

START STRONG: Faculty Guidelines for Creating a Safe Learning Environment

Developing your syllabus:

- VCU Standard syllabus guidelines available at <https://provost.vcu.edu/faculty/faculty-resources/syllabus/> contain additional sample syllabus statements related to the unique circumstances related to Covid 19.
- All faculty are asked to post their syllabi in Blackboard, Canvas, or some other learning management system, at least one week prior to the first day of class. Faculty can also post their syllabi in E-Services (attached directions will be a website link).

Send an email to all students prior to the first day of class addressing the following:

- Start with a brief self-introduction and let them know you designed your course to maximize learning, while staying flexible during this time.
- Remind your students we are all in this together.
- All students are required to complete the student onboarding training prior to return to campus ([https://rise.articulate.com/share/GhEPykTU4ojoyq3jY00bM4yrh8C58S5o4#/\)](https://rise.articulate.com/share/GhEPykTU4ojoyq3jY00bM4yrh8C58S5o4#/)
- Let them know you will follow VCU guidelines and must require all students to practice social distancing and wear a face mask following CDC guidelines.
- Any Monroe Park Campus student needing a medical exception to wearing a face mask should contact the [Student Accessibility and Education Office](#). MCV Campus students should contact the [Division for Academic Success](#).
- Students who cannot, or are unwilling to, comply with the social distancing and face covering requirements should speak with their advisor about the possibility of switching to a fully online course alternative if possible.
- You look forward to having them in class and you will also be wearing a face mask and practicing social distancing.
- Inform students if they are not wearing a face mask, they should contact their instructor and not come to class.
- Inform students if they do not come to class wearing a mask, they will be asked to leave immediately.
- Inform your students where to go if they need to request a temporary mask (VCU is planning to have some additional disposable masks in all campus buildings. More information to come from your unit's Return to Campus Coordinator regarding the specific location of temporary masks).

First day of class reminders:

- We are all in this together, and you too will be wearing a face mask and keeping social distance.
- Daily health survey:-VCU requires students to complete a daily five-second survey. Daily health monitoring is everyone's responsibility. A reminder email with a link to the health survey will be sent daily.

- To be effective, face masks must cover both your nose and mouth. Expect to be gently reminded to adjust your mask if you come to class with it not covering both nose and mouth.
- Students are required to wear face masks and practice social distancing in classrooms, labs, studios, hallways, elevators, restrooms, libraries, student-led study sessions, and all campus buildings. Face masks are recommended but may be removed while outside as long as physical distancing occurs.
- Any student who does not have a proper face covering should leave the class immediately.
- Inform students in advance if any student not wearing proper face covering refuses to leave class, you are required to dismiss the entire class immediately, and refer the non-compliant student to the Dean of Students office for possible disciplinary action. Any students referred to the Dean of Students may not return to class until they have met with the Dean of Students or designee.
- We should all be mindful that “not sharing is caring”. Students should not share calculators, cell phones, lab materials, studio equipment, tools, etc.
- Remind your students of the many resources shared in VCU’s Keep on Learning website <https://altlab.vcu.edu/rapid-response/students/>

Strategies for dealing with a non-compliant student during class:

1. While maintaining social distancing, approach the student and attempt to privately and discreetly ask them to put their mask on during class. If needed, remind them they can go to the building coordinator to request a mask. Ask them to leave class and return after they are wearing a proper mask.
2. If a student does not comply and wear a proper face covering, dismiss the class for the day and remind them of any course related materials available online.
3. Follow-up with an email to the non-compliant student stating you must refer the situation to the Dean of Students office for a possible student Code of Conduct violation. Inform the student they cannot return to your class until they wear the proper face covering.
4. Use the following reporting form to notify the Dean of Students office of the incident: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?VirginiaCommonwealthUniv&layout_id=0
5. Any student referred to the Dean of Students office may not return to class until they meet with a representative from the Dean of Student office.