

8/19/2020 [Allunit] COVID testing, quality standards, intellectual property, and parking

Dear colleagues,

MSP has been working hard to negotiate many issues related to reopening campus. We prioritized the major issues that we have heard from our members over the past couple of months. We're pleased that yesterday we completed a Memorandum of Agreement with the administration, which will be posted on our website shortly. The MOA prioritizes health and safety, including regular COVID-19 testing and PPE for on-campus faculty and librarians. It also clarifies the administration's investment in high-quality online teaching. Our mutual intention is to provide students with the best possible learning experiences this semester, as we know that faculty are working hard to make the transition to engaging, accessible, and creative online classes.

Highlights of the MOA include:

1. Free COVID-19 testing required for all faculty and librarians who are required to work onsite, in research labs, or teaching face-to-face classes. Eligible individuals received notice from Environmental Health and Safety, and will be tested weekly at the Mullins Center. EHS has worked hard to provide this testing with results available the next day. Asymptomatic testing is only for:
 - a. Students living on campus
 - b. Students living off-campus who signed the UMass Agreement and may be participating in campus activities
 - c. On-site critical staff
 - d. Faculty teaching face-to-face classes
 - e. Lab researchers

In addition, symptomatic testing is available for faculty or librarians who have symptoms of COVID-19, without charge at University Health Services. Demographic data will be stored in the Medcat records system and protected by HIPAA; positive test results will be shared only with public health personnel for contact tracing.

2. High-quality online courses. The university's goal is to provide students with the best possible educational experience this fall, to meet student needs and retain students into the future. We know that faculty share those goals and have worked hard this summer to make it happen. The MSP has heard many concerns about the "University Quality Standards for Fully Online Courses." We have clarified with the central administration

that these standards are intended to be formative rather than punitive. This MOA confirms that no one will be unreasonably denied a workload adjustment based on this checklist. The administration's intention is to provide an appropriate workload adjustment for every member of the MSP bargaining unit who does the work to create a high-quality online course, so that we can support our students now and return to our research, outreach, and service in the future. The APWS system allows faculty to describe the work we put in to prepare an online course, and department chairs/heads will approve the workload adjustment for a future semester. You should talk to your chair/head now, and once you've described your plan for your course, you can enter that information into APWS for their review.

3. **Transcripts.** We heard many concerns about the suggestion that all faculty should provide transcripts of all Zoom or Echo360 classes. The underlying goal is to help students who may be distracted during a Zoom class, or may suffer from "Zoom fatigue" and have trouble following a full class. Faculty will do everything possible to support students who learn in different ways; Zoom and Echo360 provide transcripts that will make this easy for many instructors. However, the technology is not perfect and can be discriminatory; faculty are not required to take the time to edit transcripts that are inaccurate. While the Center for Teaching and Learning encourages everyone to use the transcript feature, this MOA makes clear that faculty who find the transcripts to be unusable have the option of providing lecture notes or annotated PowerPoint presentations to help students follow the class.
4. **All MSP bargaining unit members who teach online courses are covered by this agreement, including NTT and part-time faculty.** Clinical faculty who move clinics to telepractice or who move clinical training online are eligible for workload adjustments, including course releases or credit toward continuous appointment or early eligibility for professional improvement leaves for NTT faculty, subject to the approval of the department chair.
5. **Parking.** For the Fall 2020 semester, employee parking costs will be 50 percent of published fees. All MSP members who want to maintain access to their parking lot and their waiting list status must buy a parking permit for the 50 percent discount. We will revisit parking issues for the spring semester. If you already paid for your parking permit, you will receive a refund of half the price.
6. **Intellectual property and copyright protections.** University policies around intellectual property and academic freedom have not changed. All teaching materials created by the instructor, including the syllabus, videos, PowerPoint presentations, notes, and other written materials, remain the intellectual property of the instructor and can be shared only with your explicit agreement. The MSP has created these [guidelines](#) around copyright

protections, with the assistance of our outstanding librarians. We have included model language for faculty to include in the syllabus when teaching an online course.

Please let us know as questions arise about the MOA and related issues. Meanwhile, stay healthy and enjoy this last week before classes begin.

In solidarity,
MSP Executive Committee

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