

Faculty Guidance for Additional COVID-19 Prevention Protocols in Learning Spaces

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Dear faculty colleagues,

As Dr. Terri Rebmann outlined in her [Aug 17 message to the campus](#), in order to facilitate contact tracing in classrooms, while preserving confidentiality of COVID-19-positive individuals, faculty are **expected** to provide Contact Tracers access to accurate seating charts (or some equivalent) for all our in-person classrooms and learning spaces.

Since we are moving away from socially distanced classrooms this academic year, the goal is for Contact Tracers to be able to quickly obtain accurate information about who was sitting/working in close proximity to whom in a class on a given day. Typically, students provide this information to Contact Tracers. However, in cases where students do not know the names of the students/individuals who were in close proximity to them, a seating chart or its equivalent will be extremely important information.

To support this effort, the Provost's office, deans and associate deans, and the Reinert Center have outlined the following plan, including supporting materials and options to assist faculty in collecting this information throughout the semester.

Collecting Student Seating/Group Information

From the start of the semester, faculty will be required to produce, on demand, a seating chart (or some equivalent) for a given day in the semester. Contact Tracers will request this information directly from faculty, and faculty will be expected to share it within 12 hours of the request. Faculty who do not comply may impede Contact Tracing, which could lead to all members of a class being tested and/or quarantined (including the instructor). Please know, we are not asking you to change your pedagogy; instead, we're asking you to maintain records that will facilitate effective and efficient Contact Tracing should it be needed.

Available Options for Seating Charts or an Equivalent

- Option 1: *What if student movement in my class is static or mostly static throughout the semester?*
 - Assign seats or have students choose seats on the first day of class that remain consistent for the entire semester. Create a seating chart at the beginning of the semester using the "Blank Room Template" (attached or available online [here](#)) or using the strategy for large classrooms discussed in Option 2 below, and require students to sit in the same seats each class session. Keep track of absences and any anomalous or temporary changes in seating.

- Option 2: *What if my class is in a large room (such as a lecture hall) and/or changes on a regular basis?*
 - Collect seating arrangement information at the start of each class meeting. This might involve circulating a "sign-up sheet" for each row in a large classroom with fixed seating (like the attached "[Row-by-Row Template](#)," which is also available in [MS Word here](#) and [PDF here](#)), circulating a blank sheet and asking all students to write their names down according to location in the room and proximity to the individuals around them (attached "Blank Room Template"), or some other similar option.

- Option 3: *What if I do regular group work with my students, and/or we are not in a traditional classroom (e.g., a performing arts space)?*
 - Maintain accurate records of which students worked together in pairs/small groups each class meeting. Faculty may choose to use either template for this or may keep a list of groups/pairs and the individuals assigned to those groups/pairs each class session.

This information, as well as the templates and some tips to help you navigate this new request, may be found [here](#).

I know this is a new wrinkle, but I also know you are as committed as I am to the health and safety of our campus. I believe the approach we're taking strikes the right balance of supporting Contact Tracing efforts, while still prioritizing faculty agency in how courses are conducted.

Thanks very much for continuing to be flexible and for your assistance in this effort. It's crucial to our successful Contact Tracing operation this fall.

Best Regards,

Mike Lewis, Ph.D.
Provost