**Approved Continuity of Education Work Group Recommendations**

The Continuity of Education Work Group initial recommendations were approved by President’s Cabinet on June 18, 2020.  The following updated recommendations serve as important source material to inform and update the Roadmap to Return.  As more information about COVID-19 becomes available, some of the initial recommendations have required revision.  In a spirit of continuous improvement and informed by feedback received from the university community, the initial recommendations have been updated by the Continuity of Education Work Group so as to provide updated guidance for the spring 2021 semester.

As Texas and the nation gear up for opening the economy and returning to normalcy, albeit a new normal, institutions of higher education across the nation have announced plans to open for in-person instruction. At Texas State, we have a long-standing, rich tradition of face-to-face instruction and residential life. However, the pandemic is not a thing of the past. Therefore, the institution has engaged in a deliberate review of existing response plans in a process that involves eight work groups that will research and devise integrated solutions that will enable us to move forward while ensuring the safety and wellness of our students, faculty, and staff.

The Continuity of Education Work Group is constituted of a wide cross section of personnel comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators who were charged with developing a broad road map for returning to instruction on the campuses. The work group also addressed plans for alternate scenarios for increased remote instruction if called for by local and state public health guidelines. The work group’s deliberations were conducted, and our recommendations are made within the context of the university’s shared values, including the free exchange of ideas, civility, fairness, honesty, inclusiveness, and responsible stewardship of resources. We ask that decision-makers consider the process and impact of implementing these recommendations on individuals, groups, and the university. We encourage all members of the university community to recognize that colleagues may face challenges, both personal and professional, during this time. Members of groups may also have concerns about the impact of the pandemic and these recommendations on relative workloads, performance, and future progress. Now more than ever, we are each called upon to address challenges with compassion and innovation, produce equitable and ethical outcomes, and ensure the highest regard for health, wellness, and safety in our vibrant community.

Broad imperatives that drove our decision making include ensuring the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff; commitment to student success; sustained excellence in teaching, research, and service; and providing units and faculty choice and flexibility in implementing the work group’s broad guidelines. This work group was primarily driven by the guidance provided by public health professionals, including the CDC. More locally, the recommendations that came forth from the Health, Safety, and Wellness Work Group that is led by Dr. Emilio Carranco, informed the work of this work group. Additionally, the work group was informed by research on best practices adopted by institutions of higher education. The charge for the workgroup was met by organizing the work group into five different subgroups. These subgroups worked on a significant part of the totality of the charge. What follows are the recommendations from the Continuity of Education Work Group.

Base Case (Formerly known as Scenario 1)

**Teaching and Learning**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Instruction in classroom learning spaces | |
|  |  |
| A. | **Classroom density management:** |
|  | 1. To maintain appropriate social distancing, classrooms will be filled at 50 percent capacity for face-to-face classes for spring 2021. Face-to-face only courses may be delivered normally if the student enrollment is no more than 50 percent of the room’s rated maximum occupancy. |
|  | 2. Large classes may consider scheduling lectures/faculty presentations online and having students meet in smaller groups at times with the instructor, instructional assistants, or peers. |
|  | 3. Expanding the teaching day, using non-prime class hours, or online sessions will be considered when adding new spring sections. Non-prime class hours and online sessions allow for social distancing through the management of student density. |
|  | 4. Any class that has the potential for reassignment to a new space (so as to reduce density) will be considered for spaces that are near the academic unit and will be the decision of the concerned college. University Registrar will provide a list of scheduled courses and the associated classroom density to chairs/school directors. Chairs/school directors should review the current schedule of courses and request larger venues to reduce classroom density and potentially mitigate the need for the A/B model (described in section B1). We strongly encourage faculty to take advantage of such reassignments of space. |
|  | 5. Students must be seated in the classroom with spacing between them. |
|  | 6. Any course deleted for low enrollment or that shifts online would yield classroom space that will be considered for lowering other courses’ classroom density. |
|  | 7. Adjustments to accommodate at-risk faculty and students will be made. These adjustments, which may result in converting the modality of class to 100 percent online, will facilitate density management. Faculty converting courses to fully online delivery should carefully consider instruction and assessment methods that address the need for regular and substantive interaction with students and academic integrity issues. |
|  | 8. Assigned seats must be used in all classroom learning spaces to benefit contact tracing should a positive COVID-19 case emerge. Faculty will maintain an accurate seating chart in order to facilitate contact tracing if needed as well as social distancing. Canvas functionality supports the maintenance of seating charts. |
|  | 9. As one example, final exams given in-person may be implemented within the 2.5 hour time block per classroom by offering a one-hour exam for 50 percent of the class, then a one hour exam for the other 50 percent of the class with a 30 minute break in between groups. In consultation with unit leadership, exploration of other techniques for reducing density during face-to-face examination times is encouraged. Use of online proctoring for final exams is provided without charge to students and academic departments for courses listed as online (INT) or hybrid (HYB) in the schedule of classes. Students should be notified that online proctoring will be used for the final exam as near to the beginning of the term as possible so as to afford students the opportunity to test technology, bandwidth, and logistics prior to the exam date to mitigate complications and to reduce student anxiety. Further, online exam proctoring should be coordinated at the beginning of the term with the Office of Distance and Extended Learning (ODEL). Students with testing **accommodations** approved by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) should contact that office for testing support guidelines. Faculty may support students with course **modifications** in a number of ways (without reliance on online proctoring), including offering in-person examination, examination monitored by faculty on Zoom, and alternative assessment. Faculty exploring assessment options for students with course **modification** may consult with the Faculty Development office for assistance. Appendix A provides detailed information on the differences between **accommodation** and **modification**. |
|  |  |
| B. | **Delivery modality:** |
|  | 1. For face-to-face courses, a mixture of face-to-face and remote instruction is required when student enrollment is more than 50 percent of the room’s rated maximum occupancy. In these cases, students attend in-person a portion of the time and participate remotely a portion of the time. There are many course designs and learning strategies that faculty may employ. In class sections with enrolled students totaling more than 50 percent of available seats, faculty have flexibility in developing course design and implementing synchronous and asynchronous activities to meet learning outcomes and student expectations for engaging and robust learning environments. To achieve the 50 percent density threshold, classes may need to meet in groups. For example, students are divided into an A/B model in which one half of the students are in the classroom and the other half may be engaged remotely. The next class meeting would then switch the groups. Such remote engagement may occur in different ways as described below. Regardless of the technique or delivery mode employed, regular, substantive faculty-student interaction must be a component of all courses. |
|  | 2. In the A/B model to lower classroom density, some faculty may choose to teach both the in-person and virtual groups at the same time (hy-flex). Other faculty may use a more conventional hybrid model, in which the instructor sees group A every other week (or on some other alternating, periodic basis such as every other class) and group B on the alternating week. Formal instruction is provided during in-person interaction in the classroom. When it is not their in-person week, the group would be pursuing learning activities congruent with a conventional hybrid class. Students in group B may engaged with alternative learning materials, discussions, or assignments. Yet other options for engaging the 50 percent not present in the class may be implemented in consultation with the chair/school director and dean. There are many course designs and learning strategies that faculty may employ. Workshops, consultations, and training sessions will be available to support faculty innovation efforts. |
|  | 3. Faculty must have class materials in Canvas in order to facilitate the 50 percent maximum density rule in the classroom or switch to fully remote instruction should that become necessary. These materials might include the syllabus, reading lists, assignments, resources, lecture presentations/notes, etc. Workshops, consultations, and training sessions will be available to support faculty in using Canvas. |
|  | 4. Through use of Canvas or other appropriate means, instructors must be prepared to work with students who must self-quarantine, or are certified as vulnerable populations who should not come to class, etc. |
|  | 5. Classrooms are equipped with cameras and microphones so faculty can facilitate synchronous Zoom attendance by half the class in settings using the A/B model. Clear instructions on using Zoom, sharing the instructor’s screen, and the microphone/camera in the classroom are posted in all classroom podium stations and copies sent to instructors. |
|  | 6. When feasible, students who are certified as vulnerable should be scheduled for any existing online sections. |
|  | 7. Office hours will be held virtually or electronically (Zoom, Teams, phone). |
|  | 8. University will continue to provide spaces, such as the LBJSC ballrooms, for students who need to study or engage in online instruction and assignments while on campus. As an example, students who are transitioning from a face-to-face class directly to an online class. Students should be advised to bring their laptops with them as with social distancing there may be limitations in computer labs from a capacity standpoint. |
|  | 9. All courses must meet learning outcomes and courses designated as face-to-face must incorporate/emphasize instruction and student engagement with faculty in face-to-face formats. |
|  | 10. Faculty must be cautious about extending Zoom to all students as a regular modality if online or hybrid is not the designated course instructional modality in the Schedule of Classes and not the instructor’s preference for an effective instructional environment. Providing Zoom flexibility to students may lead to low class attendance, lower grades, and other performance issues. Attendance policies may be needed, as well. |
|  | 11. Units should follow up with faculty on need to meet the assigned instructional modality in the Schedule of Classes and to deliver what the posted schedule indicated that the course would be. Instructors can establish under what conditions Zoom/virtual instruction is available in an in-person class (example: accommodating students that are sick or need to quarantine). Units/faculty should keep in mind that the number of students who have been required to isolate or quarantine is relatively low. |
|  | 12. Use of online proctoring for examinations and other assessment is provided without charge to students and academic departments for courses listed as online (INT) or hybrid (HYB) in the schedule of classes. At most, resources for online proctoring support is available for up to four assessments per student per course. Students should be notified that online proctoring will be used for assessments as near to the beginning of the term as possible so as to afford students the opportunity to test technology, bandwidth, and logistics prior to assessment dates to mitigate complications and to reduce student anxiety. Further, online exam proctoring should be coordinated at the beginning of the term with the Office of Distance and Extended Learning (ODEL). Students with testing **accommodations** approved by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) should contact that office for testing support guidelines. Faculty may support students with course **modifications** in a number of ways (without reliance on online proctoring), including offering in-person examination, examination monitored by faculty on Zoom, and alternative assessment. Faculty exploring assessment options for students with course **modification** may consult with the Faculty Development office for assistance. Appendix A provides detailed information on the differences between **accommodation** and **modification**. |
|  | 13. For online courses delivered asynchronously (without a designated meeting time on the Schedule of Classes), flexibility is needed to ensure students are not required to complete exams or other assignments at times in conflict with their synchronous class schedules. If time-bound requirements are planned for an asynchronous class, faculty should provide extended time windows for completions and vet these early in the semester, so they do not interfere with students’ synchronous class obligations. If flexibility and extended time windows are not possible, an online class with time-bound requirements should have a designated meeting time on the Schedule of Classes. |
|  |  |
| C. | **Physical distancing:** |
|  | 1. Physical distancing of at least six feet must be maintained, where feasible. This generally applies outside of the traditional classroom as the 50 percent density guidelines will be used inside the classroom. For non-traditional classrooms, use standard operating procedures to help guide social distancing. |
|  | 2. Indoor department/office/unit/organizational meetings are encouraged to be conducted remotely. |
|  | 3. Furniture must be marked by Facilities to achieve physical distancing. |
|  | 4. Dismiss the class one row at a time starting with the row closest to the door to avoid crowding/jostling. |
|  | 5. If a classroom has two doors, establish one as the entrance only and one as the exit only. |
|  | 6. Programs should develop and share with faculty their standard operating procedures for small group learning activities and discussions. |
|  | 7. Implement a highly visible “walk to the right” role modeling campaign in building hallways, quad, and other high traffic areas. |
|  | 8. Begin and end class on time to maximize time between occupied class space. |
|  | 9. Encourage students to leave the building rather than congregate/wait inside the building. |
|  | 10. Restrict the use of elevators to faculty, staff, and students who need them for accessibility reasons. |
|  | 11. Recognize potential for delays/tardy students due to distancing requirements for campus transportation such as buses. |
|  |  |
| D. | **Health practices:** |
|  | 1. Cloth face coverings are required for all students indoors, such as in instructional settings, in-person meetings, shared office spaces, breakrooms, kitchens, elevators, common areas of residence halls, exercise facilities, and on buses. |
|  | 2. Cloth face coverings must be worn by faculty and teaching assistants in classrooms. Cloth face coverings must be worn by faculty and teaching assistants also in laboratory or clinical settings where close contact is required, unless a mask with higher protective properties is required. Face coverings should be provided by the university for faculty and teaching assistants. |
|  | 3. Individuals at high risk for complications from COVID-19, as defined by the CDC, will have the opportunity to request additional modifications. Faculty members with questions about circumstances or conditions not defined by CDC may consult with their department chairs/school directors about safeguards and options for alternative arrangements. |
|  | 4. Physical barriers, such as plexiglass sneeze guards, will be placed in areas where there are significant face-to-face interactions. |
|  | 5. Proper hand hygiene, including frequent hand washing and carrying of personal hand sanitizer bottles, must be practiced. Hand sanitizer will be made available on both campuses at 25 centrally located refill stations and 250 dispensing stations. Students will be expected to sanitize hands when entering classrooms and other learning environments. |
|  | 6. Proper cough/sneeze etiquette will be promoted. |
|  | 7. Indoor ventilation will be evaluated and optimized when possible. |
|  | 8. Cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted on a regular basis. Classrooms and other high frequency areas will be sprayed with a disinfectant. Disinfectant wipes and/or sprays will be provided to faculty in each classroom so that they can disinfect high-touch areas and equipment at the start of each session. |
|  | 9. All employees must conduct a self-assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 before the start of their workday. In certain facilities (student health services, athletic facilities, dining facilities, and the Child Development Center), temperature checks and daily screens will be performed. Results will be logged and used to document compliance. |
|  | 10. Sick persons must stay home. |
|  | 11. Faculty have three major roles in contact tracing:  1) as mentioned earlier, keep a current seating chart so that close contacts can be identified, 2) assist contact tracers with identifying close contacts when necessary and, 3) remind students that if they test positive for COVID-19 or are notified that they are a close contact to a positive case, they should immediately report to Bobcat Trace. |
|  | 12. Visible signage will be placed in classrooms to remind students of best prevention practices. |
|  | 13. Implement Bobcat Pledge for students, faculty, and staff returning to face-to-face operations. |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| E. | Faculty preparation: |
|  | 1. All faculty must complete approved online teaching certification as described in university policy (**AA/PPS No. 02.01.30)**. |
|  | 2. Faculty Development, Office of Distance and Extended Learning, and ITAC will continue to provide support for faculty to establish contingency plans, revise teaching strategies, create active and engaging courses, develop alternative assessment plans, use technology, enhance academic integrity, etc. |
|  | 3. All courses should establish contingency plans for a swift and efficient transition to remote instruction should middle case or worst case scenarios unfold. Plans may include but are not limited to, online instruction; having course material, discussions, and/or assignments reside in Canvas; or other tools that may be accessed by faculty and students during periods of mandatory remote instruction. Faculty may also consider, in consultation with chair/school director and dean, alternative means of responding to pandemic surges. All contingency plans should ensure that faculty meet the required contact hours and the learning outcomes as well as requirement for regular and substantive student-faculty engagement. Planning for alternative assessment methods is also strongly encouraged in the event of a pandemic surge. Reliance on technologies such as online proctoring to support assessment as a part of these contingency plans should not be considered as these services may not be sufficiently available to all courses. Faculty may consider alternative assessment techniques including examination monitored by faculty on Zoom, virtual presentations, papers, or un-proctored examinations delivered through Canvas. Faculty exploring alternative assessment options may consult with the Faculty Development office for assistance. |
|  | 4. For the portion of the fall 2020 semester following Thanksgiving, faculty have discretion to change delivery modes for their individual in-person classes and final exams if they feel compelled to do so while considering the learning outcomes, remaining assignments, and student success factors for those classes, in consultation with unit leadership. Faculty should review their contingency plans for the fall 2020 semester and consult with their unit peers and leadership to revise and share plans for continuity of instruction and final exams should they decide to move their classes to remote/online instruction after Thanksgiving. Faculty should ensure that the post-Thanksgiving expectations are clearly stated in their syllabus and other supporting materials in CANVAS and must adhere to the scheduled final exam date and time for their courses. Reliance on technologies such as online proctoring to support assessment as a part of these contingency plans should not be considered as these services may not be sufficiently available to all courses. Faculty may consider alternative assessment techniques including examination monitored by faculty on Zoom, virtual presentations, papers, or un-proctored examinations delivered through Canvas. Faculty exploring alternative assessment options may consult with the Faculty Development office for assistance. |
|  | 5. Application to document vulnerable populations who need to teach/learn/work remotely will continue to be available. |
|  | 6. Departments/Schools are responsible for ensuring continuity of instruction when instructors of record can no longer assume the regular load. Departments/Schools should also ensure that contingency plans exist for each course in response to the potential for scenario 2 and 3. |
|  | 7. Emerging research indicates some populations are more likely to be negatively affected by COVID-19 and its health and social consequences.  For example, People of Color are more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19 and to suffer serious health consequences. Unit leadership should be sensitive to recognizing and addressing the potential for these differential impacts on individuals and groups, including those more vulnerable to illness, with family care responsibilities, with higher teaching loads, with more course preparations, in non-tenure line positions, in tenure track positions and with other factors. |
|  | 8. Graduate instructional and teaching assistants must follow all precautionary recommendations given to faculty, including use of masks, social distancing, and hand sanitizing. Office hours will be via Zoom or Teams. Graduate assistants must maintain the use of masks, social distancing, and hand sanitizing in the work environment. GIA/GTA/GA’s who are assigned common work spaces that do not allow for social distancing should develop a rotation schedule between on campus and remote work in accord with supervisor and department expectations. |
|  | 9. The University has established temporary fee policies to ensure that students don’t have to pay more for being online than they would have paid to be in person. |
|  | 10. Faculty should take into account the differences between the terms “accommodation” and “modification” in making decisions on assisting students when students approach them with the need for a resolution to their unique situations. Appendix A provides detailed information on the differences between the two terms and how to proceed in either case. |
|  | 11. In granting an exemption from assigned course work and learning expectations, faculty should take into account such factors as whether the student has tested positive for COVID-19, is isolating or is in quarantine. The key is whether the student is ill or not. A physician’s note to that effect would be the standard documentation for being late or missing assignments, whether it is due to COVID-19, the flu, etc. Students who are not ill, but are still required to quarantine/isolate, should be able to complete assignments but will not be able to physically attend classes or labs. However, students in face-to-face classes will need to be excused from in-person attendance until the quarantine/isolation period ends. Appendix B provides detailed guidance in this regard. |
|  | 12. ODEL’s instructional self-assessment Best Practices Checklist can aid faculty in planning and reflection for remote or A/B model instruction. [A copy of the Best Practices Checklist may be downloaded online.](https://gato-docs.its.txstate.edu/jcr:5ac63680-dde9-4e21-af8f-5249a0bdc9d5/Checklist%20Complete%20Fall%202016-Do%20Not%20Complete%20(1).pdf) A brief step by step process for instructors teaching hy-flex (in person and Zoom groups at the same time) is also available online (i.e., questions from Zoom students in chat, student aid/s monitoring chat, etc.). Technical information on the webcams and microphones is available via ITAC. |
|  | 13. Faculty should ensure that regular and substantive faculty-driven engagement occur in all classes, including in online classes. Asynchronous online courses cannot be implemented as correspondence courses. In addition to accreditation standards, faculty-driven activities are important for meeting the university’s core values and responding to student feedback regarding increased workload with less direct access to instructors and academic engagement opportunities. Regular and substantive interaction is covered in university policy: AA/PPS No. 02.01.30 § 05.07 |
|  |  |
| F. | **Syllabi information:** |
|  | 1. Address the mode of class delivery, access to class materials, examination procedures, including the use of online proctoring, if applicable, and other instructional strategies including specific information about how regular and substantive faculty-student interaction will be accomplished. |
|  | 2. State how office hours will be handled for student appointments. |
|  | 3. Include statement on cloth face covering requirement and violation procedures. |
|  | 4. Include the following statement in the syllabus:  Civility in the classroom is very important for the educational process and it is everyone’s responsibility. If you have questions about appropriate behavior in a particular class, please address them with your instructor first.  Disciplinary procedures may be implemented for refusing to follow an instructor’s directive, refusing to leave the classroom, not following the university’s requirement to wear a cloth face covering, not complying with social distancing or sneeze and cough etiquette, and refusing to implement other health and safety measures as required by the university, including daily self-assessments and staying home when symptomatic or ill. Additionally, the instructor, in consultation with the department chair/school director, may refer the student to the Dean of Students Office for further disciplinary review. Such reviews may result in consequences ranging from warnings to sanctions from the university. For more information regarding conduct in the classroom, please review the following policies at <https://policies.txstate.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/02-03-02.html>, Section 03: Courteous and Civil Learning Environment, and <https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html>, number II, Responsibilities of Students, Section 02.02: Conduct Prohibited. |
|  | 5. Provide general information on how disruptions to routine instruction will be handled (such as when middle case or worst case scenarios should occasion). |
|  | 6. Include a pandemic disruption tolerant attendance policy. |
|  | 7. Specify appropriate assessment and testing that will ensure academic integrity. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | |
| Instruction in non-classroom learning spaces | |
|  |  |
| A. | **Internships/Cooperative education:** |
|  | 1. Internships must follow on-site rules/procedures. Student teaching will be conducted in accordance with the rules/procedures of the school district, the Office of Educator Preparation, and the Texas Education Agency. Expectations, pending final SBEC approval, are that virtual student teaching experiences will be accepted if the school is teaching remotely, and that virtual observation will be acceptable but must be synchronous. |
|  | 2. The university requires that students engage in best practices (good hygiene, wearing of cloth face covering, social distancing). |
|  | 3. All units, where feasible, should develop back-up plans for an online internship experience and provide flexibility to students and sites, especially in cases where students are unable or unwilling to participate in on-site activities. |
|  | 4. In some instances, units may need to consult with the [Office of General Counsel](https://www.txstate.edu/tsusgencoun/) through appropriate channels for any acknowledgement and/or participant release documents that may be necessary. |
|  |  |
| B. | **Field trips:** |
|  | 1. Field trips must follow on-site rules/procedures. |
|  | 2. The university requires that students engage in best practices (good hygiene, wearing of cloth face covering, social distancing). Prior to departure, the Office of the Provost requires submission of an appropriate Standard Operating Procedure reflecting these best practices and protocols to be implemented for the field trip or travel, for approval by the provost. |
|  | 3. In some instances, units may need to consult with the [Office of General Counsel](https://www.txstate.edu/tsusgencoun/) through appropriate channels for any acknowledgement and/or participant release documents that may be necessary. |
|  | 4. Units should develop field trip contingency plans in case field trip sites close. |
|  |  |
| C. | **Laboratory work and computer labs:** |
|  | 1. Laboratory and computer labs vary considerably across campus in terms of their physical space, pedagogical needs, and adaptability for social distancing. Units are afforded flexibility in determining what needs will meet their units, but the university should provide resources across these spaces to provide a minimal level of compliance with work group recommendations. |
|  | 2. Planning for social distancing is best met in these spaces via student density measures. Units will need to be forward-thinking in accomplishing this goal as units understand their own pedagogical needs and the limitations on space. |
|  | 3. When social distancing is not possible via density measures, several options are available. The modified delivery methods listed above, including the 50-50 percent rotation of students between in-person and virtual labs, are largely applicable to these types of learning spaces. One additional method is available to laboratory classes because labs on campus are often 170 minutes. In such platforms, units may choose the Group A/B model such that Group A attends the first half of the allotted time and Group B attends the second half of the allotted time. |
|  | 4. Where possible, remote access to software commonly used in computer labs may also encourage social distancing. |
|  | 5. Some units in laboratory settings may require additional personal protective equipment. |
|  | 6. Procedure masks are recommended to be worn in laboratory or clinical settings when there is frequent close contact to others and as standard operating procedures stipulate. |
|  |  |
| D. | Clinical practice: |
|  | 1. Clinical practices vary considerably across campus in terms of their physical space, pedagogical needs, and adaptability for social distancing. Units should be afforded flexibility in determining what needs will meet their units, but the university should provide resources across these spaces to provide a minimal level of compliance with work group recommendations. |
|  | 2. Planning for social distancing is best met in these spaces via student density measures. Units will need to be forward-thinking in accomplishing this goal as units understand their own pedagogical needs and the limitations on space. |
|  | 3. When social distancing is not possible via density measures, several options are available. The modified delivery methods listed above including the 50-50 percent rotation of students between in person and virtual practice, are largely applicable to these types of learning spaces. Additionally, laboratory/clinical and field-based classes may choose the Group A/B model such that Group A attends the first half of the allotted time and Group B attends the second half of the allotted time. |
|  | 4. Some units in laboratory/clinical and field-based settings may require additional personal protective equipment. |
|  |  |
| E. | **Performing arts instruction:** |
|  | 1. Performing arts instruction varies considerably across campus in terms of their physical space, pedagogical needs, and adaptability for social distancing. Units are afforded flexibility in determining what needs will meet their units, but the university should provide resources across these spaces to provide a minimal level of compliance with work group recommendations. |
|  | 2. Planning for social distancing is best met in these spaces via student density measures. Units will need to be forward-thinking in accomplishing this goal as units understand their own pedagogical needs and the limitations on space. |
|  | 3. It is recognized that in the performing arts, social distancing is often challenging either because of the requirement of close contact (art, dance, music, theater) or because of the large amount of space needed to accommodate some activities (art, dance, music, theater). Units should explore all potential large spaces to increase the success for social distancing in these instructional activities. Outdoor venues might be considered for many of the unit activities (dance, music, and theater). |
|  | 4. Plexiglass (or something similar) may be an option to consider under some conditions, especially in smaller faculty offices in which applied music lessons or chamber music coaching are delivered. |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| F. | General guidelines: |
|  | 1. Any contingency plan or other means of compensating a regularly mandated academic activity should be in accordance with requirements of THECB, SACSCOC, discipline specific accreditation, and licensure expectations. |
|  | 2. All learning spaces should have an ample supply of cleaning wipes and hand sanitizer for both faculty and students. Special precautions may be necessary for high-use, high-touch equipment in learning spaces (lab equipment, music instruments/other equipment, shared art equipment, computers in lab spaces), and these needs may vary by unit. |
|  | 3. Make as many learning spaces Zoom/Teams room capable so as to practice social distancing. |
|  | 4. Loosen attendance policies to limit number of students in learning spaces. |
|  | 5. All learning activities should be prepared to go remote/online as a back-up plan. |
|  | 6. All units should develop online teaching materials in the event of a disruption of face-to-face activities. |
|  | 7. Where possible, assigned seats should be used in all learning spaces to benefit contact tracing should a positive COVID-19 case emerges.  In those spaces where assigned seating is not possible (e.g., tutoring centers, departmental office visits), logs of student visits should be documented. |

**Academic Events**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Texas State event with internal attendees only | |
|  |  |
|  | 1. Pre-registration for participants of events is required. In addition to the registration process, attendance should be taken for participants to help with contact tracing. |
|  | 2. In general, event participation is restricted to the maximum capacity prescribed by the university and not to exceed 50 percent capacity of the space where the event is being held, whichever is lower. |
|  | 3. Physical distancing must be maintained as much as possible and cloth face coverings must be worn when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Event management should monitor participation to ensure compliance. |
|  | 4. If event attendance can impact student credit or grades, faculty are encouraged to consider the number and availability of required events as well as alternative options that should be considered for students who have received modifications for being in high health-risk categories related to COVID-19 according to university policy. |
|  | 5. Colleges should be encouraged to rethink events with multiple delivery methods, keeping in mind if all events go to online delivery the student experience could be diminished. |
|  | 6. Event organizers must submit plan to appropriate Dean’s office for approval for all academic events – virtual or in-person – to outline safety and wellness precautions in place. |
|  | 7. Event planning is contingent upon current conditions of COVID-19 transmission in our campus and surrounding communities.  If COVID-19 cases increase within the university or surrounding communities, then event plans will need to be altered to adhere to revised university event restrictions. Event restrictions will be at the recommendation of the university’s chief medical officer in consultation with the local public health authority and state and national guidelines. |
|  | 8. When special university event restrictions are not in place due to increased COVID-19 cases, indoor event participation should be held to a maximum of 50 persons and not exceed 50 percent occupancy where the event is being held. A large event that is very interactive may require occupancy not to exceed 25 percent of the space occupancy, whereas a group seated listening to a presentation with face coverings may be permitted with a maximum of 50 percent of the space occupancy. |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Texas State event with external attendees | |
|  |  |
|  | 1. In-person events should be limited to only those that are absolutely necessary and critical to the mission of the university. |
|  | 2. Pre-registration for participants of events is required. In addition to the registration process, attendance should be taken for participants to help with contact tracing. |
|  | 3. Event participation is restricted to the maximum cap prescribed by the university and not to exceed 50 percent capacity of the space where the event is being held, whichever is lower. |
|  | 4. Physical distancing must be maintained as much as possible and cloth face coverings must be worn when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Event management should monitor participation to ensure compliance. |
|  | 5. Event organizers must submit their plan to the appropriate Dean’s office for approval of all academic events to outline safety and wellness precautions in place. |
|  | 6. Event planning is contingent upon current conditions of COVID-19 transmission in our campus and surrounding communities.  If COVID-19 cases increase within the university or surrounding communities, then event plans will need to be altered to adhere to revised university event restrictions. Event restrictions will be at the recommendation of the university’s chief medical officer in consultation with the local public health authority and state and national guidelines. |
|  | 7. When special university event restrictions are not in place due to increased COVID-19 cases, indoor event participation should be held to a maximum of 50 persons and not exceed 50 percent occupancy where the event is being held. A large event that is very interactive may require occupancy not to exceed 25 percent of the space occupancy, whereas a group seated listening to a presentation with face coverings may be permitted with a maximum of 50 percent of the space occupancy. |

Middle Case (Formerly known as Scenario 2) Campuses and units not impacted will be guided by the recommendations for base case scenario. Those impacted will adopt the following recommendations.

**Teaching and Learning**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Instruction in classroom learning spaces | |
|  |  |
| A. | **Classroom density management:** |
|  | 1. |
|  |  |
| B. | **Delivery modality:** |
|  | 1. Face-to-face classes will transition to remote delivery. |
|  |  |
| C. | **Physical distancing:** |
|  | 1. |
|  |  |
| D. | **Health practices:** |
|  | 1. |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| E. | Faculty preparation: |
|  | 1. |
|  |  |
| F. | **Syllabi information:** |
|  | 1. |
|  |  |
|  | |
|  | |
| Instruction in non-classroom learning spaces | |
|  |  |
| A. | **Internships/Cooperative education:** |
|  | 1. Unless quarantined, students participating in internships/cooperative education must follow regulations and guidance from public health officials, the state government, and the operating policy of the hosting site/institution. Unless quarantined, student participating in student teaching must follow the rules/procedures of the school district, the Office of Educator Preparation, and the Texas Education Agency. Expectations, pending final SBEC approval are that virtual student teaching experiences will be accepted if the school is teaching remotely, and that virtual observation will be acceptable but must be synchronous. |
|  |  |
| B. | **Field trips:** |
|  | 1. Unless quarantined, students participating in field trips will be regulated by guidance from public health officials, the state government, and the operating policy of the hosting site/institution. |
|  |  |
| C. | **Laboratory work:** |
|  | 1. Lab work will be conducted remotely. |
|  |  |
| D. | **Clinical practice:** |
|  | 1. Clinical practice will be conducted remotely. |
|  |  |
| E. | **Performing arts instruction:** |
|  | 1. Performing arts instruction will be performed remotely. |
|  |  |
| F. | **General guidelines:** |
|  | 1. |
|  |  |

**Academic Events**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Texas State event with internal attendees only | |
|  |  |
|  | 1. All academic events are cancelled or conducted via Zoom, Teams or other electronic method. |
|  | 2. Face-to-face meetings and activities with students are suspended or conducted via Zoom, Teams, or other electronic method. |
|  |  |
| Texas State event with external attendees | |
|  |  |
|  | 1. All academic events are cancelled or conducted via Zoom, Teams, or other electronic method. |
|  |  |

Worst Case (Formerly known as Scenario 3) All recommendations that were especially called out for middle case scenario apply in worst case scenario. Additional recommendations follow.

**Teaching and Learning**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Instruction in classroom learning spaces | |
|  |  |
| A. | **Classroom density management:** |
|  | 1. |
|  |  |
| B. | **Delivery modality:** |
|  | 1. 100 percent remote delivery for all classes. |
|  |  |

**Appendix A - Accommodations and Modifications**

The following provided by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) may be used by faculty who may seek clarity on the differences between a “modification” (for COVID-19) and an “accommodation” (for a disability), including distinctions between what a faculty member is required to do and what is optional.

* Accommodations - academic adjustments or auxiliary aids that are necessary to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to an academic program, specific course, and/or course materials. Academic requirements that are essential to the instruction being pursued by such student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory. If a student is approved for an accommodation, ODS will provide the student with an accommodation letter which states they are registered with the office and describes the accommodations which the student is eligible to use.
* Modifications – Students at a higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19 as recognized by the CDC may request academic modifications through the ODS.
  + The academic modifications are typically requests for an alteration to the method of instruction and/or method of assessment. For example, the student may indicate that they cannot physically come to campus because it would put them at a heightened risk of contracting the virus. Therefore, they may request to access the course and course assessments remotely.
  + ODS reviews student requests for academic modifications. The role of ODS is:
    - To verify a student is in a high-risk group according to the CDC, and
    - If the student is in a high-risk group, communicate with the instructor of the students’ courses to inquire what modification (if any) the instructor may allow.
  + Because these requests are often alterations to the method of instruction and/or assessment, ODS will ultimately defer to the instructor as to what modification (if any) may be appropriate.
  + Depending on what instructors feel is appropriate, modifications may include, but are not limited to:
    - allowing the student to access the lecture remotely (either synchronously or asynchronously),
    - allowing students to take tests and quizzes remotely,
    - providing alternate assignments or assessments, or
    - allowing the student to complete an independent study.
  + Accommodations **should not** be provided to students who are seeking modifications **unless they are also registered with ODS and approved for accommodations** (i.e., instructors are not required to and should not allow students requesting modifications to have extra time to complete their exams).
* Although it is possible for a student with a disability to also be in a high-risk group, the accommodation and modification processes are separate from one another.

**Appendix B - COVID-19 and Course Expectations**

The following provide guidance on when and how students who are quarantined, isolated, or test positive for COVID-19 may be exempt from homework or learning during their quarantine, isolation or positive test periods.

1. Isolation and quarantine periods address the need to prevent the spread of COVID-19; they do not exempt a student from completing assignments or fulfilling other requirements of the course.
2. Every case should be addressed based on the circumstances of the case.
3. Most students in quarantine are completely asymptomatic and capable of doing course work but may require some accommodations due to the fact that they cannot attend a face-to-face class for up to 14 days.
4. Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are in isolation may be moderately ill and unable to do course work for the entire isolation period, or they may be mildly ill and unable to do course work for 2-4 days, or completely asymptomatic and capable of doing course work.
5. The proper accommodation for a particular student requires a discussion between the faculty member and the student to determine the severity of the illness and what can be reasonably required of the student during the isolation or quarantine period.
6. Flexibility is important because a student who is ill cannot completely know whether their illness will remain mild and resolve in a few days or worsen and last much longer.