



August 3, 2020<sup>1</sup>

## **Classroom and Syllabus Guidelines for Instructors Related to COVID-19**

The Florida A&M University Board of Trustees adopted the FAMU Fall 2020 Re-Opening Operational Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan details expectations for members of the University community, including social/physical distancing, wearing face coverings, frequent hand washing, staying home when sick, and limiting the size of in-person meetings and gatherings. These expectations are based on University, local<sup>2</sup>, state, and federal safety guidelines. University enforcement of these expectations contributes to the overall effort of safeguarding the health and well-being of stakeholders, to the greatest extent possible.

It may be necessary for faculty and academic unit leaders to interact with the Office of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution (Student Conduct) regarding classroom behavior. Student Conduct aims to work collaboratively with the larger Florida A&M University community to create a safe and secure scholarly environment. Student Conduct's priority is to educate students regarding the importance of the consistent practice of preventive measures and provide opportunities for our students to correct their behavior on their own without the need for formal Student Conduct action. However, formal conduct action should be sought to address repeated or egregious violations of University regulations and expectations.

The guidelines outlined in this document are intended to provide a helpful roadmap for faculty to navigate classroom interactions regarding these requirements and support effective educational outcomes. While these guidelines have been developed to help instructors maintain a safe classroom environment with COVID-19 requirements, they can also be applied to a wide variety of classroom situations. The University expects faculty and students to treat each other in an equitable manner in all aspects of the classroom environment regardless of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and military veteran status.

### **Related to COVID-19 requirements for Fall 2020, instructors should:**

1. Include a University statement of classroom behavioral requirements in all course syllabi related to COVID-19 including the appropriate wear of face coverings and social/physical distancing requirements. Depending on the classroom and the nature of

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<sup>1</sup> This guidance is current as of the date listed herein and is subject to change or as additional information becomes available.

<sup>2</sup> Please see Leon County Amended Emergency Ordinance No. 20-15 at <https://cms.leoncountyfl.gov/Portals/0/CMR/Docs/Amended%20Emergency%20Ordinance%2020-15.pdf?ver=2020-07-23-164637-463>, July 14, 2020.

- the course, instructors may add other requirements (e.g., directional guidance in laboratories).
- Instructors are encouraged to consider including compliance with these requirements as part of the overall participation grade in the course.
  - Sending an email, and/or posting an announcement on Canvas to remind students about the requirements before the semester begins may help set the tone.
2. Verbally review classroom requirements at the beginning of the semester and spend a few minutes on these requirements during class periods before the end of the drop/add period.

**If a student fails to adhere to the requirements during a class, instructors should take the following steps, in quick succession:**

1. Remind the student, in a firm yet kind manner, of the requirement and the safety reasons for it.
2. Ask the student to comply.
  - If appropriate, make the student aware of places face coverings are available on campus and permit students to secure one with minimal academic penalty. Disposable face coverings are available in safety vending machines throughout the main campus and in the Coleman Library.
3. Remind the student that their non-compliance is a violation of class requirements and of the Student Code of Conduct (See notes below regarding “failure to comply” and disruptive behavior) and repeat the request that the student comply.
4. Ask the student to either comply or to leave the classroom immediately.
5. If the student fails to comply or leave, assess the situation, and dismiss class.
6. Should an emergency situation develop that you feel cannot be resolved by classroom dismissal, please consider calling the University’s Department of Campus Safety and Security at 850-599-3256 for assistance.

**After class, instructors should:**

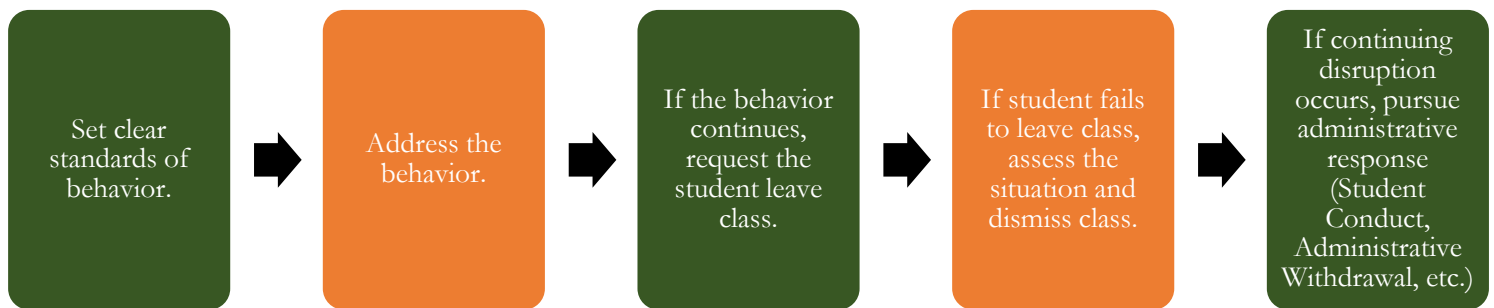
1. Immediately file a detailed report with Student Conduct online at <https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?FloridaAMUniv> or send an email to Antoneia Roe, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, at [antoneia.roe@famu.edu](mailto:antoneia.roe@famu.edu) regarding students who failed to comply. Student Conduct will contact the student to address the behavior.
  - Students dismissed from a single class meeting for failure to correctly wear a face covering may continue to attend classes during the Student Conduct review process.
  - For escalated cases in which the student may not return to class, absences from class during the pending Student Conduct review process shall be considered excused. Students must be permitted to complete coursework outside of class during that time.
2. Consider an email or other communication reminder outlining the requirement for future classes for students who initially violated the requirement but chose to comply when reminded. This allows the student to explain their action in a way that might help

mitigate it in the future. Please copy Student Conduct on reminder emails as well for tracking purposes.

3. Immediately communicate a class dismissal to your academic unit leader (i.e., that is, department head, director, or dean) and, as soon as possible, produce a written record of the facts.
4. Consult your academic unit leader regarding the use of administrative withdrawal for students who continually violate these expectations.

## Summary

Classroom steps are outlined below:



The University acknowledges and accepts that individual faculty members have differing levels of comfort, skill, and philosophy regarding classroom management. All faculty can be confident of the University’s support as they appropriately reinforce the classroom requirements set forth in this document. Likewise, faculty can be confident that referrals to Student Conduct will be addressed.

## Sample COVID-19 Language:

- **Sample Syllabus Statement:**
  - “Wearing a face covering in public can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community. In accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Florida Department of Health,<sup>3</sup> Florida A&M University has determined that everyone will be required to wear a face covering in university buildings, including classrooms. You **MUST** wear a face covering appropriately (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) in the building if you are attending class in person. Everyone is expected to wear one while inside any university building or

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<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, April 3) Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

Florida Department of Health. (2020, June 22) State of Florida Department of Health Public Health Advisory.

<https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/20200622-SOF-DOH-Public-Health-Advisory.pdf>

public space in which social/physical distancing cannot be observed. Face coverings other than those provided by the University are acceptable so long as they provide appropriate coverage (mouth and nose).

Students who choose not to wear a face covering may participate in class remotely, if available, but may not attend in person. Face coverings protect the health and safety of individual students as well as the health and safety of their classmates, instructor, and the university community. Anyone attending class in person without a face covering or whose face covering does not provide appropriate coverage will be asked to put one on, adjust the position of/replace their covering, or leave. Instructors will end class if anyone present refuses to appropriately wear a face covering for the duration of class. Students should observe signage or otherwise sit, stand, and situate themselves at least six feet away from their fellow students, faculty, and staff. Students who refuse to wear face coverings appropriately or adhere to other stated requirements may face disciplinary action for Student Code of Conduct violations. Students may consult with the Center for Disability Access and Resources (CeDAR) on a case-by-case basis for accommodations if they cannot wear a face covering. Students requiring such accommodations may be advised to take advantage of and participate in a section of the course offered through remote instruction, if available.

Finally, students who are experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms must not attend class in person and are encouraged to contact a health care provider. Students must report their absence to the course instructor. Alternatively, students may contact Student Health Services to report their absence, who will work with the student to communicate with the course instructor.”

- **Syllabus Sample Statement Regarding Participation Points**
  - Instructors may have participation guidelines and requirements related to classroom behavior as it relates to interaction in the classroom, especially in response to COVID-19. Although allowed by the University, these policies should be stated clearly on the syllabus.
  - Sample statement: “A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus, including the University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on the readings or material in the lecture.”
  
- **Syllabus Sample Regarding SpotterEDU**

Students are expected to make the most of the educational opportunities available by regularly attending classes and laboratory periods. The university reserves the right to address individual cases of non-attendance. Your professor will be using Spotter (an automated attendance monitoring platform) to record your attendance for this class.

To enable this, you are required to:

1. Download SpotterEDU from the App store (Android or iOS)
2. Install the App and go through the provided setup process
3. KEEP BLUETOOTH ON for entire class period

It is your responsibility to:

- a. Ensure your phone is not in airplane mode, or low battery. SpotterEDU uses about 2% of your battery for an entire day of use.
- b. Check the app each class period to ensure your attendance was confirmed. If not, stop to see the Professor before leaving class. Emails or any other excuse given after class period will not be accepted

SpotterEDU only monitors class attendance during your scheduled class time and does not know where you are if you are not in class.

PLEASE NOTE: YOU HAVE THE OPTION TO NOT DOWNLOAD AND USE THE SPOTTER APPLICATION. HOWEVER, IF YOU DO NOT USE SPOTTER, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO NOTIFY THE FACULTY MEMBER ABOUT WHETHER YOU ARE IN EACH CLASS.

- **Sample Statement for the Start of Class Related to COVID-19:**
  - “As you enter class (or, ‘As we begin class’), I expect that each of you is wearing a face covering that covers your mouth and nose. Please also be sure you are situated at least 6 feet away from your fellow students and seated in a seat that is designated to ensure that distance. (Add other appropriate language specific to the class here.) It is also important to remember that face coverings are required to be worn in any University building or public space in which social/physical distancing cannot be observed. These requirements are in place to promote the safety of our entire community.”
  - The following excerpt from the Student Code of Conduct provides additional context:
    - The University’s Student Code of Conduct provides language necessary to address behaviors that related to enforcement of COVID-19 requirements, including but not limited to:
      - Disorderly Conduct: Behavior that disturbs the peace or undermines public safety, such as causing a disturbance or being unruly; failure to comply with the lawful order or reasonable request of an identified University official, any non-University law enforcement official, any non-University emergency responder, or any protective order.

- Disruptive Behavior: Disruption of a class, curricular, or University activity; obstruction of the free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on University premises; interference with the rights of others to carry out their activities or duties at, or on behalf of the University; interference with the freedom of movement of any member or guest of the University; interference with the academic freedom and freedom of speech of any member or guest of the University; or any other act that impairs, interferes with or obstructs the mission, purposes, academic atmosphere, operations, processes, orderly conduct and/or functions of the University or the rights of other members of the University community.
  - Harassment: Verbal or written abuse (including electronic communications or internet activity), threats, intimidation, coercion and/or other conduct that endangers the health, safety, or welfare of others, or places another individual in reasonable fear of physical harm or creates a hostile environment in which others are unable to reasonably conduct or participate in work, education, research, living or other activities. Harassment also includes actions defined in University Regulation 10.103.
  - Noncompliance with a University Official's Directive: Failure to comply with oral or written instruction from a University official (i.e. faculty, staff, administration, residence hall staff, law enforcement officer) acting within the scope of their job duties.
  - Violation of Law: Violation of federal or state law or rules, local ordinance, or laws of other national jurisdictions; Florida Board of Governors Regulation; any other University regulation rule, or University Board of Trustees Policy.
- Referrals to Office of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution for noncompliance may result in the student being informed, in writing, that their behavior is in violation of the University's community standards and further violations will result in formal conduct action. Formal conduct action or blatant disregard for the University's standards may result in disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University. The Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution may also contact the instructor directly to gather detailed information surrounding the incident.