UWO - Classroom guidance for instructors on mask enforcement

*Syllabus statement regarding classroom mask requirements:

“All students are required to wear an appropriate mask that covers their mouth and nose when they’re in the classroom. They must also maintain appropriate physical distancing from their classmates and adhere to additional expectations communicated by the instructor or posted in the classroom. Note: UWO procedure dictates that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, an instructor cannot begin class until all students are wearing a mask properly. If a student is non-compliant with the masking policy and refuses to leave the classroom promptly when requested, the instructor is required to cancel class. Students responsible for class cancellation for these reasons will be referred to the Dean of Students office, and the student will be unable to attend class until they meet with the Dean of Students. The student may be dropped from the class by the Dean of Students."

General guidance for classroom mask management

I. As we return to the classroom, new expectations are in place to protect the safety of students, faculty, staff and other members of the UW Oshkosh community. We will need to follow the expectations outlined in the Titans Return document (https://uwosh.edu/titans-return/).

The University will mount a communication campaign to remind students of University requirements and their responsibilities. However, instructors should affirmatively remind students to follow new
classroom requirements, such as properly wearing a mask and physical distancing.

To encourage adherence to the new requirements, we encourage you to include a statement of the University’s requirements, including masking and physical distancing, in the class syllabus. (*See syllabus statement above.) Instructors may also consider including adherence to classroom safety requirements as part of the overall grade in the course. For instance, if a student refuses to comply with the mask policy and necessitates a class cancellation, this could impact course grades. We would recommend that you orally review classroom requirements at the start of class to provide a general reminder for the entire class.

II. **Recommended classroom steps for compliance with mandatory masks:**

The classroom management issues are the same as any other conflict management in a classroom. A helpful parallel is the use of safety gear such as goggles in a lab. Existing protocol for student conduct should be followed. [https://uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/student-conduct/](https://uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/student-conduct/)

**Instructor** - types of phrases that could be used.

- “Please note that wearing a mask properly while in a campus building is mandatory.”
- “Masks are mandatory because they protect the health of others and the people wearing them.”

Potential student replies and suggested instructor responses:

- I forgot mine.
  - “You can get a mask at the bookstore or the Convenience Store.”
  - “Feel free to return to your room or apartment to get yours; they are mandatory in all classrooms.”

- I can’t wear a mask due to my own health concerns.
o “Please work with the University Accessibility Center for appropriate accommodations. Masks are mandatory in all classrooms.”

o “This class (or an alternative section) provides an online accommodation; you will have to take the class in that format. Masks are mandatory in all classrooms at UWO.”

- I won’t.
  
  o "Please come back to the classroom when you are willing to wear a mask. The point of the mask is to protect others as well as yourself, and it is a campus requirement."

- I won’t. (Sits down or doesn’t leave.)
  
  o An instructor **must** inform students that they cannot teach without all students properly wearing a mask. Classroom capacities are based on 100% mask compliance.

The instructor should explain that forcing the instructor to cancel the class is unfair to the rest of the class who came prepared to learn. Peer pressure may help the situation.

The instructor should inform the student that, if class is canceled due to non-compliance, the Dean of Students office will be notified, the student will be unable to attend class until they meet with the Dean of Students and the student may be dropped from the course.

For non-compliance or other COVID-19 concerns, please contact the Dean of Students office. [https://uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/student-conduct/](https://uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/student-conduct/)