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Fall classrooms, July 31, 2020

University of Northern Iowa

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University of Northern Iowa

Fall classrooms

Dear Colleagues,

As we get closer to the fall semester, I will continue to provide details critical to faculty regarding our reopening protocol. I want to share with you today some additional details related to classrooms. The fall semester will be a new experience for us all, and it will be important that we are clear in our expectations, but offer grace and support as everyone adjusts to very different and stressful circumstances.

Room Capacity

Guidance from the CDC and IDPH demonstrates that reducing the number of people who are together at one time helps reduce spreading of COVID-19. To support this we have assigned classes to rooms using no more than 40% of the identified capacity. Generally, classroom capacities have also been capped at 50, allowing no more than 50 students plus the instructor to be present at a single time. The room capacities listed in the schedule have already been adjusted to reflect the capacity changes. Faculty do not need to adjust their daily attendance any further.

To help facilitate distancing in classrooms, “Do Not Sit” decals will be placed on select chairs in the general use classrooms (110 rooms). Facilities Management is currently in the process of marking seats for non-use in these classrooms and the process will be complete prior to the start of the semester. Associate deans and department heads are establishing patterns and marking seats for non-use in the 210 class laboratory rooms. The different room types assigned to your department are listed in the report on [Departmental Space Allocation](#) at the [Program Vitality](#) site. A more detailed explanation of this process can be found in an [email sent to department heads](#).

Hybrid Classes

Throughout the summer we have worked to move classes to larger rooms, create hybrid sections, and move some classes online. Although a few minor modifications may still be made, the schedule for fall semester is mostly complete and can be reviewed at any time. Students were [provided an explanation](#) of how to understand the mode of delivery of classes and asked that they review their schedules and contact advisors if changes were needed.

To accommodate hybrid classes in our registration system, courses that need an alternating meeting pattern have been set up as multiple sections. For example, a Tu/Th

class with a total enrollment of 70 students, will be set up in two sections of 35 students each. Each section will have alternating face-to-face meetings, such as in this example.

Section 01: T, SRL 212, 11:00-12:15
Th, Online, 11:00-12:15

Section 1A: T, Online, 11:00-12:15
Th, SRL 212, 11:00-12:15

Faculty can see the multiple meeting patterns in the Schedule of Classes, but students only see the meeting pattern for the section they are enrolled in. Examples of how this will look in a student's schedule can be found in the [Class Schedule Update email to students](#).

Multiple sections of hybrid classes are being combined in eLearning. When you use Blackboard, you should see the course only once, and enrollments of the various sections will be merged. If you have already built class materials it is possible it won't automatically merge. If you find any work missing, contact the Blackboard Administrator who can help you re-enable the original course so it can be copied to the new combined page. The work is always backed up and you do not have to redo it.

Assigned Seating and Room Plans

Faculty are expected to use assigned seating for the semester in order to help us quickly determine who might need to be contacted should someone become ill with COVID-19. You should assign the seating early in the semester and encourage consistency. To help support this, Facilities Management has produced seating diagrams for each 110 Classroom showing the arrangement of appropriate seating including noting seats that will be marked with "Do Not Sit" decals. They have also produced floor plans for 210 Class Laboratories. Because departments need to place decals in those rooms, only basic floor plans are provided for those spaces but they may still be useful when assigning seats. [Downloadable PDF documents of room layouts](#) are posted on the [Forward Together](#) website.

You will note in some rooms students may still be sitting within six feet of each other. While we have reduced the capacity of the rooms to 40%, we have not been able to seat everyone with the minimum preferred distance. Masks will be critical for us to slow the spread of the virus, and thus are mandated inside all buildings. Masks will be especially important in these situations.

Syllabus Statement

Faculty are asked to include the common statement regarding face coverings and distancing in their class syllabi. The recommended [syllabus statement](#) was written by the Forward Together committee on teaching and learning, and approved by the Faculty Senate. This [syllabus statement](#) will supplement and reinforce the informational training model students will be required to complete.

Teaching Supplies

Out of care and concern for all members of our campus community, the University of Northern Iowa will require everyone on our campus to wear a face covering while in campus buildings. Faculty members can receive two free face masks and one free face shield at the UNI Bookstore or at Essentials in Maucker Union by using their campus ID. Faculty who already received “fan masks” earlier in the summer can still receive the cotton-style masks for free.

Faculty members may find the use of face coverings and larger rooms create new challenges in voice projection. To assist with voice reinforcement, the University will be providing a Personal PA Speaker with a wireless microphone to any Faculty member who needs one. The Personal PAs will be available for checkout from the Rod Library shortly before the beginning of the Fall semester. Faculty may keep them for the entire semester and can carry them to different rooms. To check out a Personal PA, please visit the main desk at the Rod Library after August 13th. For more information on the Personal PA, please contact Rick Seeley at rick.seeley@uni.edu or 319-273-7218, or open a [Service Hub](#) ticket.

As we approach the start of the fall semester, please continue to monitor your email for updates and check the [Forward Together](#) website often. Emails such as this one will be archived on the [Campus Updates](#) section of the website for future reference.

Be well,
Jim