

From the Desk of the Chancellor, Sept. 14, 2009

Flu season. It's here. Already. But it's different this year.

The H1N1 strain ("swine flu") is a largely unknown quantity. From our experience over the last five months, we know that it's not as deadly as we might have feared. That's the good news.

However, public health experts tell us it may be more easily spread than the regular seasonal flu. That's the bad news.

You will see recommendations posted around campus on how to protect yourself against the flu and where to get flu shots. But I also urge you to think of your fellow students and your colleagues. If you think you have the flu, stay home until you are no longer contagious. For guidance on symptoms and how long to stay away from contact with others, see IUPUI's Emergency Preparedness page on [Human Influenza A \(H1N1\)](#).

I ask that faculty encourage students to follow these precautions and that they be reasonable about class absences. Let your students know how you expect to be informed of absences due to flu contagion and suggest how students might keep up with their classes or make up missed work. Students may also need to miss class if other members of their households are sent home from school or work. Because public health officials have advised that people who are not seriously ill avoid going to their physicians, students may not be able to provide a doctor's excuse. I urge that faculty be understanding about these issues and be prepared to address them in their classes.

I also ask that supervisors and department heads be prepared to fill vacancies when faculty and staff are absent. Human Resources has excellent information for staff on its [flu preparedness web site](#), including policies on use of sick time, telecommuting, absence when a child is sick, and other frequently asked questions.

Deans and department heads have been asked to develop contingency plans for substitute teachers should faculty become ill with H1N1 and not be able to conduct class. Faculty are encouraged to explore alternative course delivery methods, such as OnCourse, in the event they become ill and must stay home. The University of Michigan has a resource page on [Recommendations for Teaching During a Flu Outbreak](#) with useful options.

Finally, I remind you that all faculty, staff, and students should make sure their emergency contact information is correct and up-to-date. The link to the IU-Notify information can be found on the OneStart page under the "Notifications" tab. This alert system is useful not only for pandemic flu notifications but also for adverse weather conditions.

Please do your part to help IUPUI "Be Prepared."



Chancellor Charles R. Bantz

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