COVID-19 STUDENT MASKING GUIDANCE FOR FACULTY/STAFF

BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN:

To prepare for the possibility of a student who is unable to wear a face covering, follow the
"**Reach**, **Respond**, **Refer**" protocol:

1. **REACH**
   Prior to the start of fall semester, faculty should proactively contact the students enrolled in
   their class (via Blind Carbon Copy (BCC)) to inform them that the campus requirement is for
   "students to wear face masks in all buildings". If the student is UNABLE to wear a mask, they
   should notify the faculty member immediately and not report to the class until an appropriate
   plan is in place for them to safely participate in class.

2. **RESPOND**
   If a student responds that they are unable to wear a face mask, the faculty should inquire if the
   student is able to wear an alternate face covering, including the use of a scarf or other loose
   face covering; or as a *last* option, the use of a face shield, but only if classroom spacing allows
   appropriate distance.

   If the reason they are unable to wear a face covering is related to a disability, religious belief, or
   condition (medical, psychological, et. al.), the faculty member will provide direction to advising
   support staff to identify whether other online options exist to meet the student's learning
   needs.

3. **REFER**
   If the reason they are unable to wear a face covering is related to a disability or condition
   (medical, psychological, et. al.), the faculty member may refer the student to the Office of
   Accessibility to begin the interactive process, as stated on the syllabus, to assess if additional
   classroom accommodations are needed.

If a student arrives to class without a mask and informs the faculty member that they are unable to wear
a mask, the student needs to leave the class and the faculty member can follow up with the student via
email for steps 2-3 (above).

AFTER CLASSES BEGIN:

How to respond to a student who isn't wearing a face covering

**When someone presents in a classroom and is not wearing a mask/face covering, approach the
situation with tact, good judgment, and curiosity.** In a discrete, tactful manner, we suggest the
following language to help you determine whether special accommodations for underlying conditions
(such as temporary shortness of breath, anxiety, PTSD, claustrophobia, or a general or
mental health condition) or religious beliefs are needed while *not* asking specifically about the context:

Are you unable to meet the campus COVID-19 protocols requiring masks or face coverings?

If the answer is "Yes" due to an underlying health concern or a religious belief, the student should be provided remote access to instructional materials for the day and informed that:
1. Current campus protocols state that a mask or face covering is required in campus buildings.
2. In order to attend the in-person class, the student may utilize one of the following accommodations for students who cannot mask:
    - the use of a scarf or loose face covering;
    - the use of a face shield, if classroom spacing allows appropriate distance; or
    - continued access to remote learning for in-person classes, in consultation with the instructor for the course and depending on the course learning outcomes (https://www.winthrop.edu/onlinelearning/preparing-for-remote-learning.aspx).
    - Failing these accommodations, the student may shift to an online section of the same course via drop/add, in consultation with an advisor, student services staff member, or department chair.

If the answer is "Yes" due to a disability, the student should be provided remote access to instructional materials for the day and instructed to:
1. Contact the Office of Accessibility (OA) by phone 803-323-3290 or email accessibility@winthrop.edu to engage in the OA registration process to determine reasonable accommodations such as those in the bulleted list above to ensure equal access to learning.
2. OA will guide students in how to communicate with faculty regarding their accommodations, including whether they opt to continue remote access or pursue an alternative option that enables the student to safely return to the physical classroom.

If the answer is "No" the student should be informed that:
1. Current campus protocols state that a mask or face covering is required in all campus buildings and that the policy is designed to protect them as well as other members of the campus community.
2. The student may stay present in the classroom if they put on a mask. Faculty are encouraged to bring a small number of disposable masks to classes for the first weeks in preparation for such instances.
3. If they continue to refuse to mask, they will need to leave the area immediately, or they will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for non-compliance.

What to do if the situation escalates

If the situation escalates, please choose from the following options:
1. If the student refuses to mask in class and/or leave the classroom after being asked, the faculty member should report the incident to the Dean of Students Office for follow up as a violation of our Student Code of Conduct. Please use the following link to report student-involved non-compliance incidents to the Dean of Student's Office: **Report Non-Compliance**
2. If the student refuses to mask, does not leave the area, and becomes disruptive in a manner that exceeds the faculty member or staff person's ability to control the situation, Campus Police may be called for assistance. Faculty and staff should utilize their classroom and employee management skills until they are exhausted before calling Campus Police.

Student masking in workspaces and at events, meetings, or appointments:

Workspaces: If a student is not wearing a mask in a place of employment on campus, the supervisor should avoid asking about the student's personal situation, but instead ask:

Are you unable to meet the campus COVID-19 protocols requiring masks or face coverings?

If "yes" due to an underlying condition or religious belief, the supervisor should explore whether the job functions can be completed via an accommodation, such as a loose scarf or face covering, a face shield in combination with physical distancing, or remote work assignment, if possible. Supervisors should reach out to Human Resources via email HRhelp@winthrop.edu or telephone (803)323-2273 with any questions.

If "no," the student worker should be reminded of our campus requirement and provided a disposable mask if they wish to remain at work. If the student refuses to mask, they should be asked to leave the workspace and disciplined appropriately as a violation of our Phased Return to Work plan, up to and including termination from the position of employment.

Events, Meetings, and Appointments: If a student attends an in-person event or shows up for a meeting or appointment without a mask, the organizer should ask:

Are you unable to meet the campus COVID-19 protocols requiring masks or face coverings?

If "yes" due to an underlying condition or religious belief, be sure not to ask inappropriate questions about the condition or belief. Focus your comments on providing alternate means of satisfying the in-person event requirement, providing remote access to an in-person meeting, or making a virtual appointment, for example.

If "no," the student worker should be reminded of our campus requirement and provided a disposable mask if they wish to remain at the event, meeting, or appointment. If the student refuses to mask, they should be asked to leave the event, meeting, or appointment. If the student refuses to mask and/or leave after being asked, the faculty or staff member responsible for the event, meeting, or appointment should report the incident to the Dean of Students Office for follow up as a violation of our Student Code of Conduct. Please use the following link to report student-involved non-compliance incidents to the Dean of Students Office: **Report Non-Compliance**

As with classroom situations, use Campus Police only as a last resort when a situation feels threatening.

RESOURCES

COVID-19

- **CDC Guidance**

- **SCDHEC Guidance**

Accessibility

- **Office of Accessibility**

- **NCCSD Faculty Resources**

- **AHEAD Resources**