



# **USask COVID-19 Classroom and Academic Lab Operations Manual**

**December 7, 2020**

# 1. Introduction

These protocols are intended to protect the health and safety of students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators in teaching labs, studios, and other in-person teaching environments. The protocols are essential if we are to successfully carry out needed in-person academic program delivery. Required protocols may change as the COVID-19 situation evolves, stemming for example, from changes to Public Health directives.

## 2. Responsibilities and Expectations

### General Expectations

All members of the University of Saskatchewan Community that have approval to be on campus must:

- Complete the [COVID-19 Health and Safety](#) course;
- [Self-monitor for symptoms daily](#);
- Log their locations on campus (using the [Daily Pre-screening Log](#) PAWS tool or the PDF [Work Location Log](#));
- Practice hand hygiene; and
- Comply with all COVID-19 protocol including mask wearing, physical distancing guidance, and specific cleaning and disinfection requirements (as necessary).

### Students

In addition to the general expectations, students are expected to:

- Follow all guidance the University's Pandemic Recovery/Response Team (PRT), College/Department, professors, lab instructors, TAs, and from any staff member involved in the in-person academic program activities (e.g., Safety Resources, Safe Building Return Group);
- Understand and utilize the USask Positive Case on Campus and Close Contact on Campus Reporting Procedures.
- Participate in all training, including the use of disinfectants using the Practical Disinfection Demonstration Guidelines (for cleaning of individual learning areas); and
- Stay at home when unwell and report any COVID-19 symptoms or illness to the faculty member overseeing the course by utilizing the [Reporting guidelines and response plan](#).

### Faculty, Lab Instructors or Coordinators, and Teaching Assistants

In addition to the general expectations, faculty, lab instructors or coordinators, and teaching Assistants are expected to:

- Develop a "pull back" plan for the completion of the course and course requirements in the event that the university is required to shut down any or all of the in-person academic programming.

- Create a “culture of honesty” so that students feel confident in staying away when sick and reporting illness to the faculty member or instructor. This means that students must feel confident that accommodations can be made if they are away for illness-related reasons.
- Follow all guidance and procedures as set by departments/college, Safety Resources, Safe Building Return Group and the PRT;
- Understand, utilize, and assist students in the use of the USask Positive Case on Campus and Close Contact on Campus Reporting Procedures in the [Reporting guidelines and response plan](#).
- Safely implement all USask COVID-19 protocol and procedure as described by Safety Resources, Safe Building Return Group, PRT, College, or Department. This includes but is not limited to all [Health and Safety Guidelines and Protocols](#) as listed on the USask COVID-19 Updates Page:
- Review safety protocols (see 6 below) with students at the outset of the class and then at regular intervals throughout the term to ensure consistent understanding and practice; and
- Assist in ensuring all students, TAs, and lab instructors or coordinators have COVID-19 training certificates, and monitor COVID-19 symptoms and log work locations daily.

Rooms within buildings are locked, if faculty do not have keys for the instructional areas they will be using, contact Facilities Support at [facilities.support@usask.ca](mailto:facilities.support@usask.ca) to arrange for doors to be unlocked. They may also contact their [key custodian](#) to see if a key can be ordered for the space.

## College and Department

Colleges and departments must develop and implement all plans and processes for the safe execution of all classroom, studio, and academic lab operations.

In addition to the general expectations, colleges and departments are expected to:

- Provide support to faculty members and instructors who are delivering in-person academic programming
- Determine which groups i.e. faculty, TAs, Lab Instructors or Coordinators, are responsible for duties to meet all expectations and guidelines of the Classroom and Academic Lab Operations Manual;
- Keep records of student attendance/activities and training certificates;
- Understand, utilize, and assist students in the use of the USask Positive Case on Campus and Close Contact on Campus Reporting Procedures in the [Reporting guidelines and response plan](#).
- Complete an Exposure Control Plan for the College/Department’s in-person teaching activities (pursuant to Section 85 of OHS Regulations); and
- Provide and fund the hand sanitizer, spare face masks, and other materials needed for the safe execution of the in-person teaching activity.

Colleges and Departments will need to identify someone to open exterior doors to allow students arriving for class access to the building. This person will be responsible for ensuring students have completed their Daily Pre-screening Log and confirm they are aware of the identified path to their learning area. After the students have arrived, this person is responsible for locking the doors again.

## Facilities SBAs

Facilities SBAs are key facilitators for operations, research, and academic/teaching activities. Facilities SBAs will assist colleges and departments (as per SBA assignment) with the development and implementation of all plans and processes for the safe execution of all classroom and academic lab operations. If your college or unit does not have a Facilities SBA please contact the Safe Building Return Group at [safereturn@usask.ca](mailto:safereturn@usask.ca).

## Safety Resources

Safety Resources is the occupational health, safety, and environmental protection resource for the University of Saskatchewan. In addition to the general expectations, Safety Resources is expected to:

- Facilitate and support the development and implementation of all plans and processes for the safe execution of all in-person classroom and academic lab operations;
- Ensure Colleges/Departments have a completed Exposure Control for the teaching activities (pursuant to Section 85 of OHS Regulations); and
- Provide periodic spot checks and audit for adherence to all COVID-19 protocols, guidance, and expectations for USask personnel and activities.

## Safe Building Return Group

Safe Building Return Group is a multidisciplinary support group facilitating the safe use of USask facilities for academics, research, and operations. The group provides room occupancy assessments, signage, and generalized support for all groups needing guidance to develop safe return plans and implement their approved campus activities. The SBRG can be contacted at [safereturn@usask.ca](mailto:safereturn@usask.ca).

# 3. Protocols for in-person Classroom and Academic Lab Operations instruction for Winter Term 2021

## Physical Distancing

Physical distancing has proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak. Physical distancing should be maintained at all times, including entry and exit to and from the instructional area, within the building and outside. If physical distancing markers are required outside of the buildings, please contact the Safe Building Return Group at [safereturn@usask.ca](mailto:safereturn@usask.ca).

Students waiting to enter an occupied area must wait for those exiting to leave prior to entering the room while maintaining two meter distancing. When possible, if a space has multiple entrances, one (or more) should be designated as an entrance and one (or more) as an exit.

Rooms may be reconfigured to maintain the two meter physical distancing standard. If possible create self-contained spaces within the learning space with all necessary equipment to complete work. All students, faculty, and Lab Instructors or Coordinators are expected to follow all directional decals and

signage to maintain proper distancing. Signage can be found on the USask COVID-19 Updates Knowledge Base Article [here](#).

- Avoid crowded places and gatherings;
- Maintain a minimum of 6 feet or two meters away from others, regardless of face mask use; and
- Orient desks and workstations/lab benches to the two meter standard.

## Face Masks

Face masks are a second example of critical elements used to reduce the spread of COVID. Face masks help limit the dispersion of coughs/sneezes and can reduce the frequency of face touches. Face masks have reduced effectiveness if the user adjusts or removes the mask often. When used in combination with physical distancing, and good hand hygiene you reduce your risk of illness.

Everyone is required to wear a face mask in all USask spaces (inside and outside) even when physical distancing can be maintained.

Unless supported by a documented risk assessment, face masks may only be removed to eat, drink, and while engaged in physical exercise. In these cases, physical distancing must be maintained.

Donning, doffing, and cleaning instructions can be found on the USask COVID-19 Updates Page and are covered in the mandatory COVID-19 Health and Safety Course.

**Please note:** neck warmers, neck gaiters, bandanas, scarves, or other clothing not designed to act as a face mask cannot be used as face masks.

## Shared Facilities and Equipment

Shared facilities and equipment will require coordination with everyone using these resources for example, fume hoods, biosafety cabinets, procedure rooms, instruments, etc. When using shared equipment or working in shared laboratories:

- Post an hourly schedule on the equipment or room, or utilize a shared calendar or other multiuser scheduling system; and
- Disinfect equipment and touchable surfaces before and after each use. Place disinfectant supplies near the equipment. Place a sign near shared equipment to remind everyone of this procedure.

## Eating and Drinking

Eating and drinking in classrooms, laboratories, and studio spaces is prohibited. Students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators may only eat or drink in areas outside of the named areas where physical distancing can be maintained. Masks may only be removed when ready to eat. For additional information please visit <https://covid19.usask.ca/documents/lunch-room-guidelines-poster.pdf>

## Personal Protective Equipment and Personal Hand Hygiene

Gloves, respirators, and other personal protective equipment will be provided to employees as necessitated by their job and the hazards present.

Students and instructors will be required to sanitize hands before coming into the classroom and after touching common touchpoints.

Only use designated facilities (including only designated washrooms), as indicated by building signage and practice hand hygiene often.

## Signage for Buildings and Teaching Environments

Standard university-wide safe return signage has been created to educate and clarify expectations for faculty, lab instructors or coordinators, students, and visitors to campus. If additional signage is required for local operations, please use the standard signage provided [here](#).

If customized signage is required for your area, please contact the SBRG at [safere turn@usask.ca](mailto:safere turn@usask.ca) to make arrangements.

## 4. Cleaning and Sanitizing

USask has created a guidance document, [Classroom Disinfection—COVID-19 Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Learning Spaces](#). Custodial and faculty/instructor/TA/student duties are outlined below. Instructions on approved disinfectant, how to properly clean and disinfect, frequency, and common areas that should be cleaned can be found in the guidance, appended at the end of this document.

### Custodial Operations

#### Facilities Custodial Operations

The Facilities' Custodial Operations will continue to provide enhanced routine cleaning service levels including classrooms, usually, after classes have ended for the day. Services include:

- Emptying garbage and recycling bins
- Sweeping and mopping floors
- Wiping down podiums, desks, chairs, and other common touchpoints

Please note: Keyboards and other electronics are not cleaned by Facilities' Custodial

### Faculty, Instructors, Coordinators, TA's and Students

Students and faculty will be asked to apply hand sanitizer as they enter the class. Faculty members or others responsible for instruction (e.g., laboratory instructors or coordinators or teaching assistants) will wipe down surface areas in their work area after each class. Students are also responsible for

disinfecting the touch surfaces around them. For efficiency, instructors may ask for a student volunteer to assist in disinfecting the space. This may include the keyboard, podium, front table, tabletops, etc.

Each instructional area must be equipped with a cleaning/disinfection kit with the following:

- Hand sanitizer near the entrance
- A disinfection kit containing the following:
  - A WHMIS-exempt USask approved disinfectant spray;
  - Paper towel; and
  - Disposable vinyl or nitrile gloves.
- A trash receptacle for the wipes and gloves

### *Frequency*

High touch surfaces in the area must be disinfected, at minimum, at the **end of each class** and before the space is used by a different group. Instructor or students may also choose to disinfect the space at the beginning of the class.

Examples of high touch surfaces in teaching areas are:

Podiums	Drawer and cabinet handles	Presentation clickers
Projector remotes	Keyboard and mouse	Tabletops
Chair backs and arm rests	Demonstration props	Dry erase markers

For information on disinfectants and using disinfectants please see the [Classroom Disinfection – COVID-19 Guidance online](#) or appended in the back of these guidelines.

## 5. Committing to Safety

### Students

Students who do not follow the required COVID-19 Health and Safety protocols mapped out in this document put themselves and others at an unnecessary risk of harm. Such action may be considered a violation of the *Standard of Student Conduct in Non-Academic Matters and Procedures for Resolution of Complaints and Appeals*. In those instances when a student appears not to be following safety protocols (e.g., not properly wearing a mask), the student will be offered assistance and asked to adhere to the requirements. Continued disregard for safety protocols will be escalated as necessary by the professor who will notify and seek guidance from the Department Head and Associate Dean Academic/Students within the college.

### Faculty, Instructors, Coordinators, Teaching Assistants

In instances where faculty members, lab instructors or coordinators, TA's or other staff are not following the safety protocols and procedures outlined for in-person academic delivery, assistance will be offered, and, if necessary, the Dean of the college will be contacted for guidance in identifying a resolution.

## Appendix A: Exposure Control Plan

The Exposure Control Plan COVID-19 (ECP) describes how to minimize exposure of all USask community members to infectious SARS-CoV-2 and the resulting COVID-19 disease. This plan is part of compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety regulations, 1996, Section 85. Each Instructor must complete an ECP based on the nature of their work and potential exposure to COVID-19. Control measures need to be combined to maximize the health and safety of students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators (staff), although some risk will remain. Once completed, the plan must be reviewed by all students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators (staff) in each learning environment.

### Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment or PPE may or may not be related to COVID-19 precautions, however some types of PPE have decreased supply and higher costs. PPE should be selected based on the hazards present. The most common types of PPE are laboratory coats, safety glasses, and gloves. Procurement can help you find the equipment you require, contact them at [www.ppesales.usask.ca](http://www.ppesales.usask.ca) or [PPE\\_acquisitions@usask.ca](mailto:PPE_acquisitions@usask.ca). Safety Resources can help you determine the required PPE ([safetyresources@usask.ca](mailto:safetyresources@usask.ca)).

What Personal Protective Equipment will be required for students in your learning environment?

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### Face Masks

Face masks are mandatory in all USask spaces. Face masks help limit the dispersion of coughs/sneezes and can reduce the frequency of face touches. When used in combination with physical distancing, and good hand hygiene you reduce your risk of illness.

Will face masks be worn by all students, faculty, and staff? \_\_\_\_\_

### Physical Distancing

Will all students, faculty, and staff be able to maintain 2 m spacing? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, what additional measures will be taken to protect students, faculty, and staff? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Hand Hygiene

Please answer the following questions to build a Hand Hygiene Plan:

Will hand sanitizer be available outside each learning space? \_\_\_\_\_

Have washrooms been designated for the class? \_\_\_\_\_

## Cleaning and Disinfection

Commonly touched areas, individual learning areas, and shared equipment must be cleaned and disinfected at a minimum at the end of the class. However, students, lab instructors or coordinators, and faculty may choose to disinfect before and after use.

**Please answer the following questions to build a cleaning and disinfection plan:**

What type of disinfectant is available? \_\_\_\_\_

Will a disinfection log be used? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will be assigned disinfection duties? \_\_\_\_\_

**Summarize the disinfection plan below:**

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# Appendix B: COVID-19 Classroom and Academic Lab Operations Activity Plan Checklist

## Training and Education

- All students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators involved in the activity have completed the COVID-19 Health and Safety Training.
- All students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators have reviewed the Exposure Control Plan for the activity.
- All students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators are aware of masking, health monitoring, and work location logging requirements to be on campus.
- All students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators are aware that they are expected to adhere to safety protocols and procedures tied to their in-person academic programming.
- All students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators are trained on the use of the disinfectant including contact time needed for disinfection.

## Physical Space

- Hand sanitizer is available upon entry and exit of the learning space.
- Disinfectant readily available. (Classroom Cleaning Kits are available from Safety Resources, if needed.)
- Additional masks are available for users.
- Washrooms have been assigned for the learning space.
- Physical distancing and directional flow stickers have been installed.
- Learning Space is organized to ensure two meter spacing for individual learning spaces and other personnel work areas.



## Appendix D: Practical Disinfection Demonstration

On the first day of instruction the faculty member, lab instructor or coordinator, or TA will provide a practical disinfection demonstration for students that includes training on the proper use of the selected disinfectant. This includes:

- Review of the disinfectant hazards;
  - Including review of any required WHMIS training (dependent on disinfectant selected)
- Required PPE and proper use of PPE (Ex. Gloves);
- How to apply the disinfectant;
  - Practical demonstration of how to spray or wipe the disinfectant on the surface for proper coverage
- The contact time needed for effective disinfection (as per the manufacturer's instruction); and
- How to get more disinfectant when needed (e.g. Ask the TA, contact Safety Resources)

If you need assistance, consultation, or guidance on how to conduct this demonstration please reach out to Safety Resources at [safety.resources@usask.ca](mailto:safety.resources@usask.ca).



## Appendix E: FAQs

### **I have concerns about compliance to COVID-19 health and safety requirements. What do I do?**

If you have concerns about compliance of any of these guidelines please talk to your Instructor. If the situation is not resolved please use the hazard reporting tool located here:

<https://share.usask.ca/wellness/Lists/Hazard%20Identification%20Report%20Form/NewForm.aspx>

### **Why do I have to take attendance?**

Taking attendance is mandatory at this time to aid in contact tracing efforts. Faculty and instructors may use the provided chart as an example of taking attendance and use of the Daily Pre-screening Log in Paws but may also use other methods to take attendance.

### **Do I have to self-monitor and log my location every day?**

Everyone, including students, instructors, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators must self-monitor and keep a log of locations visited on campus each time they are on campus. Faculty and instructors are required to take attendance and can use the provided chart as an example of combining all three requirements in one chart. Students can check off the required information with their own writing implement to avoid losing instruction time and common touch points.

Safety Resources will be doing random spot checks to make sure all students are following the COVID-19 Health and Safety requirements.

### **The doors of my building are locked. Who is going to meet the students at the door?**

It is up to each department running in-person classes to lab instructors or coordinators check-in desks when students are expected to arrive on campus. If a student will be late they must arrange a late arrival with their instructor.

### **Who is responsible for making sure everyone follows traffic flow patterns in hallways/exits?**

Everyone is responsible for making sure students are moving orderly through the buildings and not crowding hallways or exits. If you have concerns and are not comfortable addressing them please report this through the “report a hazard” tool located here:

<https://share.usask.ca/wellness/Lists/Hazard%20Identification%20Report%20Form/NewForm.aspx>

Safety Resources will be doing random spot checks to make sure all students are following the COVID-19 Health and Safety requirements.



## **Who is responsible for making sure students are wearing face masks properly?**

Everyone is responsible for making sure students, faculty, and lab instructors or coordinators are wearing face masks properly. If you have concerns and are not comfortable addressing them please report this through the “report a hazard” tool located here:

<https://share.usask.ca/wellness/Lists/Hazard%20Identification%20Report%20Form/NewForm.aspx>

Safety Resources will be doing random spot checks to make sure all students are following the COVID-19 Health and Safety requirements.

## **Who is responsible for cleaning surfaces in each learning area?**

Faculty members or others responsible for instruction (e.g., laboratory instructors or coordinators or teaching assistants) will wipe down surface areas in their work area after each class. Students are also responsible for disinfecting the touch surfaces around them. For efficiency, instructors may ask for a student volunteer to assist in disinfecting the space. This may include the keyboard, podium, front table, tabletops, etc.

## **Do instructors have to supply their own cleaning supplies?**

Each instructional area must be equipped with a cleaning/disinfection kit with the following:

- Hand sanitizer near the entrance
- A disinfection kit containing the following:
  - A WHMIS exempt USask approved disinfectant spray or pre-moistened wipes.
  - Paper towel
  - Disposable vinyl or nitrile gloves
- A trash receptacle for the wipes and gloves

Please contact your College or Department for more information on supply. Safety Resources can provide basic Classroom Cleaning Kits for teaching areas.

## **Do I have to physically distance in the instructional area?**

All individuals on USask Campuses are expected to remain physically distant unless their activities have been approved for closer interactions (e.g., practical medical care, safety reasons).