

Frequently Asked Questions

Fall Semester 2020, Troy Campus Faculty

The following represent many of the questions which Troy Campus faculty are asking about their Fall classes. The responses to these questions may change as the University continues to monitor the effects of the COVID-19 virus.

Since these FAQs below address semester (Troy Campus) classes, faculty who are delivering instruction on the Dothan, Montgomery and Phenix City campuses are encouraged to direct those questions to their Program Supervisor, Department Chair or College Dean.

1. How will faculty be notified if a student in their class has tested positive for COVID-19?

The Dean of Students will send an email letter to all faculty of a student that needs to be out of class due to isolation/quarantine. The email will also denote whether the person is out due to a positive test or simply isolating due to close exposure.

2. Will faculty be contacted about symptomatic students or only students who have tested positive for the virus?

The Dean of Students will contact the faculty member about any student that needs to be out of class whether symptomatic, close contact awaiting test results or a positive case.

3. Will faculty and staff be required to be tested for the virus before the start of Fall classes and will they be provided with free test options? Will Troy University provide free tests for faculty during the semester?

Faculty and staff will not be required to test prior to the start of classes. Faculty and staff are reminded of the importance of all Federal, State and University guidelines for safety and wellness during this pandemic: appropriate wearing of face coverings, proper social distancing and hand washing/use of hand sanitizers. Should a faculty or staff member believe they have been exposed to the virus through close contact (less than six feet for more than fifteen minutes without proper use of face coverings) or if the faculty/staff member believes they have developed symptoms of the virus, they may test for free through the University's Health Center. For additional information, contact the Health Center at (334) 670-3452 or by email at hcenter@troy.edu.

Faculty and staff may only use this free University testing for the reasons noted above.

4. How will faculty accommodate students with existing medical issues who may not feel comfortable attending class?

Faculty are encouraged to talk with any students who express concerns or who have questions about attending classes with existing medical conditions. The University has encouraged students with these concerns to consider taking their courses through the TROY Online platform. All students are encouraged to follow the guidelines for masks,

social distancing and proper personal hygiene, both on and off the campus. Faculty who believe that a particular student is expressing significant anxieties about their classes should contact the Dean of Students or the Student Counseling Center for advice and follow-up.

5. If a student misses classes due the virus, how will they provide documentation? Must students provide documentation for testing that would excuse them for at least two weeks?

The student will provide documentation to the Dean of Students through the Student Services Office. The documentation must be valid and will be checked through the Student Services Office, which is the current protocol for any student who is out for an extended period of time. We would let the faculty members know, and, depending on where we are in the semester and the amount of work the student has completed, a request for an Incomplete may be made; otherwise the students must complete the required work.

6. Will faculty members be asked to assign Incompletes for students with the virus? What documentation will be needed to do this?

The assigning of Incompletes for a student have specific protocols by college, department and program. The Dean of Students would communicate with a faculty member about any student who would be unable to return to classes for an excessive period of time. Based on the Incomplete protocols, the amount of work the student has completed, and any other related issues, a request for an Incomplete could be made. Faculty are encouraged to discuss any Incompletes, based on student illnesses with the virus, with their Chair and Dean.

7. In the Spring, the University extended the drop and withdrawal dates all the way to the Final Exam period. Will that be the case this Fall?

No. At this time, the University has posted its Academic Calendar with all of the deadlines, including those for drops and withdrawals. These deadlines are similar to the ones used every semester and do not allow drops or withdrawals up to the Final Exam period.

8. After Thanksgiving, all classes, and final exams, will be delivered through Canvas. What if a student doesn't have Internet connections at their home and can't take the final exams? What if a faculty member wants to give their final exams early, before Thanksgiving, so that the student doesn't have to worry about this?

Students should be reminded that all classes and final exams after Thanksgiving will be delivered through Canvas. Troy University will remain open after Thanksgiving and provide numerous locations for students to connect to the Internet. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have all the necessary technology to complete their classes after Thanksgiving. Students who go home and then indicate that they do not have the technology (computers, Internet) will not be allowed to delay, or avoid, their final exams.

Faculty members may not give their final exams early. The College Deans and Department Chairs have been asked to ensure that final exams are delivered in their scheduled time periods after Thanksgiving.

9. What happens to a faculty member's class if that faculty member contracts the virus or has to quarantine and can't return to teaching?

The Deans will work to assign any such classes to another faculty member with appropriate compensation if the original faculty member is unable to return. For short-term absences from a class, it is anticipated that the faculty will continue to deliver instruction, as they are able, using the Canvas technology.

10. Will the University conduct temperature checks at entrances/exits of all university buildings once classes start?

No. The University will not conduct temperature checks in this fashion. All University members—faculty, staff and students—are encouraged to monitor their own conditions and be alert for any symptoms, including a rise in body temperature.

11. What accommodations will be made for students who medically can't comply with the face covering mandate?

For any student that needs an accommodation for a different type of face covering, the Dean of Students will work to acquire and provide this accommodation. Please direct students who specifically request such an accommodation to the Dean of Students.

The University will provide one free cloth mask to all faculty, staff and students for the Fall classes.

12. Do faculty members have to be on campus for at least three days per week as stated in the *Faculty Handbook*? Most faculty would be more productive working from home and meeting with their students through virtual technology.

Faculty must be available and responsive to students regardless of whether these meetings are face to face or virtual. Deans and Chairs will provide specific guidance to faculty about their expectations for faculty members' time on campus during the Fall.

Troy University will not be able to provide faculty members with new technology or additional IT support (such as VPN, new software, support for specific kinds of virtual technology, etc). For a complete list of University resources, including IT support, for using virtual technology, please see <https://it.troy.edu/remote/>.

13. Can the University provide tents as an alternative to in-door classrooms? The news media is reporting that some schools are doing this. The CDC recommends that outdoor spaces are the safest spaces.

This use of outdoor classes, via tents, could be an option for some classes. These tents require a rental cost and Alabama's excessive heat in the early Fall are considerations as well. Faculty members should direct these requests to the Chair and Dean.

14. Who will be responsible for cleaning/sanitizing desks, tables, chairs, equipment between classes?

The Dean of Students, along with the Director of Physical Plant, are working to provide some supplies to assist with the cleaning of an individual's physical space at the start of each class period. The Dean and Director are also working to provide a similar cleaning

solution to the faculty member to wipe the hard contact surfaces such as the podium, any tables, computer keyboards, mouse, etc.

It is not possible to deep clean each classroom between each class session. There is not enough time or human resources to accomplish this. As such, faculty and students are strongly encouraged to practice self-sanitizing activities (such as use of hand sanitizer) to reduce the overall risk of contaminated surfaces.

All University locations, including bathrooms, classrooms and similar spaces, will be cleaned each evening, using established guidelines for combating the spread of the virus.

Information about cleaning computer technology is available from IT at:
<https://it.troy.edu/clean/>

15. How will congestion in the hallways, elevators, lobbies and stairwells be prevented?

Students will be asked to avoid congregating in the hallways and lobbies. Extended student exchanges and conversations should be moved outside. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to begin and end their classes on time to avoid crowds of students waiting to enter a classroom. Based on CDC guidelines, as long as people continue to move and do not congregate, these high traffic areas should not result in 15 minutes or more of close contact. Additionally, the College Deans and the Dean of Students are working on signage for the hallways to encourage traffic flow and to discourage gatherings in halls. By assigning students to specific day-of-the-week pods for larger classes, the traffic flow should be reduced considerably.

16. Will the University have to transition to online-only classes this Fall like it did in the Spring?

The strong hope, and desire, of the University is that we can complete the Fall semester as planned. This includes finishing the post-Thanksgiving period through the use of Canvas.

We believe that this completion can be accomplished if all members of the University—faculty, staff and students—take seriously and practice faithfully the guidelines for safety and wellness, both on campus and off.

The University's leadership is monitoring the virus and its impact every day. The Coronavirus Task Force has been operating continuously since late January. Additional teams are being created in order to focus on specific virus-related issues for the Fall.

Should it become necessary for the University to make any changes in the planned Fall schedule, those decisions will be made with a full awareness of the potential impact they might have on our faculty, staff and students. Any changes will be broadly communicated.

17. Does the University have any metrics in place to guide its decisions about closing the campus?

The University has a team in place which is developing these guidelines for when it might be necessary to take steps to move classes into online-only formats and close the physical campus. These guidelines will be communicated as they are finalized.

18. Why doesn't the University just use online classes this Fall? Aren't we "Alabama's Leader in Online Education?" A lot of schools are going only online.

While it's true that many schools have made an "online only" decision, the University leadership, after much discussion and consultation, determined that returning students to the campus was the best choice. This decision was based on all available information at the time it was made. Respecting the virus, but not fearing it, is an important step in moving forward with the University's mission of teaching students.

All of the University's discussions and decisions about the Fall started with one question: *"Can this be done safely for our faculty, staff and students?"* This concern for safety and wellness for the Trojan Family was always the top priority.

19. What if I have a child who will not be in face-to-face classes to start the school year? How can I get permission to work from home all the time?

Any requests for an altered schedule, for this reason or any others, have to be made to the faculty member's Chair and Dean, initially. The Chair, Dean and the Office of Human Resources will provide guidance.