

Dear Faculty,

The university has been taking extra steps to try to minimize the impact of flu and other contagious diseases this academic year. This includes efforts to raise awareness of how to prevent the spread of disease, the modification of cleaning schedules and practices, and ongoing dialogue with various entities throughout the City to ensure an appropriate response, if necessary.

The new challenges presented by the H1N1 influenza virus may require some change in both how you deal with student absenteeism (due to illness) and how you prepare to have your class move forward in your absence should you become ill. The latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that infection rates could be twice as high as normal. While we do not know the magnitude of the challenges we may face, we will do our best to keep you informed and to provide you with updates as the flu season progresses.

In the next few days, we will be sending out a message to both students and parents. The entire message to students is attached to this email. One bullet point in that message reads:

Alert your professors through email or by telephone if you have the flu or are showing signs of the flu. You should not come to class ill, since your attendance will risk further spread of the virus. Communicate with your professors the seriousness of your illness and discuss ways you can submit work and make up any missed work without attending class.

Given this message, we ask you to bear in mind that during this unusual time, modifications may have to be made to the structure of your syllabi and associated course expectations in order to accommodate illness. Consequently, we suggest that you consider implementing the following:

1. Provide access to course material electronically – lecture notes, handouts, assignments, etc – to ill students (who need to be self-isolated), and establish a clear web-based presence. This may involve taking extra steps to make students aware of where to find your contact information.
2. Facilitate distribution of student contact information (email addresses, cell phone numbers) to enable students to share class notes and daily information with ill students.

We are asking that anyone who is ill – faculty, staff or student – to avoid coming to campus. The CDC is strongly recommending *self-isolation* to avoid the spread of the disease. The illness is such that it may force you to miss several class periods; therefore, please create a plan for class management in your absence and discuss or share that plan with your department chair. This plan may include the use of colleagues or alternative teaching methods and class activities.

We will do our best to keep you abreast of developments via emails and web postings. More information about H1N1 can be found on the student health clinic website at www.suu.edu/ss/studenthealth or by clicking on the link on the SUU homepage.

In advance, thank you for your cooperation as we embark on what may prove to be a very interesting fall semester.

Sincerely,

Brad Cook
Provost