

Decision Making for Engaging Delivery Mode Flexibility in a Course/Section

Throughout this academic year, there may be a need to pause face-to-face instruction in a course/section and transition a course/section to temporary online delivery due to an increase of positive cases in a classroom. A cluster is typically defined as five or more positive cases in section within 14 days, but ECU has set a lower threshold (three or more positive cases within five days) for **triggering a review to determine any necessary actions**. The following factors also will be taken into consideration.

1. Number of students enrolled in the course/section
2. Five or more positive cases in section within 14 days
3. Contact tracing interviews indicating that those positive cases are epidemiologically interconnected, and those persons could have possibly exposed others in the classroom.

If necessary, the contact tracing team will subsequently confer with the instructor and department chair to advise that the course/section will pause face-to-face instruction and change delivery mode to online for at least one course meeting while additional testing is conducted. After this analysis, the contact tracing team will advise the instructor and department chair about how many course meetings should be delivered online, and how to appropriately communicate the temporary change in delivery mode to students.

The additional testing needed will be facilitated by the contact tracing team and Student Health Services; they will reach out to students individually to schedule testing appointments. After this analysis, the students who test positive will go into isolation; exposed students will go into quarantine if they are not vaccinated; and once safe, the course will change delivery mode back to face-to-face. Students cleared for attending face-to-face classes should expect and plan to attend those classes in person as required in the individual classes attendance policies. Instructors are not expected to deliver parallel online or hybrid courses after the delivery mode is changed back to face-to-face.

Change in delivery mode cannot be executed by an instructor without consultation with the department chair and contact tracers. If an instructor is concerned that a cluster of COVID-19 cases is potentially developing in their course, the instructor or department chair should contact ECU's contact tracing team at ecucontacttracing@ecu.edu or 252-328-4238. In fact, some students are testing off site and self-reporting directly to faculty before [Student Health Services](#), or Contact Tracing is made aware, so faculty may be the first to know, and information from faculty is welcome. If faculty are aware of three or more positive COVID cases (not exposures) in one section, please contact ECU's contact tracing team at ecucontacttracing@ecu.edu or 252-328-4238. Include any available supplemental information, such as a seating chart, attendance, and whether students are consistently and correctly wearing masks in class. We also appreciate faculty reminding students to complete the self-report so that [Student Health Services](#) can verify and accurately track COVID-positive students on campus.

The timeliness of testing allows for proactive action which may help to mitigate spread. It is extremely important that faculty continue to play an integral role in helping to enforce the established ECU Community Expectations as well as the steps outlined below.

- Please enforce face covering for the duration of class. We know that masks, when worn appropriately, reduce the spread of the coronavirus.
- Assigned seating will assist with contact tracing. Using seating charts in classrooms with fixed seating is advisable; you can easily build a seating chart by following the attached directions for using the [Canvas Attendance Tool](#). You may send your seating chart to ECUContactTracing@ecu.edu by including course prefix number and section (Professor name) in the subject line [ex. AXXX 1234-001].
- Please take attendance in the event your assistance is needed for contact tracing.

We appreciate your support as we continue to assess the efficiency of current protocols and adapt our processes with guidance and consultation from Dr. John Silvernail, Pitt County Health Department, and the UNC System Office. Additional information about metrics and dashboards can be found at [ECU Public Dashboard](#).