



OFFICE *of the* PROVOST

Spring 2022 - Return to Campus

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

The Spring 2022 semester is upon us. I hope each of you had a restful and safe break.

As you have heard through news sources, the COVID-19 Omicron variant is highly contagious and is causing the incidence of disease to spike. Symptoms appear to be mild in many cases, and it may manifest asymptotically also, so that individuals may be unaware of infection unless tested. That is why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and UWF continue to urge everyone to wear high-quality masks indoors to minimize the risk of spread.

It is likely that some students will be ill and unable to return to campus in time for the start of classes on January 10 and others may develop symptoms after they return. We ask that you remain flexible in assisting students to follow the class and/or to make up class work as they are able. As a reminder, you should be aware of the excused absences policy that is posted at this URL: <https://catalog.uwf.edu/undergraduate/classattendance/>. I also recommend that you review the [UWF COVID-19 information page](#). I will point your attention to the "[Exposure](#)" section with the understanding again that these are unusual times and we must work together to navigate the semester opening.

- Will faculty be required to excuse me from class and allow me to make up work if I get COVID-19?
 - The University will not distinguish between COVID-19 related and unrelated absences. Students who are required to quarantine or isolate should consult with their faculty regarding absences and missed work. If students need additional assistance after consulting with their faculty, they may email Case Management Services at casemanagement@uwf.edu or call 850.474.2384 to discuss their options.

It is also likely that some faculty members will contract the virus and will need to isolate. Those who are able and willing are encouraged to continue delivering coursework remotely through technology, where possible. Those who are unable to do so should consult with the respective department chair and dean and make other adjustments for delivery of coursework.

January 7, 2022

Please be reminded that the CDC stresses that vaccinations and booster shots provide substantial protection against the virus and excellent protection against severe illness and the need for hospitalization. You can learn more at uwf.edu/covidvaccine.

As we have learned, flexibility is the key to continuing to deliver the highest quality courses possible to our students. I know that we will continue to work together to keep one another as safe as possible as we begin the new semester and new year.

And I really look forward to the day when this is behind us!

With thanks and best wishes for a successful semester,

George Ellenberg

January 7, 2022