



Dear Colleagues:

As you are aware, NSU plans to resume classes for Fall 2020 and to return to the high-quality classroom instruction for which we are known. Our goal is to offer as many courses in a face-to-face (traditional or blended) format as possible in ways that mitigate risks to the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff. We will follow the Universities of Louisiana System's Fall 2020 Guidelines, including the following guiding principles:

1. The health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and our communities are paramount.
2. The continuity of learning and research must be maintained, adapting to fulfill Principle 1 as appropriate and necessary.
3. The financial health and viability of the enterprise must be protected and are dependent upon the fulfillment of Principles 1 and 2.
4. The social, emotional, and economic welfare of our communities must be considered and are dependent upon the fulfillment of Principles 1, 2, and 3.

Campus Cleaning, Sanitization, and Safety Procedures

- We have worked diligently to clean and sanitize our instructional spaces since March and are taking steps to ensure the cleanliness, health, and safety of our campus moving forward.
- Beginning in August, buildings will have traffic flow patterns, with entrances and exits designated as one-way traffic.
- Elevators will be limited to 2 individuals.
- Vic the Demon will appear on stickers throughout campus indicating 6-foot physical distancing in hallways and gathering spots as well as signaling where students must sit to be physically distant in classrooms.
- Smart podiums/lecterns will have plexiglass shields installed, and/or faculty will have access to portable plexiglass shields on telescopic stands that can be moved about the classroom. In some instances, faculty will wear clear shields to facilitate their delivery of instruction.
- There will be hand sanitizer stations in prominent places in buildings and across campus, and outdoor hand-washing stations will be placed in high-traffic areas including the CAPA courtyard and the Kyser brickway.
- In accordance with UL System guidelines, masks/face coverings will be required of anyone in our classrooms/buildings/indoor gathering places. Governor John Bel Edwards has mandated the wearing of masks/face coverings while in public; this mandate may continue.

Course Offerings during the Fall 2020 Semester

Surveys conducted at the end of the Spring 2020 semester and during Freshman Connection demonstrated that current and incoming students prefer face-to-face classes where applicable (while recognizing that a hybrid model is more likely) and that faculty/staff were interested in



offering instruction through a variety of modalities including face-to-face, Hybrid, and online. To develop a reasonable instructional plan for the Fall 2020 semester which considers these indicated preferences, we engaged in collaborative conversations among a diverse group of students, faculty, staff, academic administrators, and Instructional Technology staff. These efforts have resulted the following guidelines for course instruction during the Fall 2020 semester:

- **General Education Core Classes:** as part of a pilot program, we will be offering a minimum of 100 seats total in the HyFlex model of instruction (described below in more detail) for each general education core class. This pilot program will allow us to assess this mode of instruction for its utility/usefulness at our institution and will be used to guide future discussions of its use. The remaining seats in these courses will be offered in either the traditional face-to-face or online formats depending upon classroom availability and adherence to proper physical distancing guidelines.
- **Non-General Education Core, Face-to-Face Classes:** classes can either
 - meet as scheduled if the designated room can accommodate the entire class in a physically distanced manner
 - Recommended for courses with small enrollments such as laboratory/skills courses or Scholars' or CAPA courses where applied instruction is the regular protocol
 - meet using the HyFlex model of instruction
 - Recommended for general education core courses or major-specific/upper-level courses with large enrollments not conducive to proper physical distancing
 - be converted into a traditional online course
 - Recommended for courses with large enrollments not conducive to proper physical distancing and not able to be readily converted to the HyFlex model of instruction
- **Online classes** will be delivered as planned – either synchronously or asynchronously depending on the program of study.

What Is the HyFlex Model of Instruction?

Students in a HyFlex course will participate in both online and face-to-face learning at different times during the semester. For example, if a course was originally scheduled to meet from 9:30a – 10:45a every Tuesday and Thursday of the semester, in the HyFlex mode of delivery, this course would be split into two parts:

- Half of the students would participate in the course in person every Tuesday and virtually every Thursday.
- Half of the students would participate in the course virtually every Tuesday and in person every Thursday.



- Their schedule of classes would indicate which day they participate in person/virtually.
- For a M/W/F course, Friday would be a day of virtual participation for all students.

Virtual participation in a HyFlex course differs from that in a traditional, online course. Students are required to “attend” the live class in the virtual environment at the same day/time each week and can, in real time, engage with the instructor and/or other students.

What Are the Advantages of HyFlex Instruction?

The HyFlex model of instruction provides several important advantages:

- It allows students to engage in synchronous learning.
- It allows for greater engagement between instructor and students.
- With fewer individuals together in the classroom during each class meeting, it allows for proper physical distancing and other safety measures which creates the safest/healthiest environment possible.
- If, at any time during the semester and for whatever reason, a student is unable to attend class in person, that student can exclusively participate in the class in the virtual environment and not miss instruction.
- If the university were forced to pivot to online-only instruction, learning in the course can continue in the synchronous, virtual environment with little impact on instructor and student.

How Can I Prepare Myself and My Classes for HyFlex Instruction?

- Classroom Space
Many of our classrooms are already HyFlex capable. Some classrooms are being retrofitted with webcams and microphones to assist with the HyFlex model of instruction.
- Professional Development
To aid in the delivery of online/virtual instruction, utilization of technologies, and for best practices, it is recommended that faculty take advantage of new and additional resources provided through the Office of Electronic and Continuing Education. These resources are included in the daily Campus Messenger. As preferences indicated in Faculty/Staff surveys, more offerings will be made available at the end of July and throughout the beginning of August as the start of the semester grows nearer.



What Do I Do Now?

Respecting the responsibility of Faculty to make decisions on content and delivery of their courses, please consider the following:

1. If you believe the HyFlex model would work for the course(s) you are teaching, please discuss this possibility with your Department Head or Director.
2. If you are uncomfortable returning to campus for the Fall 2020 semester, please know that we want to work with you to help find the best possible accommodations for you. You should have already received an email from your Department Head or Director with specific instructions on how to submit work accommodation requests for Fall 2020 to our Human Resources department. If you have not yet received this information, please check the daily Campus Messenger or contact your Department Head or Director for assistance.

Thank you for your professionalism, dedication, and sensitivity to our students and academic mission. We are confident that, working together, we can complete another semester of rigorous instruction for our students. As always, we welcome your suggestions and questions, and are grateful for the continued dialogue of all campus stakeholders. We urge you to continue to visit our return to campus plan with daily updates: <https://www.nsula.edu/return-to-campus/>