

Dear Professor,

My name is Dr. Sheri Kunovich, and I serve as the Associate Provost for Student Academic Engagement and Success. I am part of the contact tracing efforts at SMU. I am reaching out today to make you aware that one of your students in **the classes listed below** tested positive for COVID-19. As a result, the student will need to miss in-person instruction for a period of time.

BL	3335	002	R	Business Law
FINA	4329	001	R	International Finance
FINA	5241	701C	R	Quant Trading and Strategies
SOCI	3305	001	R	Race and Ethnicity in Us
SPAN	5310	001	R	Spanish Literature Before 1700

Below are a few frequent questions and answers to help you navigate this situation. As of September 7, faculty will have been notified by their deans that recordings are now required to be provided to any student with the proper documentation of being in quarantine or isolation. When you provide these recordings, we recommend that you add the following statement to your communications with the student: “Students are prohibited from posting the lecture recordings of in-person classes or syllabi to any external sites.”

**First, how will the student maintain academic continuity?** In addition to recordings, there are many ways to support students in keeping up with class. The [CTE has created these top five reminders](#). You are not required to offer a virtual attendance option for this student through Zoom, but this option is certainly available to you. Prior to making these options available, you have the right to request that a student provide you with documentation that they have a medical reason for their absence.

**Second, what if I have a large number of students in my class who need to isolate or quarantine?** There might be some unique, extenuating circumstances that could unfold. In this case, you would receive multiple notifications from my office and/or have students reporting to you that they are in quarantine. In these cases, reach out to directly to your department chair or academic associate dean, who can help you work through the range of options to determine the best solution. All chairs, academic associate deans, and deans are in close contact to help build efficient and appropriate solutions on a case-by-case basis. They are here to support you as you support your students.

**Third, what happens if an exam is scheduled during this time period?** This situation may require alternatives for any in-person tests that were scheduled to take place during their period of quarantine or isolation. We would recommend that the student complete all assignments and exams on their originally scheduled date, assuming that the student is feeling well enough and you are able to find a remote solution. Of course, if the student is not feeling well enough to test, you would need to make the flexible arrangements as in any such extenuating circumstances.

**Fourth, will any of my students receive notification that they might need to quarantine as a close contact?** If you or other students in your class were identified as contacts through the contact tracing process, both you and those identified students would have received separate outreach from a member of the Contact Tracing Team instructing you to quarantine. Please know that my office will not notify you of students in *quarantine*—only of students who are in *isolation* because of a positive COVID-19 test. If students tell you that they are missing class because they are in quarantine, you can definitely require that they provide you with this documentation if they request flexibility during this time period. The SMU Health Center will provide them with such documentation upon request of the student if they are in quarantine.

**Fifth, what options do I have for academic continuity if I am identified as a close contact?**

Work with your department chair or academic associate dean to develop an agreed-upon contingency plan. Depending on your vaccination status, you and your department chair can determine whether to arrange for a substitute, arrange for an in-class facilitator, or move the class to Zoom for a short (less than two week) period. Any decisions to move to Zoom must be made in collaboration with your chair, who is in close contact with the dean's office, or, in the case of Dedman Law and Perkins, in collaboration with your dean. They then report these decisions to [covidfacultyrequest@smu.edu](mailto:covidfacultyrequest@smu.edu).

**Last, if I decide to use Zoom to a student with COVID or in quarantine, do I need to make these options available to all my students?** It is your decision to provide Zoom as an option to students who are in quarantine or isolation. You can request that the student provide documentation before you make resources available. Extending this option to other students not in isolation or quarantine would not be aligned with the in-person class delivery and therefore should remain an option for students in situations specific to COVID-19.

We are sharing this information out of an abundance of caution while also being sensitive to student privacy concerns. We have observed that some students will voluntarily tell faculty about a positive COVID test, particularly if they are not feeling well enough to participate in upcoming class activities, while other students may choose to manage any necessary absence(s) or a need to engage virtually in a more subtle way. We would ask that you try not to identify this particular student and instead wait for them to come forward to you.

Please see the [faculty FAQ of the Mustang Strong website here](#) for the most commonly asked questions and answers. If you have other questions not addressed here or in the FAQ, please reach out to your chair or academic associate dean. You can also copy this email on your request for additional support ([covidfacultyrequest@smu.edu](mailto:covidfacultyrequest@smu.edu)). This email has been established to help us navigate additional concerns specific to unique circumstances, as we recognize that there may well be situations that require more context to arrive at the best solution.

Sincerely,

Sheri

Sheri Kunovich, Ph.D.

Associate Provost for Student Academic Engagement and Success