



Dear UWF Faculty and Staff:

Many colleges and universities across the United States are already reporting cases of the H1N1 virus on their campuses. Now that the fall semester is underway, I wanted to bring you up-to-date on what UWF is doing to mitigate the potential impact of H1N1 to our campus community.

During the summer, I assembled a cross-divisional team of health care professionals and administrators to develop a plan for responding to the H1N1 virus. As part of that effort, the university has endorsed the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Guidelines for Response to Influenza for Higher Education. In addition, the university has established a dedicated H1N1 Web site at <http://uwf.edu/h1n1> to provide both general and UWF-specific information about the virus.

As you may know, flu can be spread easily from person to person. Therefore, we are taking the following steps to minimize the spread of flu at UWF:

- A series of educational posters outlining H1N1 symptoms and prevention strategies is being developed for campus-wide distribution. The first set of posters has already been distributed.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been ordered for placement in areas where faculty, staff and students congregate, such as classroom buildings, residence halls, dining and recreation facilities and the library.
- The Student Health Center has created a series of informational messages on its main telephone line (474-2172) designed to answer frequently asked questions about H1N1.
- Students will receive notification as soon as the seasonal flu vaccine is available through the Student Health Center.
- Faculty, staff and students will be notified as soon as the H1N1 vaccine is available. Please note, however, that the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended that the vaccination efforts focus on five key populations: pregnant women; people who live with or care for children younger than six months of age; health care and emergency medical services personnel; persons between the ages of six months

through 24 years of age; and people between the ages of 25 and 64 with chronic medical conditions.

We have been and will continue working closely with the Escambia County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning UWF. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available to us.

For now, we are doing everything we can to keep UWF operating as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help:

- Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.
- Practice respiratory etiquette by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth; germs are spread this way.
- Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, body aches and fatigue. A fever is a temperature that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius as measured by a thermometer. A person who has a fever is likely to feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or be sweating or shivering.
- Develop contingency plans now to ensure that your areas of responsibility continue to function smoothly should you or your co-workers become ill.
- If you have flu or flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever. This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
- Talk with your health care provider about whether you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu. Also if you are at higher risk for flu complications from H1N1, you should consider getting the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. People at higher risk for H1N1 complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, heart disease or diabetes.
- Don't overreact and assume that anyone who coughs or sneezes has H1N1. Remember that individuals with colds, sinus infections, etc., may exhibit many of the H1N1 symptoms.

For the most up-to-date information on H1N1, visit <http://cdc.gov/flu> and <http://flu.gov>. In addition, you can call the CDC hotline at (800) 232-4636 and the Florida Department of Health hotline at (877) 352-3581.

You are encouraged to check UWF's H1N1 Web site (<http://uwf.edu/h1n1>) regularly for updates. We will notify you by e-mail and through "Argus Today" of any additional changes to UWF's strategy to prevent the spread of H1N1 on our campuses.

I am deeply grateful for to all of those who are contributing to our response to this virus. By working together and supporting one another as we address the potential challenges ahead, we should have a safe and productive academic year for all our faculty, staff and students.

Sincerely,  
Judy Bense, Ph.D.  
President