



# UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

September 21, 2009

Dear Colleagues:

You received recently from President Emmert a message about the novel H1N1 influenza virus and our anticipation of it arriving on our campuses sometime this fall. If it follows a pattern other universities have experienced, it will spread fairly quickly among the University community, especially among students living in close quarters in the residence hall system and in the sororities and fraternities. As President Emmert mentioned in his message, we are asking you to be flexible and accommodating with students who miss class or assigned activities due to illness. The influenza appears to be relatively mild and may last up to a week. To help stem the spread of the virus, we are asking students, faculty, and staff who become ill to stay at home until at least 24 hours after they are fever free, without the aid of fever reducing medication.

Most who become ill will not need to visit a health care provider, and we are not encouraging students to do so unless their symptoms persist or are severe. The resources of the Hall Health Center and other local clinics would be overwhelmed with a high volume of visits. Also, therefore, we should not require students to present a note from a doctor or evidence of having visited a health care provider in order to be eligible to make up missed work. That, too, would simply overwhelm the system and divert our health care providers from their primary task of serving ill patients. So please do not ask students to present documentation regarding their absence due to illness.

The flu may cause students to miss a larger amount of class instruction than normal, and we want them to be able to make up any work they may have missed. To this end, UW Technology has worked with others across campus to develop a new website of online tools to help you make instructional materials available online and to manage instruction through a period of unusual absenteeism. It is called an Academic Continuity Toolkit (ACT) and may be found at <http://www.washington.edu/itconnect/emergency/act/>. I encourage you to visit the site and see if the toolkit may be of use to you if the influenza virus is widespread. I also encourage you to work within your units or among your colleagues to develop plans for instructional or research coverage in the event of faculty, librarian, academic staff, and/or academic student employee absences. It should be our goal to keep our academic offerings and research programs as intact as possible.

For information and guidance specific to the novel H1N1 influenza virus, go to the Campus Health Services web site at [www.uw.edu/flu](http://www.uw.edu/flu). Look there for updates and the most recent developments regarding influenza at the University. We will keep the campus informed as information becomes available during the quarter, both in terms of

the incidence of the disease in our community as well as when a vaccine becomes available and the plan for administering it.

I appreciate your patience and commitment to serving our students as best we can during what may be an unusually difficult period. We all hope an outbreak of H1N1 influenza is not widespread, but we need to be prepared in case it is.

Sincerely,

Phyllis M. Wise  
Provost and Executive Vice President