



How to H1N1 Proof Your Course

Using teaching technology to adapt curriculum and manage the impact of increased absenteeism

(The staff of the Teaching Technology Support Office (TTS), Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science, are available to discuss these suggestions and/or your specific course needs.)

Syllabus specific suggestions:

If your course has...

Then consider...

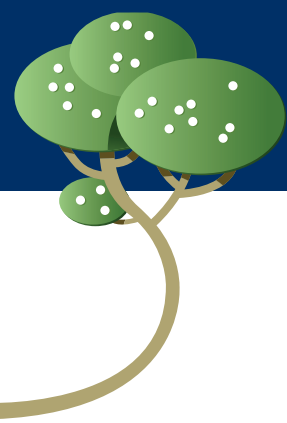
1. assignments that require students to hand in a hard copy and/or use Turnitin.com

allowing students alternate methods of submitting such assignments, e.g., email, Blackboard (Bb) assignment upload, an attachment in separate Discussion threads in Bb (different Discussion threads can be reserved for each component, allowing students to discuss the assignments, read each others' final products etc. This allows students to keep engaged while away from campus and there are very good pedagogical reasons for this.)

Issues to keep in mind:

- 1.1. how to grade online papers/soft copies (be mindful of the burden of printing many student papers): you can use a template of a standardized key of what you expect in these assignments, or use a grading rubric you might already have.
- 1.2. for students affected by H1N1: consider choosing citations and resources that are available from the UofT Library/online databases (so students do not have to physically come to the library). Some discussion about this at the beginning of the term might be helpful and/or arrangements can be made to have a liaison librarian come to your class to facilitate a discussion or workshop.
- 1.3. Student access and UTOR IDs: some discussion in the first couple of classes will reduce student complaints and seeming access problems.





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If your course has...

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2. a standard policy on missed course work due to illness, requiring UofT Medical certificate for make-ups or extensions

amending your policy on missed tests/assignments for students affected by H1N1. The Provost's Office will issue an institutional policy that will be supported by the Faculty giving directions to students in the event of absence due to H1N1. Indicate in your syllabus that such instructions will be forthcoming, and then reiterate them when you receive them.

Issues to keep in mind:

2.1. Reinforce the official instructions. The Provost's Office will issue an institutional policy for students and instructors, which will be supported by the Faculty, giving directions to students in the event of absence due to H1N1. It is very likely that public health authorities will instruct those with H1N1 symptoms not to visit doctors' offices or hospitals. Indicate in your syllabus that such instructions will be forthcoming, and then reiterate them when you receive them.

2.2. Accept the officially-recognized "equivalent documentation." Students are likely to present you with a printout from an electronic "absence registry" the University is now developing as a ROSI substitute for a UT Medical Certificate. Indicate that you will accept "officially approved documentation" and that should cover anything that is issued by the Provost or the Dean. You can be more specific in class or on Bb when you have details.

2.3. Create an alternate grading plan for students affected by H1N1 (much like you might for other legitimate absences, e.g., prorating grade, re-weighting of course components while keeping within the Faculty's policy for maximum weighting for any one course component).

2.4. Consider no make-up tests, particularly since this might be a term of increased absences. Make-ups will increase an instructor's workload (to create, administer and grade such components) and increase the required support (which might not be available).





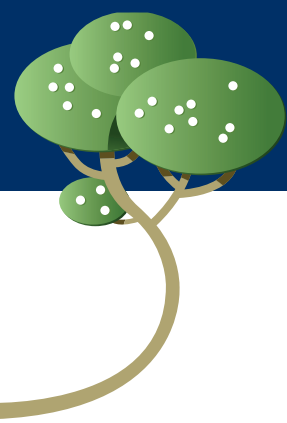
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2.5. Might not be your student that is affected by H1N1, but a family member who requires care (e.g., young child, partner, or elderly parent), such that the student is not able to come to campus. At the moment there is no expectation that students caring for others with H1N1 will be quarantined. The normal protocols for students caring for others who are sick will apply in this instance as well, *i.e.* they are expected to make every effort to attend for critical course elements, as far as that is possible. However, you should remain flexible and understanding in how you address these situations.

2.6. It will be very difficult for you to police the veracity of H1N1 claim. However, the University will have ready by the start of classes an “Absence Registry” on ROSI, where students affected by H1N1 will be able to declare their absence for this reason. You should instruct your students to use it, should the time come, and be prepared to accept a printout from ROSI of this declaration as evidence of illness for H1N1.

2.7. If you are already using Bb, you can use the “last accessed” tracking feature and course statistics tool in Bb to check if students are generally participating in the course and then all of a sudden stop participating.





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3. an email policy for communicating with students

amending your email policy: in order to decrease duplicate communications, you might consider explicitly stating expectations of email content vs. Bb communication content, *e.g.*, reserve email ONLY for personal communication that would be inappropriate for students to share with other students (*e.g.*, illness, trying to set a meeting with you, *etc*) and reserve Bb announcements and Discussion board communications for course content and related issues (*e.g.*, questions about course material, *etc.* All students will benefit from your answer once).

Issues to keep in mind:

3.1 Be very explicit that you will not answer course content type questions via email. Management of information, particularly in a term where you might find a disproportionate flurry of email contact/online activity, will be much easier for you, administratively, if it is organized in some way.

3.2. If you do send out important course information via email, consider sending it as a Bb announcement also (this feature is available in Bb).

4. regularly scheduled, face-to-face, office hour

a Bb Discussion thread where students have 24/7 access to leave questions for you or TAs, but you and/or TAs contract to go into the discussion board only on specific day/time.

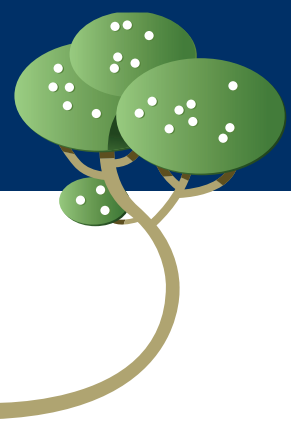
5. course documents that students are required to access.

making all course documents available on Bb or a course web site (*e.g.*, course syllabus, readings, library links, *etc.*)

6. discussion-based classes, seminars, or group presentations

extending the class discourse online by using the Bb Discussion Board. This tool will allow students who are away from campus to continue to engage with others.





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7. short, in-class quizzes that are not weighted too heavily, e.g., worth about 1% to 2% each

using online quizzes in Bb.

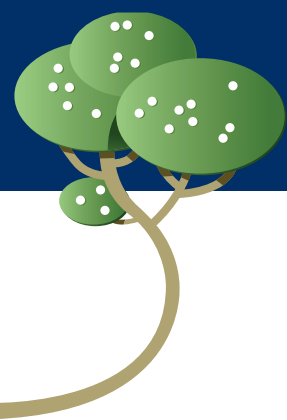
Issues to keep in mind:

7.1. An obvious concern for instructors is students cheating during a non-invigilated quiz. Instructors can implement any of the following to minimize this: password for the quiz, timer for quiz duration, forced completion, monitor # of attempts, prohibit backtracking, randomize questions from a pool so that no two students get the same questions.

7.2. If quizzes are not heavily weighted, then there is not too much to lose and an online option gives legitimate cases the benefit of the doubt.

7.3. scoring and grading is done on the fly and results can be automatically imported into the Bb Grade Centre





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General course/instructor issues and suggestions:

8. Rather than trying to change the language throughout your current syllabus to accommodate H1N1 cases, try coming up with an H1N1 clause that clearly states that in the event of students being affected by H1N1, students are to follow the instructions on the official UofT website – www.preparedness.utoronto.ca and check their UTOReil box for official communications from the Faculty about how to proceed.

8.1 The Provost's Office is preparing the institutional policy on these matters. Currently, there is no boiler-plate language for syllabi, but you should put in a notification that there will be official UofT guidance on these matters and students will be hearing a message from the Provost directing them about absences due to H1N1, and the Arts & Science-specific version of this will be sent to students and instructors by the Dean's Office and the Faculty Registrar. It is best to simply include in your syllabus "Watch this space for further information." It will be posted on the "preparedness" website and will no doubt be posted on Bb directly. For now it is best that you give students the opportunity in class to exchange contact information so they will have one or more peers to turn to for notes, in addition to material you provide.

9. You should not dismiss the possibility that you yourself will be ill and absent. Make a plan beforehand with a colleague or your TAs.

9.1 Consider obvious implications of using extra TA time: \$/hours, any union issues, *etc.*

9.2 Consider some form of lecture capture where you can deliver your lecture from home.

You can accomplish this by:

- posting slides or lecture documents on Bb or a course web site (though this might be too meager a representation of what you normally cover in class);
- using software that captures both audio and slide transitions (so students can hear/see what they would normally hear/see in class). You could just record your lecture from home at the touch of a button; very easy and the University is investigating if this option can be made available to all instructors.
- Contacting the TTS office (lms@artsci.utoronto.ca) to discuss other course specific options if these suggestions do not meet your needs.

