Academic Continuity for COVID-related Disruptions in Learning and Disability Services Office (DSO) Accommodations

Guiding Principles:

1. **COVID-related disruptions in learning mode** – Students dealing with COVID-19 delayed and/or interrupted learning (travel restrictions/delays, quarantine/isolation) requiring absence from the in-person component of a class should be supported to participate remotely as the course modality allows.

2. **Non-DSO requests** - Most students with requests for alternative remote access due to COVID-related travel delays/restrictions or quarantine/isolation will generally not have DSO accommodations and will fall under our standard instructional continuity policy ([Policy D05.0 subsection VIII](https://www.rit.edu/disabilityservices/student-resources)). These requests should be honored as the course modality and academic continuity plan allows (see remote access methods below).

3. **DSO accommodations related to COVID-19** – Students with new or changed disability accommodation needs in light of COVID-19 should connect with the Disability Services Office (DSO) to discuss appropriate and reasonable accommodations.
   - There may be cases of students facing travel restrictions/delays, isolation, or quarantine who are already working with the DSO for reasons unrelated to COVID. Accommodations unrelated to COVID that are approved by the DSO for these students should continue to be honored.
   - Students requesting alternative remote access to courses or any other accommodation for reasons related to disability/health condition will follow the standard DSO accommodation request and coordination process outlined here: [https://www.rit.edu/disabilityservices/student-resources](https://www.rit.edu/disabilityservices/student-resources)
   - For students who qualify for DSO accommodations for remote access to courses, whenever possible and reasonable, faculty should honor this request. As will be the case for all academic accommodations, faculty will be officially notified by the DSO once a student is approved for this accommodation and requests it in their courses. Faculty can also view all their students’ accommodations centrally via the [MyDSO Faculty Portal](https://www.rit.edu/disabilityservices/student-resources).
   - Instructors who believe an accommodation fundamentally alters their class or otherwise poses a significant issue should contact the DSO directly at dso@rit.edu. Instructors should discuss any issues directly with the DSO before engaging their student.

4. **Assistance for faculty** –
   - Mechanisms will be in place to inform faculty of students who cannot attend class due to COVID-related circumstances. Email requests (from the institute and/or students) will be directed to instructors.
   - ILLI will be available with guidance to support faculty efforts to make course material available remotely including myCourses tools, asynchronous recording and posting, and synchronous streaming (via Zoom).
   - There will be instances in which our notifications system (once per day) is out-of-sync with real-time circumstances (Quarantine release, Daily Pass). Please use direct communications with your students as a means of confirming the status of their remote participation needs in these cases.
Guidelines for COVID-related remote course access requests

Faculty Expectations

1. Faculty may receive email notifications from either RIT or their students directly. These emails will inform faculty of student names who may need alternative remote learning access due to quarantine/isolation. We ask that faculty be alert to these communications throughout the term since quarantine/isolation can occur at any time during the term. Instructors are asked to respond directly to their student within 48 hrs of receiving a request in order to discuss alternative access options for their course.

2. Communication between faculty and students should continue throughout the duration of the support need in order to both assess the effectiveness of the support and any changes in the support needed (i.e. quarantine date change).

3. Faculty will provide remote learning alternatives for quarantined/isolated, travel restricted, or delayed start students so they will be able to access course materials necessary to meet the course learning outcomes and continue their academic progress as modality allows.

4. Faculty are strongly encouraged to develop and post on their syllabi their academic continuity plan that should include remote access methods that are going to be made available.
   - Please keep in mind that students may not have access to printing, scanning, and other non-digital tools since quarantine restricts their movements. Flexibility will be important in this regard.
   - Assignment deadline flexibility may also be necessary. Please consider offering at least 1 or more of the following:
     | myCourses content (ppts, notes, discussion, assignments, quizzes, grades) | Effective short-term methods (1-3 weeks) |
     | Other electronic distribution (dropbox, email PPT, notes, etc.) | |
     | Alternative assessment (testing) methods | |
     | Asynchronous captured class content (must be captioned, per campus policy) | Effective longer-term methods (>3 weeks/full semester) |
     | Synchronous streaming sessions | |

5. Faculty will continue to follow RIT policies and procedures for students who have received DSO-approved accommodations in their classes, regardless of modality. Faculty with questions about student accommodations can visit the faculty resources section of the Disability Services Office website.

6. Faculty will not ask students for health information, regardless of the nature of a request, also:
   - Students working with the DSO for any reason, whether COVID-19 related or otherwise, should not be asked to justify the rationale for their approved accommodations or be asked to provide documentation to any RIT entity outside the DSO. For more information on confidentiality and accommodations, visit the DSO website: https://www.rit.edu/disabilityservices/confidentiality.
Student Expectations

1. Students experiencing COVID-related isolation, quarantine, travel restriction, or delayed start should notify their instructors by email of their need for remote access as soon as they become aware of it. There will be a remote access needs widget in myCourses with a fillable pdf they can email to their instructor specifying the duration of the access need.

2. Students will update instructors as the semester progresses if there are any changes to their remote access needs.

3. Students will not be asked to divulge any personal or health related information.

Staff Expectations

1. Assist students in understanding the accommodations process or how to communicate their access needs.

RIT Teaching and Learning Services Assistance
https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/

- Continuity of Instruction support - https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/teaching-elements/continuity-instruction
- Flipped Classroom support - https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/teaching-elements/flipped-classroom
- Online Assessment - https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/teaching-elements/assessing-online-students