FAQs: Responding to COVID at Gillings

(Last updated August 20, 2021, 2:00 p.m.)

The FAQs below give additional details to support you in this rapidly changing context. We will update this document and date stamp it as new information becomes available.

The Carolina Together webpages have the most up-to-date information about COVID-related university policies and procedures. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with these webpages in addition to the information below. If you are uncertain about test results, let your decision-making be guided by exercising caution and err on the side of reducing exposures.

Classroom Standards

1. Are students required to wear masks in the classroom? All students are required to wear masks (and wear them correctly) in the classroom and inside our buildings, as described in the Community Standards. Please do not pull down your mask to talk during class. If a student does not have a mask on inside, remind them of the community standards. If they are unable to produce a mask (or use one of the free masks that are readily available throughout Gillings buildings), they should be told to leave the classroom. All syllabi must include specific wording about the University’s mask use policy. Faculty should review that policy with their students to be sure everyone is aware of and adheres to this policy. Here is additional guidance for students who refuse to wear a mask in class.

2. Is eating and drinking permitted in classrooms? Eating and drinking are not permitted in classrooms. Students may leave the classroom to drink, if needed. Faculty are encouraged to offer brief breaks each hour for courses that are longer than 60 minutes. We encourage the Gillings community to eat and drink outdoors in our courtyards. We have tents in several locations around our buildings, and they are available to all. People also may eat in the atrium or in shared offices, if necessary, but are encouraged to minimize time without a mask while eating and drinking and consider wearing the mask between bites/sips when around others. People in private offices may eat and drink with the door closed.

3. Can faculty remove their masks while teaching? Vaccinated faculty may remove masks while teaching, per Community Standards, but must maintain at least 3-6 feet of physical distance at all times.

4. What if I have forgotten to bring a mask? Masks are available in multiple locations in Gillings buildings.
   - Rosenau: Elevators near the front entrance; near Room 229 at vending machine
   - McGavran-Greenberg: Elevators near the north courtyard entrance; outside of Room 2301 next to the vending machine
   - Michael Hooker Research Center (MHRC): 1200 hallway opposite restrooms; Lower Atrium next to vending machines; Security Guard desk by main atrium entrance

Exposures

5. What happens when a faculty or staff member has been exposed to/in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID?
   a. Vaccinated faculty and staff members who are identified as a close contact with (i.e., exposed to) an individual who has tested positive for COVID should follow quarantine guidelines for vaccinated individuals, even if asymptomatic, including getting tested within 3-5 days, wearing a mask at all times when in public, and consulting with primary care provider with questions. If symptoms develop follow protocols in Item 7.b.
   b. Unvaccinated faculty or staff members who are identified as a close contact with (i.e., exposed to) an individual who has tested positive for COVID should follow quarantine guidelines even if asymptomatic,

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1 A close contact is defined as having been within 6 feet of the individual for 15+ minutes within a 24-hour period.
including: consulting with primary care provider; getting tested immediately and once again after 5-7
days if first test is negative; and quarantining for at least 10 days after last exposure. If symptoms
develop follow protocols in Item 7.b.

6. Can faculty continue to teach in person if they have been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID?
   a. Fully vaccinated faculty. Yes. Follow protocols in Item 5.a. NOTE: Quarantine guidelines do permit in-
      person teaching, but instructors should be in contact with their department chair to determine how best
      to address their unique situation.
   b. Unvaccinated faculty. No. Follow protocols in Item 5.b. Faculty may resume teaching in person after 10
days if all tests are negative. Instructors should be in contact with their department chair, who will work
with faculty member to determine plans for course instruction and other specifics of their unique
situation.

Symptoms

7. What should faculty, staff or students do if they have COVID symptoms? All faculty, staff and students are
expected to self-monitor for COVID symptoms daily. Those who have any symptoms consistent with COVID
must quarantine, get tested immediately and should not return to class, work or campus until negative test
for COVID is confirmed.
   a. Students should contact Campus Health to schedule an appointment (through online scheduling or by
calling 919-966-2281) to arrange for testing and determine next steps and then let their course
instructors know they will not be attending class. With guidance from the local health department,
Campus Health works closely with Environment, Health and Safety (EHS). Staff from EHS will then inform
exposed faculty and/or staff if they have been identified as a close contact of a student who has tested
positive for COVID. Students may want to let their instructors know they will be out of class with
symptoms as a precautionary step.
   b. Staff and faculty should immediately arrange for a COVID test with their primary providers or other
testing site, contact their medical provider, and inform their supervisor or department chair. (The
Carolina Together Campus Testing Program is for asymptomatic students and employees.)

8. Can faculty continue to teach in person if they have COVID symptoms? No. Course instructors with symptoms
should follow guidance in Item 7-b and then shift to leading class remotely until their COVID test results are
returned. If an instructor tests negative for COVID, in-person teaching can resume.

Positive Tests

9. Students, faculty and staff who TEST POSITIVE for COVID must immediately isolate for at least 10 days after
onset of symptoms. Campus Health will conduct contact tracing for any member of the Carolina community
who tests positive for COVID.
   a. Students must also immediately contact Campus Health. Campus Health staff will conduct case
investigation and contact tracing and will work with students to identify close contacts.
   b. Faculty and staff must immediately contact their primary provider and notify department chair or
supervisor. Someone from Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) will inform faculty/staff who are close
contacts as soon as possible.
   c. Faculty with teaching responsibilities who TEST POSITIVE for COVID must not come to campus and
must immediately shift to leading class remotely. Instructors should contact their department chair,
who will make every effort to support those with a positive COVID test — including help with course
coverage, if necessary. If a change in mode of instruction is needed for more than a few class meetings,
please contact the Senior Associate Dean, Academic and Student Affairs. In-class course delivery can
resume after a minimum of 10 days if the instructor is asymptomatic, has been cleared by their health
care provider and feels well enough to teach.

10. Are there any specific considerations for Gillings students or faculty who have clinical responsibilities? A small
percentage of students and faculty at Gillings have some or regular interactions with the health care system and
patients. These individuals are covered by specific protocols established by UNC Health. For example, students with placements in these settings who test positive for COVID will need permission from Campus Health to return to class or clinical service. Students should contact Campus Health with questions and/or their program director. Faculty with clinical responsibilities should be covered by separate UNC Health policies.

11. What happens if a staff or faculty member is too ill to fulfill their duties? Like any other serious illness absence, faculty who are too ill to fulfill their duties should notify their department chair immediately; staff who are too ill should be in contact with their supervisor. The faculty/staff member and the chair/supervisor can then develop a plan for covering all duties, including identifying a substitute instructor for class[es], or hiring temporary workers, as needed. Faculty/staff with COVID will be permitted to apply for leave under Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The department chair should notify the Senior Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs of faculty-related plans for longer term mode of instruction changes. Consistent with HIPPA guidelines, reasons for the leave of absence will be held confidential.

12. Who is handling contact tracing? Campus Health conducts contact tracing when a member of the Carolina community — including students, faculty and staff — tests positive for COVID. More information on contact tracing is available on the Carolina Together website. Faculty/staff should talk with their primary care provider to make sure it is safe to return to work. Students, faculty and staff all may pursue an extended leave of absence if necessary.

13. Who “clears” students, staff or faculty who have tested positive for COVID to return to the classroom/work? Student clearances are generally handled through the University Approved Absences process. Faculty/staff should be in contact with their primary care provider to make sure it is safe to return to work, and they should communicate with contacts at Environment, Health and Safety for guidance and clearance to return to work. Students, faculty and staff all have opportunities to pursue an extended leave of absence if necessary.

Disclosures/Notifications

14. Will faculty be informed if a student in their class has tested positive for COVID? No. Some students who contract COVID may have few or no symptoms and will be able to continue class remotely while isolating for 10 days. Other students may seek a University Approved Absence (UAA), as they do for other multiple day illnesses or emergencies. UAA staff will notify you if they have approved a student for absences but will not specify reasons. Close contacts will be notified, but the identity of the positive student will not be shared by Campus Health or Environment, Health and Safety. NOTE: We ask faculty to make it a standard practice to record all course sessions this semester in the event a student needs the course information in a different format. In all circumstances, please support the student and make sure they are aware of Campus Health and other resources to make up coursework.

15. Can faculty tell others (faculty or students) that a student tested positive? No. Campus Health staff strongly advise against letting others know when a student has tested positive. If warranted, Campus Health works with the UNC Communications team to provide messaging to school contacts if a message to a broader group (e.g., all students in a class) is needed. This will occur if there is sufficient concern that the entire group of students and instructors need to be notified to be tested.

16. What information can a faculty member disclose to other students or TAs about a student in their class who tests positive for COVID? Faculty may not disclose any information to others about a student who tests positive for COVID without that student’s express permission. Students themselves may choose to disclose information to their peers and/or instructors. If that happens, taking appropriate action without revealing student names or other information is permissible. Please avoid stigmatizing any student at any time.

17. Will anyone at the Gillings School receive a student’s notice or clearance to return to class? No. The clearance is HIPAA protected information. Only in the case of students with clinical responsibilities will permission to return to class be required (see Item 8).

Changes in Mode of Instruction/Substitute Instructors

18. What happens if an instructor switches delivery mode and doesn’t notify the appropriate parties? The dean and senior associate dean for Academic and Student Affairs are responsible for assuring that class delivery matches the mode approved through the Registrar. Students rely on that information as well. Instructors should
not unilaterally change their mode of instruction. Instructors should notify their department chair and senior associate dean for academic and student affairs if a change in delivery is needed. Instructors should be prepared to discuss specific concerns or circumstances.

19. Do you have vetted language that instructors can use if they are advised by Campus Health to move a class online because of a possible case within their class?
   “Hello students. I was notified by Campus Health that an individual who attended X class [on X days] tested positive for COVID-19 on X date. Out of an abundance of caution, we will be holding class via Zoom on DATE/TIME. The Zoom link will be sent via Outlook. Sending well wishes that the affected individual heals quickly and completely. UNC Campus Health is doing the case investigation and will contact you if they determine that you are a close contact. They will give you specific guidance at that time. If you develop symptoms, please seek immediate medical attention. Here is the link to general information regarding exposures.”

Supporting Students through COVID

20. What is the Gillings School plan for handling student absences due to COVID isolation/quarantine? We continue to use the touchstones of adaptability, flexibility, and kindness when it comes to COVID-related issues, including how to work with students who must make-up course work due to COVID-related absences.
   a. Faculty have been advised to proactively record all course sessions this semester and post them to Sakai so students may access content asynchronously.
   b. Any student asked to quarantine or isolate due to COVID is eligible for a University Approved Absence (UAA). It is the student’s choice to request UAAs, and not every student in isolation or quarantine may need them. Faculty are strongly encouraged to invite students to participate synchronously via Zoom when possible and health-permitting. For additional specific strategies for supporting students who need to be absent from class for 3 or more days, please see the University Approved Absence Office website.

21. What support do students have for coping with COVID?

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<tr>
<th>For information about...</th>
<th>Contact and/or follow instructions at:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testing information</td>
<td>Unvaccinated students must get Covid tested twice weekly. Unvaccinated faculty and staff must get Covid tested weekly beginning on September 15. Guidance for testing, including location, frequency and hours, can be found at the CTP testing website. This requirement is for ALL individuals who come to campus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If a student tests positive for COVID, self-isolate</td>
<td>Contact Campus Health at 919-966-6573</td>
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<td>Quarantine guidance – if you have symptoms and/or have been exposed and are awaiting test results</td>
<td><a href="https://campushealth.unc.edu/sites/campushealth.unc.edu/files/Quarantine%20Instructions%20-%20Campus%20Health%2007.30.21.pdf">https://campushealth.unc.edu/sites/campushealth.unc.edu/files/Quarantine%20Instructions%20-%20Campus%20Health%2007.30.21.pdf</a></td>
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<td>UNC Campus Wellness COVID website</td>
<td><a href="https://campushealth.unc.edu/services/covid-19-service-details-and-faqs">https://campushealth.unc.edu/services/covid-19-service-details-and-faqs</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>A long-term student absence related to COVID</td>
<td>Submit a request to the University Approved Absences Office (UAAO).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Standards</td>
<td><a href="https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/community-standards">https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/community-standards</a></td>
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## Additional Questions

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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td><a href="#">Charletta Sims Evans</a>, MEd, Associate Dean for Student Affairs</td>
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<td>Gillings facilities, cleaning protocols, air quality, signage, outdoor spaces</td>
<td><a href="#">Brent Wishart</a>, MS, Facilities Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional design</td>
<td><a href="#">Aiya Williams</a>, MS, Instructional Technology Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mode of instruction change</td>
<td>Department chair; then <a href="#">Laura Linnan, ScD</a>, Senior Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoom or other classroom technology</td>
<td><a href="#">OJ McGhee</a>, MA, Instructional Media Services Manager</td>
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