

TO: West Lafayette Campus Faculty
FROM: Randy Woodson, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost
RE: Important message from the Provost for your immediate attention
DATE: August 11, 2009

2009-2010 presents a new challenge for all of us at Purdue—we are facing a pandemic emergency period as declared by the Center for Disease Control.

With the challenge of a pandemic come many unknowns—how bad will it be? Are we prepared? How will this affect us? The challenge is that we have to be ready for a health crisis. A team of Purdue people has been working on all aspects of campus preparation for nearly three years. This has prepared us well. But now, we ask that each of you take specific actions to help your students to prepare.

Our students are in the age group that has been most affected by Influenza A H1N1 (ages 5-24). Also at high risk are pregnant women and individuals with chronic ailments such as asthma. Because a high proportion of the Purdue family is in the high risk group, we must be especially vigilant.

Here is a list of things that I ask you to do to be sure the classes and students you teach are “storm-ready”.

1. Insert a paragraph into your syllabus explaining that emergencies such as a pandemic may necessitate changes in the course. An example can be found at www.itap.purdue.edu/ilt/faculty.
2. If you require attendance in any of your classes, please consider adjusting your policy so that students who are ill with influenza are not penalized for doing the right thing and not attending class. We do not want ill students in class spreading the virus.
3. Develop a method of mass communication so you can alert students of cancellation of class or assignments.
4. Make plans for how you will help students get caught up when they return.
5. Absenteeism can be as high as 30-40% during the peak of a pandemic. Be prepared for the possibility of a temporary suspension of classes should that be necessary to break a chain of infection. A temporary suspension may result in lost class time.

6. Talk with your students about the pandemic and review with them the steps they need to take to avoid getting pandemic influenza, or if they get it, the steps they need to take to prevent giving it to others. Stress the importance of not coming to class with a fever or for seven calendar days after recovering from influenza. Mitigation practices can be found at www.itap.purdue.edu/tlt/faculty.
7. Be aware that pandemics come in waves. Experts believe that wave one has passed and wave two is on the horizon. Historically, wave two is the most virulent, and it is sometimes followed by a third wave. Unfortunately, we don't know how virulent the pandemic of 2009-2010 will be...but it is reasonable to assume that it will be worse than what we have seen to date.
8. Please let students know that updates and emergency information will be posted on Purdue's home page and urge your students to sign up for emergency text messages.
9. Prepare yourself and your family.

Thank you for all your help and cooperation.