complete group projects. A student emails me telling me they are sick and can't do the presentation/project. What should I do?	<p>These types of situations are an unfortunate part of teaching every year. You'll want to handle this fairly, and consistently with the past.</p> <p>Tell the student to stay home. Ask them if they have notified their group members. Provide concessions that allow the student to complete the assignments. An option is to have the group present, knowing that the part of the presentation will be missing. Tell these students that their grade will not be affected by this. Have the student who can't make it send you a video of their part of the presentation to assess.</p>

		If the student can't make it, move the weight of the assessment to other parts of the course. When circumstances like this happen, we have to be compassionate.
6	I understand that we are supposed to not come if we have symptoms from a very broad list of covid self-assessment. However, what do we do if waking up we feel somewhat tired, and maybe there is some headache, or a husky voice, but it feels likely to go away after a cup of coffee, and the lecture starts in two hours?	<p>If these are symptoms that are common to you and you know they will disappear, you are fine. For instance, some people have a chronic cough/throat clearing caused by post nasal drip. This would be good to disclose to your class.</p> <p>In the case that you actually feel sick, contacting your Department Head and then having your back-up person teach the class, or teaching the class online is the appropriate thing to do.</p>

Supporting students arriving late to in-person courses or who are sick

#	Scenario	Possible responses
1	I have received emails from the department telling me that some students in my class will be unable to make it to class by September 7th.	<p>Please reach out to these students and tell them what type of things you will do to support their learning. Remember, we often have students enter our classes at the add/drop deadline. However, in this case, we have let students know that we can support them until they get to campus, if they are arriving by Oct 12th. These measures are meant to be a stop-gap. Examples are</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect students with a buddy who is attending the course in person. 2. Provide materials online (Canvas) 3. Provide access to recordings (including last year's is OK) 4. Provide online office hours (which most people are planning anyway) 5. Make flexible assessment schemes, e.g. drop x of y, shift % to other assessments, do online assessment <p>Things that require more resources (through block grant)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Provide additional TA support 7. Provide online exams for those temporarily away (if low stakes and appropriate)

		<p>8. Stream live sessions synchronously through AV support 9. Have TAs running a zoom session synchronously in the classroom</p> <p>If course with online sections</p> <p>10. Move students temporarily or permanently to an online section.</p> <p>If students can't make it to class until late October it might be untenable for them to attend the class if they miss significant amounts.</p> <p>If students are in an in-person course and have completed quarantine (if required) they are expected to attend class by Oct 12 (Tuesday after Thanksgiving). Science Advising is reaching out to students expecting to arrive after this date to help them look at online/hybrid courses (only) in term 1. If they can't do this other arrangement will have to be made, including potentially withdrawing.</p>
2	How do we treat students who expect to arrive later in September, but then the period drags on through most (or all) of the term?	<p>This student should talk to advising and potentially get a late withdrawal. These types of cases would be handled one-on-one with the advising office. It's unfortunate, but we can't support these students properly without teaching a whole online version of the class.</p> <p>Students who will not be here for the start of term have received communication that instructors will let them know what supports will be available to help them keep up with the class until Oct 8th. Students are expected to be here by Oct 12th. Science Advising is contacting and working with all students who indicated a return date after Oct 12th.</p>
3	If we make resources (e.g. an on-line tutorial) available for a few distant students, then presumably we should also allow in-Vancouver students to use those same resources, but surely only up to a point - so how do we make sure we don't end up teaching half the class on-line after all?	<p>The resources we're supplying for these students, and for the students who get sick, can't replace the actual experience of going to class and taking part in the discussion and activities for extended periods of time. They're not expected to replace actually going to class.</p> <p>One perspective is that class time should add value for the students that a recording simply can't reproduce. It's easier said than done, but it is a standard to aim for.</p>

		It is, however, appropriate for students who come to class to also have access to the resources that are being provided to those who will arrive after the start of term.
4	A student is sick. How do I support them in class?	<p>The way we handle students who are sick has not changed. Make sure you tell the student not to come in and go over the concessions you will give this student so they can feel OK not coming to class.</p> <p>The number one resources are the buddy system, releasing class slides and notes, releasing old recordings. Make concessions for tests and assignments.</p>
5	An international student informs me that they are going to be unable to make it to Vancouver until much later in the term/next term and wants to discuss their options. What should I do?	Refer them to Science Advising. There is now a process to grant formal Leave of Absence for continuing undergraduate international students that is in alignment with the UBC Leave of Absence policy, and will not jeopardize certain immigration privileges with IRCC, including eligibility for a post-graduate work permit. All returning international students are being contacted (as of August 31) to inform them of this option, in case some are making decisions now.

Classroom management and design

#	Scenario	Possible responses.
1	Can I encourage people to pick a seat and use the same seat all term? Can I assign seats?	Yes. And there are examples of assigning seats (e.g. labs). A low-workload approach is to ask students to pick an area of the classroom and sit there each day.
2	Can I only offer Zoom office hours?	Yes. Make sure to communicate your plan clearly so students will feel comfortable in making use of office hours.
3	Can we just do audio recordings of lectures to supplement class slides?	Yes, you can make that choice. Recordings of any kind are not required.
4	A student approaches me to ask/demand	https://science.ubc.ca/students/blog/what-expect-your-science-courses

	that I record my in-person lectures because another class in the same/other department has recorded lectures. I don't want to record/comply but I feel a great deal of negative pressure to comply (teaching evals, Reddit posts etc.).	<p>Students have been informed, and you can re-inform them, that instructors aren't required to record lectures. Recordings are only one potential way to support students who are late arrivals or are sick. There are others. Let the students know what supports you will provide that you think are going to help them keep up and succeed. See Question 1 under "Supporting Students Arriving Late" for some ideas. If you have an active learning class, remind them that watching recordings of such a class is not helpful for their learning. Remind them that recordings are not a replacement for activities in class, which may include active learning, peer teaching, and socialization/community.</p> <p>Regarding the concern about negative evaluations, talk with your Head. Their job is to contextualize those evaluations.</p>
5	During a lab/tutorial session, or in class, a group of students start to behave in a manner that makes others in the class (including the TA) very uncomfortable.	<p>This is a scenario that is not specific to Covid, but may be related, if it involves, e.g. masks, in which case, see questions above. In this generalized case, one approach would be to ask the TA to immediately report this behaviour to the instructor in charge. In the very rare case where this persists and is causing a disruption to the class, the student(s) concerned are in breach of the Student Code of Conduct (https://students.ubc.ca/campus-life/student-code-conduct) and the non-academic misconduct policy. In such cases, you can ask the student(s) to leave the classroom. Presumably this situation is unlikely to escalate to the need to call security.</p>
6	Can I ask my class if they are all vaccinated?	<p>No. This is a breach of privacy. We cannot collect personal health data from our classes.</p> <p>Vaccination is required for students in residence, and for a variety of on-campus activities including dining, clubs, sports, NOT classrooms. This is by public health order.</p> <p>There will, however, be rapid testing required for all (students, faculty, staff) who are not vaccinated or who choose not to disclose their vaccination status. https://broadcastemail.ubc.ca/2021/08/26/ubc-implements-vaccine-declaration-and-rapid-testing-for-covid-19/ (details to come)</p>

7	<p>In general it's unclear to me how to balance the desire to get students to participate in class with the requirement that we discourage them from attending if they're sick. Essentially-free clicker marks are often used to encourage participation and penalise the less engaged students - do we just have less of that, or drop it altogether?</p>	<p>This is a hard balance.</p> <p>Consider whether or not the clicker marks are actually required in your class. There is a hope that for well constructed clicker questions and worksheets students see that value in them beyond just marks.</p> <p>Another question to consider is if it is worth trying to force students to come to class who only do it for marks, but would rather not be there. At some point, students have to take ownership of their own learning.</p>
8	<p>Most of my class has started attending my hybrid class remotely. Is it appropriate to tell the remaining three students we're going online?</p>	<p>If your class was planned and scheduled in "hybrid" mode and that's what students signed up for, the expectation is that it will continue to be offered in "hybrid" mode.</p>
9	<p>Term has begun, and due to recent public health restrictions my classroom can no longer seat the whole class. Am I expected to move the section (or even whole course) to a formal hybrid setting, or even entirely online? b) do the same, but for the whole course?</p>	<p>If physical distancing in post-secondary settings becomes mandated by the PHO, then UBC's classrooms cannot accommodate very many classes. There would be further direction if this scenario comes to pass.</p>
10	<p>It's the night before my 120 student in-person midterm. 17 students are suddenly feeling ill and asking "could we please write the test online"?</p>	<p>No. If a student is ill, they should not be writing an exam. Do the usual thing you would do when students are ill for a midterm. This might be to hold a makeup midterm later, or it might be moving the weight to other assessments, or...whatever it is that you would normally do.</p>
11	<p>It's the night before my 120 student in-person final exam. 37 students are suddenly "feeling ill" and "could we please</p>	<p>No. If a student is ill for a final, they should not attend nor write the exam. Tell them the following:</p>

	write the test online?	If you are sick on a final exam day , do not attend the exam. You must apply for deferred standing (an academic concession) through Science Advising no later than 48 hours after the missed final exam/assignment. Students who are granted deferred standing write the final exam/assignment at a later date. Learn more and find the application online: https://science.ubc.ca/students/advising/concession
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