

RIT

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-related delays and/or interrupted learning (i.e. quarantine/isolation) requiring absence from the in-person component of a class should be supported to participate remotely as the course modality allows. Faculty have a responsibility to offer alternatives that allow students to maintain academic continuity while in quarantine or isolation.
2. **Quarantine or isolation periods** may vary from as little as a few hours to several days. Official notifications of students in quarantine or isolation will continue to come from the Registrar's Office.
3. **Students and faculty need to stay in frequent communication about participation status.** This communication is particularly important when students are notified of a quarantine/isolation requirement since the notification systems to students and faculty are not always synchronized which can lead to time lags between notification cycles.
4. **Approved DSO accommodations** must be honored per our usual process
5. **Non-DSO requests** - Most students with requests for alternative remote access due to COVID-related restrictions or quarantine/isolation will generally not have DSO accommodations and will fall under our standard **instructional continuity policy** ([Policy Do5.0 subsection VIII](#)). These requests should be honored as the course modality and academic continuity plan allows (*see remote access methods below*).

Guidelines for COVID-related remote course access requests

Faculty Expectations

1. Faculty will be notified daily by email of students who require alternative remote learning access and should be alert to these communications throughout the term. Some of these notifications will come from the university, while others will come directly from students. Instructors are asked to respond directly to students within **48 hours** of receiving a request in order to discuss alternative access options for their course. If a faculty member received a request directly from a student, the faculty member should direct the student to notify the Student Health Center and can ask to see the message they received from the myLife portal.
2. As noted above, the duration of quarantine or isolation may vary from a few hours to several days. As a result, the official notification from the Registrar's Office may lag beyond the period of quarantine or isolation. Also as noted above, students receive a message through the myLife portal advising them of their need to isolate or quarantine. Students will also receive a message when they are released from quarantine or isolation. Faculty may ask to see these messages but may not request additional information about the student's medical situation.
3. Communication between faculty and students should continue throughout the duration of the support needed in order to both assess the effectiveness of the support and update changes in the support need (i.e. quarantine date change).
4. Faculty will **provide remote learning alternatives** for quarantined/isolated/ill students so they will be able to access course materials necessary to meet the course learning outcomes and continue their academic progress. Faculty are not expected to change the modality of their course (indeed they cannot once courses have begun) to accommodate requests, but rather are asked to find ways to make content available for limited periods of time as needed.

5. Faculty are strongly encouraged to develop and post their **academic continuity plan** which should include remote access methods that will be available.
 - Please keep in mind that students may not have access to printing, scanning, and other non-digital tools because their movements while in quarantine are restricted.
 - Assignment deadline flexibility may also be necessary.

Please consider offering at least 1 or more of the following remote access methods:

myCourses content (ppts, notes, discussion, assignments, quizzes, grades)
Other electronic distribution (dropbox, email PPT, notes, etc.)
Alternative assessment (testing) methods
Asynchronous captured class content (must be captioned, per campus policy)
Synchronous streaming sessions

6. Faculty may **not ask students for health information**, regardless of the nature of a request. 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>.
7. **Assistance for faculty**
ILI will be available to support faculty efforts to make course material available remotely including myCourses tools, asynchronous recording and posting, and synchronous streaming (via Zoom).

Student Expectations

1. Students experiencing COVID-related isolation, quarantine, or other illness should notify the Student Health Center and 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 may not be asked to divulge any personal or health related information. Students should be prepared; however, to show the letter they received through the myLife portal when they are initially notified of Q/I and their release letter from quarantine/isolation confirming they are cleared to circulate on campus when asked by a faculty member or supervisor. The letter will not contain any medical information.

Staff Expectations

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

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.

- 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](#).

- There may be cases of students facing 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>
- 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](#).
- 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.

RIT Teaching and Learning Services Assistance

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/>

[RIT Ready \(https://www.rit.edu/ready/academics\)](https://www.rit.edu/ready/academics)

- Continuity of Instruction support - <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/course-design/teaching-elements/continuity-instruction>
- Aspects to Consider for Online Course Activities - <https://www.rit.edu/ready/faculty-course-planning#aspects-to-consider>