SPRING 2022 FAQs for Instructional Faculty:

(This is an evolving document and it will be updated as needed.)

Masking:

1. How are faculty supposed to be the “mask-enforcers” in the classroom, particularly with large lecture halls (like Political Science 155 with 400 students)?
Like other expectations of adhering to policies such as cheating, faculty can monitor mask policy compliance similarly.

More specifically, faculty can proactively communicate about what is expected of students in their classes.
- Communicate the consequence for non-compliance at the beginning of the semester (i.e. student will be asked to leave).
- Maintain consistent messaging throughout the semester.
- Engage in communication with students who fail to comply (e.g., refer to syllabus expectations, seek information and understanding, ask for compliance).

2. If a student refuses to wear a mask, what should be the faculty member’s response?
Begin by asking the student to wear a mask. If the student doesn’t have a mask, direct them to the many locations on campus where they can obtain one. Remind the student not only of University policy but of any course expectations about masking described in the syllabus and/or during class.

If a student continues to decline wearing a mask, they can be referred to the Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities (OSCCR) by making a referral at:
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?CSUChico&layout_id=0

Vaccine Requirements:
3. Who is keeping track of vaccine status of students and employees?
The University COVID Response Team tracks both students’ and employees’ vaccine status.

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

5. 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.
6. 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:

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.
11. 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:

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. 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:

15. 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.”

16. If a student visits a professor during office hours without a mask, can they request the student wear a mask?
Yes. Everyone must wear a mask indoors, which includes but is not limited to, classrooms, labs, art studios, the library and in faculty offices.

17. Can I meet with students outside without a mask?
If you are able to social distance (6 ft.), this is currently possible; however, out of caution, you may prefer to keep masked. If either or you are eating or drinking, though, you should maintain social distancing.

18. 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 the needs of the college and department as determined by the college dean, department chair, and faculty member.

Faculty Related:

19. 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

20. 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.

21. Can I go online for the first two weeks of the semester?
In rare and unusual circumstances and with dean approval, this may be possible. Please consult with your chair and dean first about other options including but not limited to providing students with assignments, recording class lectures, or securing a substitute instructor.

22. For faculty with young children who cannot be vaccinated or who live with other vulnerable others who were ready to come back but feel a bit less comfortable coming back with the Omicron surge, what choices do they have in terms of changing their mode of instruction?
It is understandable to have health concerns. Chico State is committed to the safety of our employees. Data shows that vaccination with boosters and masking works, and the best way to protect oneself is to vaccinate, boost and mask whenever around others and to social distance when possible. Given that students have already enrolled in course sections and made corresponding plans, the mode of instruction should not be altered except in very
rare circumstances when there is compelling need. Such changes must be approved by the dean of the College.

23. If a faculty member’s teaching load consists of only online courses, does he/she need a “telework contract”?
No. Telework contracts do not pertain to faculty.

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.