

UC Davis Faculty & Students

As you are surely aware, the number of cases of H1N1 infection among our students has been growing. More importantly, those students with this diagnosis have been given very specific guidelines about class attendance from their healthcare providers under the guidance of the Yolo County Health Department. Included in the student's packet of guidelines is a reminder to inform their instructors of the restrictions placed upon their attendance at classes and laboratories. A copy of this set of guidelines can be found at: <http://healthcenter.ucdavis.edu/topics/flu-swine.html>. This note is to remind faculty and students of their rights and obligations as we work together to insure the health of our students and the integrity of our degree programs.

The responsibility to initiate this faculty/student conversation is with the student. In so doing, instructors are expected to provide reasonable accommodations for students who are unable to attend class and/or complete assignments in a timely manner as they deal with their illness and follow the instructions of public health officers. It has generally been our practice to require students to provide instructors with documentation of their illness, whether from private physicians or the staff of Cowell Student Health Services (SHS). However, we wish to remind Instructors that the volume of students who are being diagnosed with this illness is substantial and is making the provision of individualized documentation unworkable. In addition, because of the need to keep ill students from coming to campus, the SHS is working with many students over the phone and thus can only substantiate that they have been contacted by students who are reporting symptoms of this illness. In such cases, the SHS will only be able to provide to instructors an email version of the flu illness self-care advice and public health recommendations for work/school absence. The SHS will advise the students that they may copy and forward this document electronically, if needed, ASAP without coming on campus, or, alternatively download the document and bring it into the instructor as illness verification after their symptoms have resolved. We ask that you accept this level of documentation in the effort of promoting a healthy campus. Any questions or concerns regarding the authenticity of these electronic documents can be directed to the SHS Director, Michelle Famula, by phoning the Director's Office at 752-2333.

We ask that instructors provide students with explicit details of these accommodations and to remind students that inability to attend class does not eliminate all their academic responsibilities. Based upon the instructor's discretion and judgment, accommodation could take the form of (but is not limited to) a grade of "Incomplete", recommendation to the student to consider a P/NP option and contact their Dean's Office if necessary, amendment to the assigned work for the class (such as extending a deadline), or any other solution faculty deem to be academically rigorous while accommodating the needs of a student who has been asked to not

attend regular class meetings. The regulations governing grades can be found at: http://academicsenate.ucdavis.edu/cerj/manual/dd_regs.cfm#GRADES . Remember, this unique flu season has not changed academic policy. Rather, we are looking for the faculty and students to work constructively together, during what we hope is a temporary health event, to ensure that students follow the recommendations of their health care providers.

We ask instructors to pay particular attention to the needs of students who are engaged in classes that meet specific major or college requirements, along with the potentially special needs of students who had anticipated graduating at the end of this quarter. In some cases this accommodation may require a coordination of efforts between instructors, academic advisors and the Associate Dean of the appropriate college. Though this process is not expected to be simple, we do hope that all members of the campus community can work together to insure the health and safety of others while maintaining our commitment to standards of a University of California degree.

Of course, we know that the faculty may become ill as well. We ask that instructors keep their department chairs fully informed of their ability to attend class. We would expect that department chairs have planned for the possibility of faculty illness. Students should therefore be assured that the faculty will make every effort to have this quarter's educational experience to be similar to any other quarter. We hope that faculty and students, working together, can minimize the academic impact of this disease.

We hope this additional information is helpful.

Robert Powell
Chair, Academic Senate

Fred Wood
Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs