

August 24, 2009

To: UNF Faculty

Fr: Mark E. Workman, Provost and VPAA

Re: H1N1 (swine flu) pandemic

As we begin the fall term and approach flu season, you will be receiving a lot of information about the possible outbreak of the H1N1 virus. While we do not know how widespread this flu outbreak will be or when a vaccine will be available (possibly late October or early November) the CDC is anticipating that when merged with the more mundane seasonal flu, the H1N1 could cause mild or moderate disruption to both campus and home life. In light of this possibility, I want to share with you a few official suggestions and recommendations for planning ahead and strategies you might consider in order to mitigate or manage the potential impact of a widespread flu on your instructional plans.

- Discourage students from coming to class if they believe they have the flu and do not penalize them for doing so. Per CDC guidelines, do not require a doctor's note to confirm illness or recovery. Doctor's offices may be very busy and may not be able to provide such documentation in a timely way. The CDC now recommends students, faculty, and staff stay at home at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (chills, feeling very warm, a flushed appearance, sweating). We will update you on any changes to these guidelines as soon as we know them.
- Be as flexible as possible regarding missed classes and tests. Review your attendance, make-up, and deadline policies and revise these policies if and as appropriate during the term. Flexibility likely will be needed throughout the fall term as conditions change.
- For those students who live on campus, Residence Life has already identified areas of isolation for confirmed cases of H1N1. At this time, you cannot demand that an apparently ill student leave your classroom but we are waiting for final word from General Counsel at the BOG on this issue.

Other recommendations:

- If the classroom allows, space seats farther apart to reduce close contact among students.
- Review plans for public forums that will draw large crowds indoors and be prepared to cancel if necessary.
- Consider and if possible plan for alternative ways to deliver your lectures, and evaluate/test your students. This might include posting lectures on Blackboard, streaming audio/video, take-home exams, online exams, etc. **To that end, I have asked CIRT to develop a comprehensive website dedicated to instructional technology and the H1N1 pandemic. We hope to have this information available by the end of the week.**
- Discuss with colleagues their availability to guest lecture for you should you become ill with the flu.

- Make sure your department has a phone tree to facilitate communication with each other.

I strongly encourage you to discuss H1N1 planning with your colleagues and department chair.

Thank you.

Links to guidelines and recommendations:

UNF site: <http://www.unf.edu/student-affairs/H1N1/index.html>

CDC site: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

Flu.gov: <http://www.flu.gov/>