

MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Staff

FROM: Pat Toney
Vice President of Academic Affairs

DATE: October 15, 2009

RE: Suggestions for Continuity of Instruction

With the threat of an increase of Novel Influenza (H1N1) cases within the upcoming months, I would like to suggest that we take a proactive approach to prepare for the possibility of high absenteeism and/or a possible wave of mass infection resulting in the need for course or program adaptation in order to ensure QCC students have access to the continuation of instruction.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) stress the importance that students, faculty and staff should not come to class or work if they are ill with flu-like symptoms and should remain in isolation for at least twenty-four hours after they no longer have a fever, etc. (www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/school/higheredguidance.html)
Therefore, during an academic semester, there may need to be a modification of course assessment strategies, class attendance policies and/or course delivery modes as well as need for emergency staffing.

Below are short term practical suggestions to consider in the event that face to face classroom instruction becomes jeopardized due to an outbreak of Novel Influenza (H1N1). These suggestions are intended to assist instructors in enhancing the learning situations for their students during a possible disruptive period.

- Maintain up to date student contact information to ensure a continuous communication process.
- Adjust class attendance policies so students with the flu can remain at home rather than attend class (It is important to note that CDC has stressed that medical documentation of illness will be difficult to access during a pandemic.)
- A possible statement added to the course syllabus may include: "In the event of disruption of normal classroom activities due to an H1N1 swine flu outbreak, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, you will be given an addendum to this syllabus that will supersede this version." (Source: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)
- Consider preparing two weeks worth of material to use if an emergency occurs.
- Develop broad departmental solutions for makeup work/exams so a separate arrangement for each sick student is not needed. Possible solutions include group sessions, use of proctors, and online makeup work/exams.

- Collaborate with and across departments to develop solutions for the following:
 - Accessing multi-media library
 - On-line homework
 - On-line quizzes and tests.
- Inform students of on-line tutoring options:
 - Communications Skills Center - www.qcc.mass.edu/csc/
 - Math Tutor Center - www.qcc.mass.edu/mathsupport/
 - by phone (1-800-877-3016)
 - by fax (1-877-262-9774)
 - by email (tutor@aw.com)
 - SmartThinking - <http://www.smarthinking.com/>
- Continue use of QCC Portal for the following purposes:
 - Informing students of varying severities and possible school closure,
 - Submission of grades,
 - Provide announcements to students,
 - Post handouts/assignments
- Utilize Blackboard for the following purposes:
 - Upload basic course information
 - Upload extensive instructional material and /or classroom activities
 - Add a segment within the course syllabus which outlines the learning activities expected to be accomplished in case of a pandemic. Some questions to consider in formulating the information:
 - Do the students have internet access?
 - What will the teaching objectives be during the pandemic time period?
 - How will communication with the students be conducted?
 - How will course content become available to the students?
 - How will students be assessed?
 - Do the current textbooks have an online resource?
 - How will the students learn about the course plan?

Academic Affairs is poised to provide training for instructors who wish to enhance their course through the College's learning management system, Blackboard, to further prepare for the possibility of high absenteeism or of not being able to reach students within a classroom due to wide spread cases of H1N1. Workshops will train instructors on the basic functions of Blackboard including uploading extensive instructional material and/or classroom activities in order for students who are required to be off campus to access their course work and to complete the course requirements. The workshops on the basic functions of Blackboard conducted by Louise Hamelin in the Center for Academic Excellence are scheduled as follows:

Monday, September 21, 2009	2:00pm to 3:30pm	Blackboard Basic Functions
Tuesday, September 29, 2009	5:00pm to 6:30pm	Blackboard Basic Functions
Friday, October 2, 2009	2:00pm to 3:30pm	Blackboard Basic Functions
Monday, October 5, 2009	5:00pm to 6:30pm	Blackboard Basic Functions

Additional workshops will be added as necessary.

EMERGENCY STAFFING

Below are some short term practical suggestions to consider for emergency staffing in case of prolonged absenteeism of faculty. The College is committed to adhering to appropriate contracts and standard operating procedures.

- Develop a pool of substitute instructors
- Identify instructional partners who can cover each other's courses if needed
- Develop a pool of non-unit professionals who are qualified to teach

RESOURCES

Below are some resources from academic institutions and community resources.

East Carolina University

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/academicoutreach/continuity.cfm>

University of Wisconsin

http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/continuity/index.cfm

Fairleigh Dickinson University

<http://fdu-coursecontinuity.wikispaces.com/>

Higher ED Assessment

<http://higheredassessment.blogspot.com/search?q=continuity>

Flu.gov

<http://www.flu.gov/professional/school/collegeschecklist.html>