

Faculty Procedures for Dealing with the H1N1 Flu in the Classroom

In an effort to assist faculty in dealing with students who may be evidencing symptoms of the H1N1 flu, the university is providing some guidelines. Remember that first and foremost we need to assure the health and safety of all students, as well as faculty and staff. In your obligation as a faculty member, you have a crucial role in limiting the effects, if any, of this pandemic. Separate communications deal with how you personally should take steps to protect your own health.

But, what can you do in the classroom?

1. Dismiss a student who you have any reason to believe has flu-like symptoms. All flu-like symptoms are now considered to be H1N1 because of its widespread occurrence and the length of time for accurate testing. Err on the side of caution.
2. In the highly unlikely event that a student refuses to leave the classroom you must take steps to prevent the spread of disease. At a last resort, campus public safety may be summoned (X2515)
3. Inform students that they should voluntarily stay away from class if ill even if you've not dismissed them.
4. Provide any dismissed or otherwise flu-related absent student an alternative method of making up any work missed because of any absence.
5. Do not require a doctor's excuse prior to a student's return. In an attempt to avoid further spread of the disease and to preserve medical resources, the Orange County Health Care Agency recommends that anyone experiencing flu-like symptoms only contact their personal physician or health care provider if symptoms persist or worsen or if they have an underlying medical condition. Mild infections usually do not require medical attention.
6. Be aware that persons 24 years of age and younger appear to be more vulnerable than others. Consider the impact that will have on the student populations.
7. Encourage students to stay home for 24 hours after their fever has subsided (without the use of fever reducing medications), as this is the recommended approach to dealing with the illness.
8. Determine and discuss with your classes alternative delivery systems (e.g., Blackboard) for instruction in case of a full campus closure at some point during the term. The newly signed UPS 300.004 (Policy on Course Outlines) and UPS 230.010 (Faculty Obligation to Meet Classes) provide information concerning faculty responsibilities concerning continuing instruction in the event of a prolonged campus closure or emergency.