AY 2021–22 ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION:
GUIDANCE FOR COLLEGES, SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENTS, AND PROGRAMS
FROM THE ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Volume 2, Edition 1: August 11, 2021

Topics: Fall 2021 COVID-Related Issues; Planning for Spring 2022; Teaching and Instructional Technology Support

Due Dates for Chairs/Directors and Department Schedulers: None in This Edition

Deans, chairs and directors: please email this entire edition of guidance to your faculty, your graduate students with teaching appointments, and your academic support staff

CONTENTS

What's in this edition of guidance, and what's coming next

This edition of guidance focuses on fall 2021 instruction issues related to COVID-19; planning the spring 2022 class schedule and class assignments; and resource updates from the Center for Teaching & Learning and the Office of Information Technology. The next edition of guidance will provide COVID-19-related updates as needed, but will also focus on other new developments in policies, procedures, and resources related to teaching and learning. Deans, chairs, and directors: if you have suggestions for guidance topics, please contact Katherine Eggert, senior vice provost for academic planning and assessment.

Instruction modes, office hours, advising modes, and graduate/honors defenses and qualifying exams

Fall 2021 class instruction modes

For the fall semester, an overwhelming majority of our classes are scheduled to be delivered in person. An inventory at the end of July indicated that:
- 79% of classes are scheduled to be delivered in person
- 4% of classes are scheduled as hybrid in person
- 17% of classes are scheduled as online or remote

Changing the instruction mode of a class

The university is committed to teaching classes in the instruction mode listed when student registration began. Instructors may not independently change the instruction mode of their classes.
Changes in class instruction mode must always be approved at the department/program/college level, and during the pandemic changes must also be approved by the provost's office. Changes based only on the instructor's preference will not be approved.

Campus leadership understands that many instructors are worried about classroom transmission of COVID-19 because of the delta variant. Instructors should keep in mind that we are following the guidance of our expert scientific team in preparing the classrooms for use this fall. In addition to our

vaccination requirement and the new masking requirements, we are continuing the cleaning and ventilation measures we took last year that made our classrooms among the safest public spaces to be. Faculty, staff, researchers, graduate student teachers and student employees who need work-related accommodations or leave because of COVID-19-related issues should consult the Human Resources webpage and follow up with Human Resources as needed.

Instructor office hours
Faculty and graduate students who are instructors of record may hold office hours in person or remotely, at their discretion. Office hour locations/modes for TAs and others who are working under the supervision of an instructor of record should be planned in concert with the instructor of record, so that everyone engaged in teaching the class is aware of office hour plans. Please make the mode/location of office hours clear in the class syllabus.

Undergraduate advising
Academic advising and coaching support for undergraduate students will be offered both in person and via Zoom throughout the fall 2021 semester, offering students flexibility in choosing the modality that suits their needs. Advising offices will be open and staff will be on campus on a rotating basis. Weekly open hours for advising (Mondays 1:00-3:00 p.m.) will continue in a primarily remote capacity, and some advising programs will operate in a primarily remote capacity during the first few weeks of the semester in order to accommodate increased demand.

Graduate advising
Academic advising and support for graduate students are by nature very decentralized, with much advising provided by faculty and staff in departments or graduate programs. Modes of advising may vary by unit, and students should communicate directly with their faculty advisor and graduate program to determine whether advising should happen remotely or in person. Advising must comply with any campus and public health requirements in effect at the time. Staff in the Graduate School will continue to provide assistance, support, and resources in a hybrid manner.

Qualifying/preliminary/comprehensive exams and dissertation/thesis defenses
Qualifying/preliminary/comprehensive examinations and final exam/thesis defenses for graduate or honors students are teaching occasions, even if they are not credit bearing, and they are subject to the campus strictures on in-person teaching in effect at the time taken. During times that the university allows in-person instruction, including fall 2021, students can take an examination or defense in person. Any requirements of the university or public health orders at the time of the exam must be observed, including the indoor masking requirement in effect as of August 13.

Remote or hybrid examinations/defenses are also allowed. It is recommended that each examination be thoughtfully considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the circumstances affecting both the student and each committee member.

COVID-19 mitigation in the classroom and in instructor/advisor offices

Masking requirement

As announced to the campus on August 10, CU Boulder will return to requiring masks in public indoor spaces regardless of vaccination status as of Aug. 13, 2021. This requirement is a temporary precaution during the delta surge to supplement CU Boulder's COVID-19 vaccine requirement by providing a multi-layered approach to keep our community safe. The campus will continue to work closely with Boulder County Public Health as it considers public health requirements in the Boulder community. If Boulder County Public Health adopts any requirements or modifies the requirements described below, we will immediately inform you. See the campus announcement for complete requirements and details.

Requirements and details relevant to classroom instruction, advising, and office hours include:

- All individuals must wear a face covering at CU Boulder when engaged in classroom instruction, laboratory work, academic advising or other activities in any publicly accessible indoor space on campus.
- Activities performed in indoor spaces that are not publicly accessible (e.g., residence halls, private offices, controlled-access facilities, etc.) are not subject to this requirement, although public health officials strongly recommend all unvaccinated persons wear a face covering in both public and non-public indoor spaces whenever possible.
- Anyone who feels more comfortable wearing a mask is encouraged to do so even in settings where masks are not required.

Exceptions relevant to classroom instruction, advising, and office hours include:

- Children under age 2 and individuals who cannot medically tolerate a face covering are exempt from this requirement. ***Students to whom this medical exemption applies are required to get an accommodation authorization through Disability Services.***
- Individuals performing any of the following activities are exempt from the campus indoor face covering requirement while such activity is being performed:
    - Those who are hearing-impaired or otherwise disabled or who are communicating with someone who is hearing-impaired or otherwise disabled and where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication. ***Students to whom this exemption applies are required to get an accommodation authorization through Disability Services.***
    - Vaccinated instructional faculty who are engaged in an indoor instructional activity and are separated by at least 6 feet from the nearest person. ***Instructional faculty do not have to obtain a formal exemption or permission for this exception.***
    - Individuals who are engaged in an instructional activity or laboratory work under circumstances where wearing a face covering would significantly impede their ability to effectively perform the activity or work, such as playing a musical instrument, vocal performance or where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication (e.g., foreign language instruction). ***CU Boulder's Public Health Office will be responsible for determining which activities and work, as well as the circumstances under which they may be performed, are permitted under this exception. The Public Health Office will communicate on the exemption process later this week. Instructors are welcome to***

consult with the Public Health Office on the circumstances of their class to determine when students should wear masks and when they may be unmasked.

Eating and drinking in the classroom
Because of masking requirements, eating and drinking in the classroom are effectively not permitted.

Classroom cleaning and ventilation
Enhanced classroom cleaning protocols remain in place for the fall semester, including supplying classrooms with disinfectant wipes.

The campus will continue with the same mitigation measures for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) as employed in all buildings during the 2020–21 academic year to maximize airflow, filtration and outdoor air. These include:

- Our building heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems have been assessed and are being optimized to provide maximum airflow.
- The many different types of building ventilation systems on campus have been configured to maximize the use of outdoor (fresh) air where possible.
- Building systems are operating for extended hours to keep air flowing rather than the typical protocol of setting back or turning the systems off during nights and weekends.
- For buildings that do require air recirculation due to system limitations, HVAC systems have been upgraded to MERV 13 filters, which are similar in performance to HEPA filters.

Masks and ventilation in offices
Everyone who uses or visits a shared office space (including cubicles, huddle spaces, etc.) will need to be masked. Faculty members and advisors who have private offices may wear masks and may request that visitors wear masks, including posting signage with that request if desired.

Unfortunately, our Infrastructure team doesn't have the capacity to check individual faculty or advisor offices for ventilation. Faculty and advisors should not ask Facilities Operations and Services to conduct ventilation checks of their offices. However, mitigation measures for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) are continuing in all buildings, as described in the section on "Classroom cleaning and ventilation." For equipment or systems that are not functioning properly, contact the Operations Control Center at 303-492-5522 to log a service request.

Buff Pass
The daily completion of the Buff Pass form is now optional for faculty, staff and students. It may be used to monitor one's own COVID-19 symptoms and learn about resources.

Students who are ill or quarantined; students with disabilities; student requests for remote instruction

Attendance policies and medical absences
Student illness or quarantine due to COVID-19 should be treated the same as any other student absence for medical reasons. The instructor should give students make-up work or assignment extensions as per

their usual policy for students who are ill. The instructor of an in-person class is not required to teach the class remotely to students who are absent due to illness or quarantine. However, an instructor may choose to do so if they wish.

Please note that student health services on campus—Wardenburg Health Center, Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS), and Student Support and Case Management (SSCM)—no longer provide appointment verifications, also known as "doctor's notes," to students. Requiring doctor's notes or puts a strain on campus medical services and forces students to make unnecessary trips to the doctor. Similarly, the CU Boulder Public Health Office does not provide students with verifications of quarantine. Rather than requiring doctor's notes or quarantine verification, instructors are encouraged to develop attendance policies that do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences, and that build in enough flexibility for students who must miss several classes due to quarantine or illness.

Next steps if a student discloses they have COVID-19
If a student discloses to an instructor that they are ill (or tested positive) with COVID-19, the instructor should contact the CU Boulder Public Health Office to determine any next steps required. The instructor should *not* announce to the class that the student (or "someone in the class") has COVID-19, as this is either directly or iindirectly sharing a student's private health information with the class.

Requests for instructional accommodation via remote instruction: students with disabilities and others
Students cannot request that an in-person course be taught to them remotely for reasons other than a documented disability that would require such an accommodation. Remote location, commuting time, scheduling issues and vaccination status are not valid reasons for requesting an accommodation. Students who require an accommodation based on a documented disability must receive approval from the Office of Disability Services. If approval is granted, Disability Services will contact the course instructor to determine if the accommodation will fundamentally alter their course and whether necessary technology support is in place.

Syllabus statements
The Office of Undergraduate Education will shortly distribute the fall 2021 required syllabus statements to all fall 2021 instructors, including this updated syllabus statement regarding COVID-19:

> As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements and all public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information, see the policy on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct. If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please follow the steps in the "Accommodation for Disabilities" statement on this syllabus.

> As of Aug. 13, 2021, CU Boulder has returned to requiring masks in classrooms and laboratories regardless of vaccination status. This requirement is a temporary precaution during the delta surge to supplement CU Boulder's COVID-19 vaccine requirement. Exemptions include

individuals who cannot medically tolerate a face covering, as well as those who are hearing-impaired or otherwise disabled or who are communicating with someone who is hearing-impaired or otherwise disabled and where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication. If you qualify for a mask-related accommodation, please follow the steps in the "Accommodation for Disabilities" statement on this syllabus. In addition, vaccinated instructional faculty who are engaged in an indoor instructional activity and are separated by at least 6 feet from the nearest person are exempt from wearing masks if they so choose.

{Faculty: add if applicable:}*This class has also obtained a mask exemption from the CU Boulder Public Health Office for times where wearing a face covering would significantly impede students' ability to effectively perform class activities. In this class, students do not need to wear masks while* **{add the relevant activity/activities, such as playing a wind instrument, singing, or speaking during foreign language instruction}.**

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home. In this class, if you are sick or quarantined, **{Faculty: insert your procedure here for students to alert you about absence due to illness or quarantine. Because of FERPA student privacy laws, do not require students to state the nature of their illness when alerting you. Do not require "doctor's notes" for classes missed due to illness; campus health services no longer provide "doctor's notes" or appointment verifications.}**

Instructor illness or quarantine

This academic year, the campus has moved to treating instructor illness or quarantine due to COVID-19 in the same way as any other illness or short-term absence from the classroom. These situations will be handled on the level of the academic unit. An instructor who is ill or needs to quarantine should work with their chair, director, or dean on appropriate measures depending on the situation. (TAs should work with the instructor of record for the class.) Those measures might include teaching an in-person class remotely on a short-term basis, finding a substitute instructor, etc.

October 29 deadline for pass/fail, dropping a class or grade replacement

All normal college, school, department and program restrictions on pass/fail credits and courses are in place this year. The deadline for students to declare a class pass/fail (or to change a pass/fail designation to a grade) is the end of the tenth week of classes (prorated for shorter-term classes). This is the same deadline for dropping a class, or requesting a class be used for grade replacement. For the fall semester, that deadline is October 29 for regular-term courses. *For undergraduate students especially, it's important that students know how they're doing in your class before this deadline, so they can make informed decisions about pass/fail, dropping a class, or requesting grade replacement. Please make sure you've assigned and graded significant assignments by this point.*

Planning fall 2021 final exams

Please note that this information does not apply to the Colorado Law, which has its own final exam calendar and reading days. Law students and faculty should check the academic calendar on the Colorado Law website.

All classes

- All classes must follow the campus Final Exam Policy exam scheduling provisions:

  o For courses in sessions of ten weeks or longer, no examinations may be given during the week of classes preceding the start of the campus's final examination period; however, assignments listed in the syllabus such as papers, lab practicums, presentations, portfolios and projects may be due during that week.
  o Class sessions or graded assignments of any kind, including papers, lab practicums, presentations, portfolios and projects, may not take place or be due on a day designated in the academic calendar as a Reading Day. For fall 2021, Friday, Dec. 10 is designated as a Reading Day.
  o When students have three or more final examinations on the same day, they are entitled to arrange an alternative examination time for the last exam or exams scheduled on that day. When students have two final examinations scheduled to meet at the same time, they are entitled to arrange an alternative examination time for the course that meets later in the week during the term or, if the two courses meet on the same day during the term, the course that meets later in the day.

In-person classes

- Final exams for all in-person classes should be administered in person during the designated time for that class during the final exam period (December 11–15).

Remote (synchronous) classes

- Final exams for all remote (synchronous) classes must be given remotely. They should be administered one of two ways:
  1. During the designated time for that class during the final exam period (December 11–15). Be prepared to accommodate students who have computer or connectivity problems during that time slot.
  2. Within a time window of at least 24 hours, as long as that time window (a) includes the entirety of the designated final exam time for that class and (2) begins and ends within the final exam period (December 11–15).
- The class syllabus must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

Online (asynchronous) classes

- Final exams for completely online (asynchronous) classes should be offered over a time window, inclusive of start and completion times, of at least 48 hours. The window allows students to fit the exam for an asynchronous class into the rest of their exam schedule.

- Final exams for online (asynchronous) classes must be administered during the <u>final exam period (December 11-15)</u>. They may be offered at any time during that period, as long as the administration time window of at least 48 hours begins and ends within that final exam period.
- An exception to the above two bullet points: some online classes are included on the <u>common exam schedule</u> for exams to be given at a specific time during the final exam period. For those teaching one of these courses, please communicate your expectations clearly to your students about whether their exam will be given during the established common exam time.
- The class syllabus must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

Hybrid classes

- Final exams for hybrid classes may use the guidelines for either of their instruction modes, as specified above. For example, a hybrid in-person/remote class may follow the guidelines for either in-person classes or remote classes.
- The class syllabus must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

International student concerns

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) addresses international student concerns related to COVID-19, including visas, vaccinations and travel, on its <u>web site</u>. Faculty and students with individual concerns should <u>contact ISSS</u>.

Senior and community auditors

The <u>Senior Auditors</u> and <u>Community Auditors</u> programs return to pre-pandemic operations in fall 2021, after being suspended for AY 2020-2021. Only in-person and hybrid in-person classes are eligible for auditing—remote or online classes are not eligible. All other pre-pandemic course restrictions on auditing also apply. Auditors, like all students, must adhere to the CU Boulder vaccination requirement and must follow all other requirements of the university or public health orders related to COVID-19.

Event planning

With regard to events, CU Boulder continues to follow state and county requirements. All previously planned events are currently able to proceed as planned for fall. There are no local capacity restrictions on events. If there are any changes, the campus community will be notified.

As departments plan social, networking and professional development activities for students and faculty for the start of fall 2021, they should keep in mind that some people may not be able to participate in person due to compromised immune systems, international status (and thus different vaccine access at the beginning of the semester), etc. Hybrid options are encouraged in order to reduce inequities in accessing such opportunities.

Planning the spring 2022 class schedule

Classroom capacities and standard meeting patterns

The assumptions for spring 2022 class scheduling are as follows, though changes will be made if public health conditions require them:

- Classrooms will be at pre-COVID capacities, including large lecture classrooms. The classroom capacity list is posted on the Office of the Registrar website and is updated frequently.
- Passing periods have been standardized to 15 minutes every day, Monday through Friday. This change is permanent and responds to longstanding complaints from students and faculty about getting from one class to the next during the pre-pandemic 10-minute MWF passing period. Find the spring 2022 standard meeting patterns for Main and East Campus on the Office of the Registrar website.
- Departments should continue to plan to use the entire teaching day and week to schedule classes, as they did in AY 2020–21. This will now be standard practice, as it fully and equitably utilizes the breadth of classrooms and teaching times for all departments and maximizes students' opportunity to choose classes whose meeting time doesn't conflict. Departments submitting schedules that do not follow this principle will have their scheduling requests returned for a re-do.
- Due to potential shifts in public health conditions, departmentally scheduled classrooms will remain *departmentally prioritized classrooms* for AY 2021–22. Academic Scheduling reserves the right to schedule classes in those rooms if needed after departments have scheduled their own classes.

Instruction modes and class assignments

For spring 2022, departments and programs should plan to offer most classes in person (with the exception of online degree programs). The baseline assumption is that any faculty member who is teaching in spring 2022 will be available to teach in person, unless their position is explicitly devoted in full or in part to remote teaching.

We will continue to use normal leave and accommodation practices in spring 2022. All employees (including faculty, staff, graduate students, researchers, and student employees) who need work-related accommodations or leave because of COVID-19-related issues should consult with Human Resources.

Please use the following principles in planning spring 2022 instruction modes and class assignments:

- Departments and programs should weigh demand for remote and online classes and may choose to offer a selection of sections remotely or online. The campus will not set any target percentages of in-person courses for each department, program, college or school. Departments and deans will define appropriate course instruction modes in concert with faculty and other instructional personnel.
- ***Instructor preference should not determine a class's instruction mode. Each class's instruction mode should be determined according to college/school and department/program priorities, based on pedagogical reasons and on student needs.*** For example, priorities for remote/online instruction might include one or a few sections of a course that has multiple sections, where

there is student demand, where the course is crucial for students to make progress toward their degrees, and where the course can be taught effectively remotely or online.

- All instructional personnel should be treated equitably in assigning them to classes/sections in various instruction modes. Please work with your graduate student teachers (TAs, GPTIs) the same way you do with your tenure-track faculty, instructor-track faculty and lecturers.
- It is reasonable to assess evidence of an instructor's effectiveness at remote/online teaching (or willingness to participate in training in effective remote/online pedagogy) before assigning someone remote/online teaching. If you're a department or program chair/director and need help with this task, please consult your dean and/or work with the Center for Teaching & Learning for resources to assess effectiveness with teaching remote/online.
- Some students may want to sign up for solely remote or online courses. However, students (except for those in online programs) cannot expect that every course they might want to take will be offered in an online or remote mode, and departments and programs are not obliged to make that possible.

Support from the Center for Teaching & Learning

During the week of August 9, the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) is hosting an Equitable Teaching Conference via Zoom to help all instructors prepare for fall semester with a focus on inclusive practices. The CTL's annual Fall Intensive will be held remotely via Zoom on August 18–20. Some sessions of this 3-day event are designed specifically for graduate student instructors, but many are applicable to any educator new to CU, such as the use of iClickers and Canvas, Honor Code and Cheating, Universal Design and more. All are welcome to all of these events.

This fall semester, the CTL will host over 100 events on various themes, such as assessment, innovative teaching, teaching well with technology, and wellness. In addition, we are launching two micro-credential programs, on Just & Equitable Teaching and Teaching International Students. All educators and staff are welcome to participate.

The CTL offers individualized, confidential consultations free of charge to all educators on the CU Boulder campus. CTL staff members can consult on specific aspects of your teaching or hold a general conversation. We likewise offer consultations to help you prepare for remote, hybrid, or flexible teaching, or returning to the in-person classroom. When needed, our staff can quickly connect you to appropriate campus support and resources. Contact us at CTL@colorado.edu.

Assistance with technology for remote instruction and hybrid work environments

Request a fall 2021 Technology Copilot

OIT is continuing with the Technology Copilot program for the fall 2021 semester. The Technology Copilots program was established to provide students with a more positive and seamless learning experience by enhancing the classroom presence of remote students in hybrid and fully online classes. Technology Copilots help instructors set up Zoom before class begins and assist with Zoom during class. They engage with, and represent, remote students in class activities like discussions, questions and

breakout sessions. They also help the instructor notice and report technical difficulties, and they advise the instructor on how to share types of content (music, video, equations, etc.) with both in-person and remote students simultaneously. This partnership allows the instructor to focus on teaching. Learn more about the program and how to request a Technology Copilot or Technology Copilot training for your teaching assistant or learning assistant.

Training opportunities for using academic instruction technology
Have questions about using Canvas, administering exams online or other technology questions? OIT offers a wide selection of on-demand or real-time training sessions for campus-supported teaching technologies like iClicker Cloud, remote-capable classrooms, Zoom and much more. You can also tap into the expertise of OIT's Learning Technology Consultants to dive into a specific problem, question or solution through one-on-one consultations.

Guidance for working with colleagues and staff remotely
As CU Boulder adjusts to a new hybrid working environment, many departments and individuals on our campus need resources and best practice recommendations for leveraging technology, utilizing tips and tricks that make hybrid work easier. OIT has worked with departments on campus to learn what issues they've faced while working remotely, and we've put together Hybrid Work Recommendations so that you can find solutions that work for you and your colleagues. Please return to this guide as necessary to answer questions and find resources for working in a hybrid environment.

Past guidance editions, forthcoming editions, questions and requests
Past and current editions of Academic Instruction Implementation guidance and their supporting materials are available on the Academic Affairs website.

New editions of Academic Instruction Implementation guidance will be published in AY 2021–22 as needed to guide faculty, staff and students in any necessary changes to current instruction and in planning for future academic terms.

Please continue to send questions, requests for clarification and requests for further guidance. Your communications are welcome and help shape decisions about instruction and instructional support and recommendations to campus leadership. Individual faculty and other instructional personnel should direct questions to their chairs and directors. Deans, chairs, directors and school/college administrators should send all queries and requests to Katherine Eggert, senior vice provost for academic planning and assessment.