

Special Guidance for Fall 2020 related to Attendance and Grading and Sample Syllabus Statements

Faculty Handbook section 9.6.1 Syllabus and Performance Expectations requires faculty to provide clear expectations for all elements of a course through the syllabus, including attendance and assignment of grades.

Classroom expectations and course policies must be adapted to the health and safety measures needed to mitigate transmission of COVID-19. A core element of this is the requirement that individuals self-isolate when exhibiting any symptoms of illness. In addition, individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 may be directed to self-quarantine for a period of time. Thus, it is crucial that faculty communicate to students that they should not attend an in-person class if they feel the slightest bit sick, and also take no action that could encourage class attendance by those whose attendance might endanger public health, for example through the inclusion of attendance as a factor of course grade calculation.

Asking for verification of illness by a medical professional is not appropriate in light of public health guidance to self-isolate. Schiffert Health Center does not provide verification of illness to the Dean of Students or others due to HIPAA regulations. Faculty members should accept a student's notification of illness. The course syllabus should specify expectations for illness notification from the student (e.g., email) and expectations for communicating about missed work and its submission.

Should a student become seriously ill for an extended period of time or is required to quarantine, the student should work with the Dean of Students and the associate dean to provide notification and support under the university's regular processes.

Sample syllabus statements are available as models below. Faculty members may include additional expectations appropriate to their course and classroom space.

Sample Syllabus Statements:

Basic Syllabus Statement

By participating in this class, all students agree to abide by the Virginia Tech Wellness principles.

If you are exhibiting even very slight signs of illness, you **must** not attend class in person. Notify me by email and follow the instructions posted at <https://vt.edu/ready/health.html#tips>.

Expanded Syllabus Statement

Virginia Tech is committed to protecting the health and safety of all members of its community. **By participating in this class, all students agree to abide by the Virginia Tech Wellness principles.**

To uphold these principles, in this class you **must** do the following:

- Wear a face covering during class, including as you enter and exit the classroom
- Maintain the designated distancing guidelines of the classroom
- Enter and exit the classroom according to posted signage

If you are exhibiting even the slightest sign of illness, you must not attend an in-person class. Notify me by email and follow the instructions posted at

<https://vt.edu/ready/health.html#tips>.