



EMORY
UNIVERSITY

Special Guidance on Suspension or Relocation of Instruction

Office of the Provost

September 1, 2021

The purpose of this guidance is to support academic continuity in emergent circumstances, drawing on best practices and connecting with other campus emergency response operations and functions, particularly those created to mitigate the impact of COVID19 (although these guidelines can apply to other emergent situations, e.g., major weather event).

This guidance is also intended to recognize and respond to faculty and instructor needs for workplace flexibility that could arise during instructional periods. In all cases, Emory seeks to support students and instructors in continuing high-quality teaching, learning, and discovery even when disruptions arise. In such cases, it is important for all members of the community to have a shared sense of what the expectations are and to contribute to good communication. Schools, colleges, and other academic units may have area- and site-specific requirements. What follows are *minimal* expectations and clarification of roles and responsibilities.

1. Each school, college, and academic unit must have a process in place for **finalizing decisions** about episodic and temporary suspension or relocation of instruction (e.g., shift to remote instruction, or shift to a larger room, etc.) at the level of the class. **Suspension or relocation of instruction on a larger scale requires the approval of the Provost.**
2. Every class and instructional setting should have a **plan for continuity** in the event that the scheduled mode of instruction is not possible or advisable. Plans should include details about **communications** with relevant designated school official(s) as well as students.
3. Decisions about **temporary suspension or relocation of instruction** are dependent on multiple factors, including **health and safety conditions**, classroom/lab/facility **availability**, and the **learning objectives** for the course.
 - a. Decisions about **health and safety** will be determined by relevant emergency response teams:
 - i. COVID Cluster Investigation team— In this case, the school's designated Risk Mitigation Team Lead will serve as the primary point of contact for these decisions.
 - ii. Environment Health & Safety Office (if not COVID related, e.g., chemical spill)
 - iii. Emory Police Department (e.g., other safety concern on campus)
 - b. Decisions about **classroom/lab/facility availability** will be determined by responsible officials in each of the schools and colleges in consultation with Campus Services.
 - c. Decisions about necessity and suitability of relocation of instruction (e.g., shift to remote) as it relates to **meeting learning objectives** for the course will be determined by the instructor of record.

4. Instructors must follow school and college policies and guidance, including whether or not **unilateral decisions** about relocation of instruction are permissible, and any additional required processes for notification or limitations on duration.
5. In all cases, **communications** to students about suspension or temporary relocation of instruction must include:
 - i. effective start for the change;
 - ii. site of relocation (including remote or virtual environments),
 - iii. instructions for accessing remote or virtual environments,
 - iv. any anticipated changes to graded assignments,
 - v. plan for make-up class meeting (in the event of suspension), and
 - vi. expected duration of suspension or relocation of instruction.

Communications must also protect instructors' and individual student's health information and details about their academic progress. For example, communications must not include names or identifiable information about students in the class or the health status of the instructor.

6. Schools and colleges must have a **designated official for answering questions** about relocation of instruction in the event that the instructor is unable to do so.