

**Instructor & Academic Support Staff FAQs – COVID-19 Protocols
Fall 2021**

1. When compared with academic year 2020-2021, how will campus operations change at UW-Milwaukee campuses for Fall 2021?

UWM plans to safely transition to operations and campus activities that closely resemble those prior to the start of the pandemic. Approximately 70 percent of sections will have some in-person component, classroom capacities generally will return to fall 2019 levels, and campus social activities and operations will move toward pre-pandemic normalcy. While campus will look and operate more like it did before the beginning of the pandemic, UWM has developed safety protocols and monitoring activities that will help ensure campus safety and flexibility.

As detailed in [UWM's Interim Covid-Related Health and Safety Rules](#), regardless of vaccination status, all individuals visiting UWM facilities are required to wear face coverings while indoors. This mask mandate applies to all vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. In addition, all unvaccinated individuals coming to campus regularly (for as little as an hour once per week) are required to test weekly for COVID-19. The weekly testing mandate applies to unvaccinated students and staff. (See below for additional testing details.)

UWM follows UW System policy and state and local health department guidelines. Specifics for UWM's operations are detailed in the following FAQs. All guidance is subject to change given local health conditions.

2. Are masks required on campus and in classrooms?

Yes. UWM's updated [Interim Covid-Related Health and Safety Rules](#) require that all individuals wear face coverings when indoors at a UWM facility. UWM may recommend face coverings for some large outdoor gatherings.

3. Are COVID-19 vaccines required for UWM students and staff?

No. Vaccines are not required of students or staff who are on campus or participating in campus activities. Thus, one cannot require students to vaccinate for specific courses or activities, a field trip or some other activity off campus. If a field trip site requires vaccination to enter, then an instructor should work with the site potentially to relax this restriction during the field trip or identify an alternate activity so that we do not deprive some students of educational opportunities based on vaccination status. Certain field placements, for example, in nursing and education, may be exceptions to this rule if the placement site requires vaccinations.

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4. Will there be mandatory COVID-19 testing on UWM campuses this fall?

Yes. As detailed in [UWM's Interim Covid-Related Health and Safety Rules](#), unvaccinated students and staff who are not fully online/remote are required to test weekly for COVID-19. It is highly recommended that those requiring weekly testing utilize the free testing available on each UWM campus. UWM will assume all students and staff are unvaccinated and required to test weekly unless they have submitted proof of vaccination or another exemption to the [Testing Exemption Form](#).

5. Will there be social distancing in classrooms or in other areas on campus?

UWM eliminated social distancing requirements for Fall 2021. Some individuals may feel more comfortable maintaining some physical distance and are encouraged to do so if feasible and desired.

In most cases, classrooms and event facilities will operate at normal, pre-pandemic capacity levels. Apart from vaccination, universal masking is the best protection against catching and transmitting COVID-19.

Instructors may want to keep seating charts (or some alternative) for their classes or ask students to consistently sit in the same seats each class and meet their neighbors. Keeping a seating chart or knowing your classroom neighbors may aid in contact tracing in case there is a positive case.

6. Can I ask my students whether they have been vaccinated?

A student's vaccination history is private medical information and should not be requested since vaccination is not required for UWM classes or activities.

7. Who do I contact if I'm interested in having Plexiglass installed in my office, classroom, or work space?

The two most important factors in preventing COVID-19 infection and transmission are vaccination and mask wearing. Plexiglass has not proven as effective as first thought during the early stages of the coronavirus. And, Plexiglass barriers may reduce airflow and thus restrict ventilation in indoor environments. UWM does not plan to install new Plexiglass barriers except in extenuating circumstances or environments. If you think your space requires a Plexiglass barrier to maintain safe interactions, please contact your supervisor to discuss your work space needs prior to [submitting a PPE request](#).

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8. What is UWM doing to make sure students (and staff) comply with the testing mandate?

Like last Spring, UWM will be tracking compliance for those unvaccinated individuals required to test weekly. UWM will assume that all students enrolled in courses with some in-person component and all students in residence halls (regardless of their course schedule) are required to test for COVID-19 weekly. Students will be removed from the mandatory testing list once they have submitted proof of vaccination or another approved exemption (e.g., having tested positive for COVID-19 exempts one from testing for 90 days). Students' test results from on-campus testing will be cross-checked against this database to identify those who have not tested. Notifications will be sent to students and follow-up conduct proceedings initiated for those failing to test. A similar process exists for staff. UWM recommends that students and staff utilize the campus-based testing, doineedacovid19test.com. Students and staff who do not use campus-based testing will have to file proof of testing (or some other exemption) on a weekly basis using the [Exemption Form](#).

9. Will UWM monitor positive COVID-19 cases and continue contact tracing in Fall 2021?

Yes, UWM will monitor students and staff who test or report positive for COVID-19. In addition, UWM will continue to monitor where those infections are occurring in case there is an identifiable connection among reported cases. As in the past, UWM will work with the Milwaukee Health Department to support MHD's formal contact tracing efforts. As was the case last year, enhanced cleaning of common spaces and classrooms will be conducted regularly.

10. What should I do if I or a student are identified as a close contact?

If you or the student *are fully vaccinated* (that is, it has been longer than two weeks since the last shot of a COVID-19 vaccine regimen), then you do not need to quarantine as long as you do not have COVID-19 symptoms. Following CDC recommendations, UWM recommends that vaccinated individuals identified as a close contact test 3-5 days after notification. As long as the vaccinated person remains asymptomatic, one can attend class and maintain normal social interactions. If you or the student have COVID-19 symptoms, then self-quarantine and get a COVID-19 test as soon as possible.

If you or the student *are not fully vaccinated*, then the same guidelines apply as they have in the past for close contacts. First, confirm that you are a close contact. The CDC defines "[close contact](#)" as occurring when a person is "within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from two days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated." If you kept your distance from the COVID-positive person and weren't within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes total over a 24-hour period, then you are not a close contact,

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according to CDC and local health officials. If you are a close contact, then you should self-quarantine and get a COVID-19 test as soon as possible.

I've Been Identified as a Close Contact. What next?

	Unvaccinated	Vaccinated
Do I have to Quarantine?	Yes. Quarantine for 14 days.	No, as long as you stay asymptomatic, but wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until you receive a negative test result.
Should I get a C-19 test?	It is advised to test 3-5 days after notification. If you test negative, you must still quarantine for 14 days. If you test positive, you should isolate for 10 days after the positive test result.	Yes, test 3-5 days after being notified as being a close contact.

11. What should I do if a student contacts me to report that they tested positive or were diagnosed with COVID-19?

Regardless of vaccination status, an individual who tests positive should isolate for 10 days after a positive test result.

Like last year, you should instruct the COVID-positive student to:

1. Stay home and isolate.
2. Self-report their illness with the Dean of Students Office ([link: http://uwm.edu/covid19selfreport](http://uwm.edu/covid19selfreport)).
3. Follow Norris Health Center's or their health care provider's directions. Report a worsening of symptoms to their care provider.
4. Keep up with their course work and studies, as their health and symptoms allow.
5. Isolate for at least 10 days and contact Norris HC or their health care provider at the end of those 10 days.
6. If the conditions for Return to Class have been met (see below), the student is free to return to class, without retesting or documentation, on the 11th day after onset of COVID-19 symptoms or positive test result.

Please make every effort to accommodate the student's participation and learning as their health allows. There are no hard rules about how much class a student can miss, same as before COVID-19. The issue is whether they meet the expectations and course outcomes. If the student cannot meet course expectations, just as you did for illnesses or other issues pre-COVID, please work with your student advisors or program directors and follow your department or college policies and procedures.

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If you wish, you can [file a report](#) on behalf of the COVID-positive student with the Dean of Students Office.

I've Tested Positive for COVID-19. What do I do?

	Unvaccinated	Vaccinated
Do I have to Isolate?	Yes. Isolate for 10 days.	Yes. Isolate for 10 days.
When can I return to work/class?	Ten (10) days after symptom onset or positive test result, isolation can end for individuals: a. whose symptoms are gone or improving, and b. who do not have a fever (and have not used fever-reducing medications).	

12. Are students and staff required to self-report their positive COVID-19 test result or diagnosis?

Yes, students and staff should self-report their positive test result and/or a positive COVID-19 diagnosis. Students should report their results/diagnosis to the [Dean of Students Office](#).

The Dean of Students Office will notify, in a de-identified manner, the other students in your in-person class, so please **do not** share the student-provided information with the class. Beyond the potential confusion duplicate notifications could cause, you may violate FERPA by sharing this information beyond those UWM staff who legitimately need to know this information (such as your department chair or the Dean of Students Office). Anyone identified by the self-reporting student as being a close contact may be contacted by the Dean of Students Office or local health department.

Staff members should report their positive test result or COVID-19 diagnosis to [UWM's Employee Case Management Form](#).

13. What do I tell my class if there is a positive case?

As detailed above, the Dean of Students Office will inform both the instructor and students in an in-person class when a student in that class has self-reported a positive test or diagnosis for COVID-19. The information provided to the rest of the class will not include identifying information about the COVID-positive person. Since the Dean of Students will provide this information, instructors should not inform students in the class of any student-provided information they may have received. Please note: the notification the Dean of Students Office will send does not treat the instructor or class members as close contacts, as defined above. If an individual is identified as a close contact, that person will be contacted separately by the Dean of Students or local public health department regarding next steps.

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14. What should I tell a student who asks me where they can get tested for COVID-19 or get a vaccination?

UWM will conduct COVID-19 testing for unvaccinated individuals. Testing times will vary depending on the UWM campus. Students and staff can register for a test at <https://doineedacovid19test.com>. Please use your UWM email address when signing in for an appointment.

Students with symptoms should be told to contact Norris Health Center or their own health care provider. Symptomatic individuals should self-isolate until they are able to visit Norris or their health care provider.

UWM is partnering with the Milwaukee Health Department to vaccinate students and staff during the first part of the fall semester. Refer to the UWM website for dates and times of the vaccination clinics. In addition, students and staff at any UWM campus can receive vaccinations from local pharmacies and health care providers.

15. If a student suspects they have COVID-19, is awaiting test results, and then finds out the test comes back negative, can the student return to in-person activities upon knowledge of the results if it is before 14 days?

If the test is negative for COVID-19, their symptoms are improved, they no longer have a fever, and a health care provider has instructed them they can resume normal activities, then the student can return to class. If the student was identified as a close contact and is unvaccinated, they must quarantine for 14 days even if they tested negative and are asymptomatic. In order to reduce the burden of unnecessary calls and visits to medical units, instructors should not ask for a medical excuse for COVID-related illnesses.

16. A student who tested COVID-positive contacts me and wants to rejoin our face-to-face class. What do I tell them?

Students who tested positive or were quarantined can return to in-person classes and the campus after their required isolation or quarantine period. Students should follow the directions they were provided for Return to Classes/Campus. (See below for these directions.) In order to reduce the burden of unnecessary calls and visits to medical units, instructors should not ask for a medical excuse for COVID-related illnesses.

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17. What are my responsibilities in the classroom for classroom safety?

All students and staff are responsible for following UWM's Interim [COVID-Related Health and Safety Rules](#). Everyone attending an indoor classroom is required to wear a face covering. You personally are not responsible for cleaning the classroom, although supplies will be in each classroom for use as you or other individuals feel the need. You are not responsible for checking or verifying a student's or staff member's vaccination status and should not inquire about vaccination status. Individuals may choose to voluntarily share their vaccination status but are not required to do so.

To support a safe community environment, all instructors are encouraged to share UWM safety protocols with students and to recommend vaccination against the COVID-19 virus.

Instructors are encouraged to read the [Guidelines for Classroom Conflict Transformation](#) for more guidance in handling classroom issues that may arise due to the universal mask requirement.

18. Can I prohibit a student from attending my in-person class if they are not wearing a mask?

Regardless of vaccination status, all students and staff are permitted to attend classes and work on campus and are required to wear a mask while indoors at UWM facilities. If you observe a student not following UWM's masking guidelines, instructors should:

1. Inform the student of UWM's health and safety rules, including the wearing of masks. If the student complies, carry on.
2. If the student does not comply, ask the student to leave class and go get a mask at a mask-handout location (each UWM building should have signage identifying mask handout locations).
 - a. If the student refuses to leave class to get a mask, take a break and talk to the student. The student should be informed that failure to leave class and comply with UWM's safety standards could result in nonacademic discipline.
 - b. Please note that per [SAAP 1-5](#): "Removal of a student from a classroom should occur only when the teaching and/or learning process cannot continue unless the student is removed. When a student is removed from a classroom for misconduct, such a removal applies only to that specific class session. The student may attend future class sessions unless disciplinary action, which restricts them from attending class, is imposed by the Dean of Students Office."
3. If the student refuses to wear a mask and refuses to leave the class, the instructor should cancel that day's class, informing the class that it will reconvene at the next scheduled class period.
4. Immediately report the student violation using the Dean of Students Office [Report It](#) form. The Dean of Students Office will gather details and follow up with the student,

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involving the UWM PD if necessary, and communicate back to the instructor on how best to handle the next class meeting.

5. The UWM Police Department should be contacted if there is disruptive or threatening behavior. For these purposes, refusing to leave a classroom does not necessarily constitute a disruption.

19. If a student becomes uncomfortable with attending class in person, how should this be handled?

UWM is planning to safely conduct classes and campus activities in a manner that resembles pre-pandemic practices. For face-to-face classes, instructors should inform students at the beginning of the semester and in the course syllabus of attendance requirements, if any. Instructors should consult their department or academic unit's policies for attendance and attendance requirements. UWM is not requiring that all in-person courses have online options available for students. Instructors may wish to include or consult the [COVID-19 Syllabus Statement](#).

With that said, the potential exists for COVID-19 to disrupt fall plans. Instructors should consider back-up plans just in case. Additionally, students benefit from instructor flexibility in case of disruptions to their ability to attend classes in person. In last spring's student survey, students expressed their appreciation and gratitude to instructors for their flexibility and understanding. UWM benefits by being a radically welcoming campus.

20. Am I required to record my lectures for students who cannot or do not attend my face-to-face class?

You are not required to use lecture capture for your in-person lectures. However, UWM is strongly recommending that instructors make lecture capture available to students in Canvas when practical. The UITS Knowledge Base has a [list of classrooms currently equipped for lecture capture](#), with more general assignment rooms being added. UITS also has [training available](#).

Students' responses to last spring's survey indicated that a great majority of students anticipate that they would use lectures captured on video. Lecture capture is viewed by many students as a means to go back and review parts of the lecture that they did not immediately understand or missed for some reason while in class. Lecture capture was not generally seen as an alternative to attending class. In addition, lecture capture benefits students with accommodations who can use its captioning functionality. UWM has dedicated funding to expand lecture-capture technologies in many general assignment classrooms for Fall 2021.

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21. What happens to my class if I test positive or if I become a close contact?

If you are vaccinated and are identified as a close contact, then as long as you remain asymptomatic, you can continue teaching your in-person classes. The CDC recommends that vaccinated individuals test 3-5 days after being identified as a close contact.

If you test positive for COVID-19 or are unvaccinated and identified as a close contact with a COVID-positive person, you should:

- a. Self-report your diagnosis to your supervisor as soon as possible.
- b. Follow the guidelines given in the attached Return to Work/Return to Classes & Campus: Requirements After Isolation or Quarantine.
- c. At the start of the semester, make sure that a back-up instructor has been designated for your class. If you need assistance in finding a back-up instructor, discuss this with your department chair.
- d. Add the backup instructor in Canvas as an instructor.
- e. Continue to teach the class if you are teaching an online class and your health situation allows it.
- f. Communicate with the back-up instructor with a copy to the department chair about the need for them to step in to continue instruction.
- g. Resume your normal instructional duties, after your isolation/quarantine period.

22. Who should I work with if I feel the need to move my face-to-face class completely online?

If you need to move your class from in-person to fully online instruction, for whatever reason, please contact your department chair and/or dean to discuss your situation. The Provost's Office has provided a [set of guidelines](#) governing requests for changes in modality for Fall 2021. Please refer to [these guidelines](#) and process for submitting requests.

23. Who should I contact if I'm feeling anxious about transitioning to in-person campus activities?

There is little doubt that the global pandemic has created new personal and professional challenges and concerns. The opportunity to return to campus life is exciting but might come with emotional unease. This is to be expected and will require adjustments from the past year's routines and comfort zones. As you adjust to new routines and a familiar but changed environment, please give yourself time to make the adjustment. The shift from last year's mostly at-home environment will take time, and the routines and comfort levels will shift accordingly. In time, we all will find connection to our students, colleagues and new routines. The best thing we can do to navigate these changes is to take care of ourselves and manage any stresses that might arise. If you feel the need to speak to a professional, UWM's [Employee](#)

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[Assistance Program](#) is a free and confidential benefit for employees and their household members.

Please visit UWM's [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page for more information and answers to other questions.

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**Return to Work/Return to Classes & Campus:
Requirements after Isolation or Quarantine**

All students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19, who are unvaccinated and have been in close contact with a COVID-positive person, or who have been required to self-quarantine should not return to work, classes or campus until the following conditions are met. Conditions for return differ whether one is in isolation as a result of a positive test or quarantine based on close contact. These conditions for return to work/class/campus follow CDC guidelines.

Isolation: Return to Work/Class/Campus

1. COVID-19 positive individuals should isolate for 10 days after symptom onset.
2. Ten (10) days after symptom onset, isolation can end for individuals
 - c. whose symptoms are gone or improving, and
 - d. who do not have a fever (and have not used fever-reducing medications).
3. For asymptomatic individuals, isolation can end 10 days after their first positive test for COVID-19.
4. No documentation is required, nor should it be requested for return to work/class/campus.
5. Once the above conditions have been met, students cannot and should not be denied a return to class/work/campus.

UWM recommends contacting Norris Health Center or your personal medical provider to verify your health status for return to work or classes. Norris Health Center will not retest students leaving isolation.

Those who have recovered from COVID-19 should self-monitor for return of symptoms. If symptoms return, do not come to campus and contact Norris Health Center or your health care provider. (Reference: [CDC isolation guidance](#))

Quarantine: Return to Work/Class/Campus

1. Vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine as long as they remain asymptomatic. CDC recommends vaccinated individuals test for COVID-19 3-5 days after being identified as a close contact. If the test is positive, isolation should begin at that time.
2. Unvaccinated individuals who quarantine due to close contact should quarantine for 14 days following their last contact with a COVID-positive person. There can be no close contact with a COVID-positive individual during quarantine, or else the quarantine clock resets to 14 days.
3. Unvaccinated individuals who quarantine due to close contact and who live with a COVID-positive individual should quarantine for 14 days from when the COVID-positive person began home isolation.

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4. After 14 days with no symptoms and from the last contact with a COVID-positive person, quarantined individuals who are unvaccinated are allowed to return to normal activities.
5. No documentation is required, nor should be requested for return to work/class/campus.
6. Once the above conditions have been met, students cannot and should not be denied a return to class/work/campus.

UWM recommends contacting Norris Health Center or your personal medical provider to verify your health status for return to work or classes. Norris Health Center will not retest students leaving quarantine.

Those who leave quarantine should self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms. If symptoms occur, do not come to campus and contact Norris Health Center or your health care provider.
(Reference: [CDC quarantine guidance](#))

Updated: August 30, 2021