



ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION PLAN

FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY RE-OPEN PLAN FALL 2020

Francis Marion University is committed to providing a safe environments for the entire FMU community. Special practices and procedures will be put in place for the Fall 2020 semester.

Provision for social distancing and other safety measures requires changes in the mode of delivery for some classes in fall. All classes have been designated as face-to-face, online or hybrid (a blend of face-to-face and online). Varying processes and protocols will pertain to each class.

The primary mode of delivery in fall will be face-to-face which is the traditional mode of presentation in which the instructor and all students are present at each class period. However, to reduce the density of students on campus and to facilitate social distancing a number of changes will be implemented.

CLASSROOM DESIGN

New classroom seating capacities and layouts have been determined, based on a survey of existing spaces. The new layouts will provide for social distancing within classrooms. When classes exceed the new capacities, they will be moved to a new, larger location or will affect a new mode of delivery.

ALTERNATE MODES OF INSTRUCTION

As noted, two alternate modes of delivery will be utilized. They are online classes and combination online/in-person classes.

ONLINE CLASSES overcome the lack of classroom space and eliminate in-person instructor/student contact. FMU has already experienced an increase in the demand for online classes in recent years, and the proportion of online classes at the university has grown, particularly in graduate programs. Online classes may also assist with scheduling to accommodate special students or faculty needs, and to generally reduce the number of students on campus.

COMBINED CLASSES can help reduce the number of individuals in classroom areas during any one period of the academic day, while at the same time maintaining some in-person contact between instructors and students. FMU's plan for hybrid classes calls for classes to meet at least once per week in person, with other classes and communication occurring online. The exact hybrid mix may vary from class to class. Hybrid classes will also help with overall distancing by reducing the number of students on campus throughout the academic day.

As originally scheduled, seven percent of FMU's fall undergraduate classes, and 26 percent of its fall graduate classes, were to have been delivered online. The university expects to increase online class to 15 percent of undergraduate sections offered in fall 2020. Few changes are anticipated for graduate classes. Hybrid classes may be offered in up to a quarter of the remaining undergraduate classes meaning about 60 percent of classes will employ traditional, face-to-face classes.

ENHANCED SUPPORT

Professional development seminars relating online course delivery are already in progress and will continue to be offered throughout the summer and into the fall. The seminars are being recorded and will be available for review by faculty members through FMU's Blackboard site.