SPRING 2022 FAQs (Updated March 14, 2022):
Note: New (March 2022) FAQs are highlighted in yellow

Masking:

1. What is the current campus and classroom policy on masking?
President Hutchinson announced that, beginning March 12, 2022, masks are now optional in most locations on campus for students, faculty, staff, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status. Masks are always welcome at Chico State and the President has encouraged anyone who feels more comfortable in a mask to continue wearing one.

Per CDPH guidelines, masks are currently required at campus healthcare facilities, on Chico State transportation, and at select events at Laxson Auditorium.

2. How did the University come to its recent (March 2022) decision about masking?
The University evaluates the data within our campus community, as well as throughout the county and the state. As of right now, Chico State has both an extremely high vaccination/booster rate (about 90%) and an extremely low number of active COVID-19 cases.

Statewide, COVID numbers are back to pre-Delta variant levels, approaching the record lows we saw last summer, and the data indicates cases are continuing to drop not just in the state but also in Butte County. This data indicates that now is the correct time to adjust the facial covering policy.

3. May I continue to require students in my in-person classes to wear masks?
No. The University’s updated policy means that masks are optional in classrooms for both students and faculty. However, masks are always welcome on our campus and in our classrooms. Please encourage your students who feel more comfortable wearing a mask to continue to do so and ask everyone to respect all who wish to continue wearing them.

4. I’m worried about teaching in-person without a mask requirement. What options do I have? May I move my in-person or hybrid class fully online?
If you prefer, you can continue to teach while wearing a mask, and when possible, socially distance yourself from others. You may not move your in-person or hybrid class fully online unless you go through the proper steps to obtain a medical accommodation. For more information, please contact your chair and/or dean.

5. Does this mean the University will not go back to a mask requirement for the remainder of the semester or ever again?
Not necessarily. We will continue to make decisions informed by evolving public health guidance. If Butte County or the Chico State campus community experiences new COVID-19 surges or concerning variants, we will adjust our strategies accordingly, as we have done throughout the pandemic.
**Vaccine Requirements:**

6. Who is keeping track of vaccine status of students and employees?  
*The University COVID Response Team tracks both students’ and employees’ vaccine status.*

7. Are chairs going to be given a list of attestations or COVID-19 certifications for students?  
No.

8. Will faculty be notified of an exemption in a similar way as they are notified of ARC accommodations?  
*Generally, faculty will not be made aware of students who have obtained medical or religious exemptions unless there is a legitimate need to know of an approved vaccination exemption.*

9. Will faculty be able to have access to information about students who are or are not vaccinated or ask a student’s vaccination status or otherwise ask for vaccination information, including through a classroom poll?  
No. *This would be a violation of students’ health information privacy rights.*

**Cases/Outbreaks:**

10. I have tested positive and am now isolating. What should I do?  
*First, if you haven’t already done so, please contact the COVID-19 hotline (530-898-2222) and follow their guidance. You should also contact your department chair and dean, who, depending whether you are symptomatic or not, should have additional guidance as to how your classes can proceed. This may include providing alternative assignments for your students, placing them online for a temporary period of time, or utilizing a substitute instructor for when you are isolating.*

11. I have multiple students who tested positive and who are isolating. What should I do?  
*As detailed in the January 10, 2022 memo from President Hutchinson and Provost Larson, we suggest treating this situation like any pre-COVID situation in which you might have had several students out ill. If you are teaching online, your students may not be appreciably impacted. If you are teaching in-person and your classroom allows for ChicoFlex instruction, you may allow students who are in isolation to attend your class online during their isolation period. Other options include providing students with alternative assignments, or recording and posting your lecture(s). We also encourage you to reach out to your chair and dean for additional ideas.*

When the COVID-19 hotline is notified of a student who tests positive and has been in a class during a high-risk exposure period, that information will be shared with Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) for notification purposes. EHS will notify the faculty member of a positive case in their class. The department chair and college dean will be copied on the notification, which will include, among other information, what date(s) the student was in the class during the high-risk exposure period. The notification is intended to be forwarded/shared with the students in the class.
12. What kind of documentation can faculty ask for if a student repeatedly has COVID-19 exposures/symptoms and asks to be excused from class to quarantine? 

Faculty should not request documentation directly from the student. Students will receive direction from the COVID-19 hotline. Faculty can contact the COVID-19 hotline if they want to confirm whether or not a student has been directed to quarantine or isolate.

13. If a student says they’ve had an exposure, when can we allow them back in the classroom? 

The COVID-19 hotline will advise the student about quarantine times and will notify instructors if there is a positive case. Not all exposures lead to positive test results or quarantine.

14. Will students need to provide documentation of a negative COVID-19 test or do they wait a specific amount of time before coming back? 

The COVID-19 hotline will advise students about how long they need to isolate, their need for testing, and provide related instructions for their return to campus.

Class Attendance:

15. How can we hold students accountable for attendance or course material for fully face-to-face courses if they are following quarantine rules? 

Quarantined students and students in isolation should be treated like any other students who have legitimate, medical reasons for missing class. Faculty should do their best to work with quarantined/isolated students and not penalize or otherwise disadvantage them. Toward that end, flexibility in attendance policies is encouraged.

16. If there is enough room in a classroom, can faculty ask students to social distance? 

Social distancing is not currently required; however, a faculty member can make the request, pending classroom capacity.

17. Can a professor prohibit a student entering a classroom if they exhibit signs of cough, cold, illness, etc.? 

Proactive messaging is key: Instructors should remind their students to conduct a self-assessment before coming to campus. If they have COVID-19 symptoms, students should stay at home and contact the COVID-19 hotline. If a student is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms in class, an instructor should not single a student out in front of others. Rather, the instructor may quietly take them aside and remind them that if they are feeling sick or experiencing something out of the ordinary, they should be at home rather than in class. Instructors, though, may not ask them about their medical condition or for health information.

Office Hours:

18. What are the policies for office hours? Can some or all of them be held online? Would that depend on whether some or all of that instructor’s classes are online? 

The FPPP (1.1.5) provides the following guidance:

“Office hours will be held in the instructor’s campus office or a designated location on campus during times when the university normally schedules classes and when the instructor is not scheduled to be in class. For students unable to meet during these scheduled office hours, instructional faculty will provide reasonable opportunity for consultation.
If an instructor is teaching a class to students in remote locations or a class that is substantially online, online or remote office hours are permitted with the approval of the Appropriate Administrator (generally the college dean). In order to best promote the objectives of a course, the instructor determines the format of online office hours. For online students desiring to meet face-to-face, instructional faculty will provide reasonable opportunity for consultation.”

19. Can faculty be allowed to avoid coming on campus and (for example) have virtual office hours and attend meetings via Zoom rather than in-person?
Generally, no. However, this is contingent upon on the needs of the college and department as determined by the college dean, department chair, and faculty member.
Faculty Related:

20. What is the protocol for faculty after receiving a positive COVID-19 test?
Contact the COVID-19 hotline and inform your dean. If an individual tests positive they are required to self-isolate; the COVID-19 hotline will advise you with specific information and follow up if needed. For more information, please see https://www.csuchico.edu/hr/covid-19/index.shtml#hotline

21. Are faculty teaching in-person expected to move classes online if they are required to isolate?
Depending on the class and the instructor, there may be multiple options including but not limited to providing assignments for the class when the instructor is in isolation, securing and utilizing a substitute instructor, and moving the class online temporarily. Please consult with your chair and dean to determine the best option.

22. If a faculty member’s teaching load consists of only online courses, do they need a “telework contract”? Can they still be required to come to campus?
No, telework contracts do not pertain to faculty. Yes, faculty may still be required to come to campus for in-person assignments, such as in-person committee meetings.

For more campus-wide COVID-19 information, please consult the following website: https://www.csuchico.edu/coronavirus/. If in doubt or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the COVID-19 Hotline at 530-898-2222.