**COVID-19 CLASSROOM PROTOCOLS**

**Rob Baker, Mike Mattison, Cherie Rebar, Brooke Wagner**

In alignment with public health recommendations, Wittenberg University is taking measures to prevent community spread of COVID-19. These measures include enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures that will take place across campus. The purpose of this policy is to describe:

* Personal classroom space hygiene,
* The procedure for students entering and exiting a classroom setting, and
* Classroom expectations for faculty and student behavior.

\*\*The policies set forth herein are baseline protocols for all classrooms. Departments that have special classroom concerns, e.g., labs and fine arts classes, will need to adopt additional safety and hygiene protocols. Faculty in those departments should be mindful of any additional protocols to follow.

**Personal classroom space hygiene**

1. To help prevent the spread of Covid-19, the University strongly encourages best public health practices that, at a minimum, require everyone—faculty, staff, students, and campus visitors—to a) adhere to social distancing expectations, b) wear a face covering that covers both the nose and the mouth, and c) thoroughly wash hands frequently.
2. University housekeeping personnel will clean classrooms once per day. However, students, faculty, and staff are strongly advised to wipe down/clean their personal classroom spaces each time they enter, and before class begins. Cleaning supplies will be available in each classroom. All used wipes and cleaning towels/rags must be disposed of properly.
3. Special Considerations:
	1. Fixed technology (desktop computers, document cameras, etc.) will be disinfected in a way that is appropriate for electronics as determined by Witt Solution Center.
	2. If an item is brought to class by faculty for student use, it must be disinfected before and after use. This includes, but is not limited to, items such as manipulatives, lab equipment, and/or tools. Appropriate cleaning protocols for the use of these small items should be developed by each department.
	3. If students bring items for use in class, faculty must remind students of their responsibility to clean the items properly before and after classroom use.
	4. As noted, Departments will develop appropriate cleaning protocols for alternative classroom learning environments, like wet-labs and computer labs that will follow the guidelines above as well as take into account unique challenges created by the spaces.

**Procedures for faculty and students entering and exiting buildings and classrooms**

1. Prior to the beginning of the semester, faculty or staff members will notify students how to properly enter and exit the classroom for each of their courses. Some classrooms may be assigned a specific entry door, and a separate exit door. Other classrooms may have only one door that serves as an entry/exit point. It is recommended that a template for each classroom be made available to faculty teaching in that room.
2. Students should arrive for class **no earlier** than 5 minutes prior to the designated start time, and will enter the room only when the faculty or staff member has opened the door to indicate that entry is available.
3. Congregating in hallways prior to and after class is strongly discouraged. Students will wait patiently, maintaining 6-foot social distancing in the hallways prior to class.
4. Faculty will inform students of the correct pathways to be followed in each classroom building in order to promote appropriate social distancing during building when entering or exiting.
5. Students will enter classrooms one at a time, practicing social distancing of at least 6 feet between themselves.
6. Unless necessary, the use of handrails upon entering or exiting a room is discouraged.
7. At the conclusion of class, the faculty or staff member will notify the students that the exit process will begin. Faculty will dismiss students one row at a time, with social distancing of at least 6 feet between the students as they exit the room.
8. Once all students exit the room, the faculty or staff member will exit the room, leaving the room unlocked.

**Classroom expectations for student and faculty behavior**

1. All personnel—faculty, staff members, and students—will wear a face covering that always covers their noses and mouths when inside buildings and classrooms. The only exception to this is that faculty may choose to wear a face shield rather than a cloth covering when at the front of the room. Faculty who choose to wear a face shield must also have a covering ready to pull up over their faces if they need to move closer than 6 feet away from students for a brief period, or if they need to cough or sneeze.
2. It is recommended that students and faculty carry at least one extra face covering with them at all times, so that a soiled one (from sneezing, coughing, or other form of wetting, or contamination) can be replaced. Students and faculty should regularly wash used face coverings at least once a day. Handwashing the face covering is ok as long as soap and hot water are used for at least 20 seconds.
3. Consumption of food is in the classroom is strongly discouraged.
4. Drinks are discouraged but are permitted if they can be consumed while wearing a face covering.
5. It is recommended that any materials for student use should be sent electronically before the beginning of class. Handing out papers or folders in class is discouraged, but if necessary, only the faculty should handle the papers. Given the expectation of assigned seating, faculty could possibly hand out the papers/folders to each assigned seat prior to the students entering the classroom.
6. It is anticipated that a designated room for administering tests/exams will be set up for faculty to schedule as needed. The same guidelines regarding papers, folders, and exam books noted in #5 above should be followed.
7. Faculty should have their own supply of markers and chalk. If students are required to use markers or chalk during class, two options are recommended: Option 1: Faculty provides these items, ensuring they are cleaned and disinfected before each use. Option 2: Faculty requires students to bring these items to class as a course material. If faculty require students to bring their own chalk or markers, it is strongly advised that faculty make this clear in the course syllabus, including the requirement that the markers/chalk be correctly cleaned before and after use.
8. Manipulatives, equipment, tools, etc., will be cleaned as outlined in the small-items protocol submitted by each department.
9. At all times possible, faculty should remain at the front of the room during class, maintaining a six-foot distance from students. Faculty should deviate from this only if absolutely necessary and even then, only for a brief time to minimize potential viral spread.
10. It is strongly recommended that faculty use assigned seating in all classes. Regardless, student seating, whether assigned or open, will reflect social distancing, with at least 6 feet between students. Social distancing must be maintained throughout the entire class, including during group work and activities. Contact tracing will be more easily conducted under a regimen of assigned seating.
11. Faculty must track student attendance in order to facilitate contact tracing. It is recommended that faculty use the recommended electronic attendance-tracking method (either Wittenberg Self-Service Portal or Moodle). At the very least, though, some record of student attendance is required.
12. It is recommended that faculty attempt to contact absent students to determine why they are absent. If the student indicates they are sick with possible Covid-19 symptoms, it is further recommended that the faculty member remind the student of the need to contact the Heath Center for appropriate follow-up and care.
13. Students, faculty, or staff members should not move seats and/or desks. If moving seats/desks is absolutely necessary, social distancing must be maintained, and seats should be returned to their original location at the end of class.
14. Per CDC guidelines, coughing/sneezing episodes are to be contained by coughing/sneezing into one’s sleeve (elbow or shoulder) and keeping the face covering on. Any student with a persistent coughing or sneezing event, while in class, will be asked to leave to minimize any cross contamination with other classmates. This requirement must be explained to students by faculty at the beginning of the semester, and faculty should make sure this protocol is not viewed as stigmatizing, but rather accepted as part of common courtesy and appropriate behavior to help minimize viral spread.
15. If a student needs to blow their nose, they must exit the room to do so. They will dispose of the tissue into a waste receptacle and immediately wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds prior to returning to class.
16. During class, doors will remain open to improve airflow. Windows may also be opened during appropriate weather conditions. Please sanitize any window handles used.
17. Any violations of classroom safety and hygiene protocols will be subject to Student Handbook regulations governing violations of University rules. Violations will be handled on a case-by-case situation with faculty and Student Development staff.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2020a). Cleaning and disinfecting your facility. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [CDC] (2020b). Considerations for institutions of higher learning. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [CDC] (2020c). Interim considerations for institutions of higher education administrators for SARS-CoV-2 testing. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/ihe-testing.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2020d). Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-ihe-response.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2020e). Show me the science – when and how to use hand sanitizer in community settings. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-hand-sanitizer.html>

United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA]. (2020a). Guidance for cleaning and disinfection: Public spaces, workplaces, businesses, schools, and homes. <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-04/documents/316485-c_reopeningamerica_guidance_4.19_6pm.pdf>

Resources on Face Shields:

1. Face shields only if doing physical assessment on each other; otherwise, cloth masks- <https://nursing.wsu.edu/safety-guidelines-for-college-of-nursing-labs>
2. Face shields only if in very close proximity of each other; otherwise, cloth masks - <https://www.nursing.umaryland.edu/media/son/Return-to-Clinical-Experiential-Learning-and-Return-to-Face-to-Face-Simulation.pdf>
3. Article from JAMA on efficacy of face shields: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2765525>

United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA]. (2020b). List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2. <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>