

Greetings from Iowa State University!

Professional students are important members of the Iowa State University community. We appreciate the many ways in which you contribute to the vibrancy of the university through your own education as well as supporting our missions in teaching, research, and service. As we have planned for the fall semester, our priorities have been safety and health, and continuity of your academic progress toward your degree goals.

We are writing today to share information about Iowa State University's academic programs for the upcoming semester, and to address a few of the questions we know you have as you prepare for the fall.

Fall classes offered in multiple formats

One thing is for sure – the fall semester will not be “veterinary school as usual.” As you have seen in previous communications, we will be offering a mix of in-person and virtual instruction. While Iowa State has always taught in different instructional modes, a greater fraction of our courses this fall will be virtual or have a virtual component.

Face-to-face: Labs will be offered in-person and will be similar to those offered traditionally in other semesters, but multiple changes—such as an increase in the number of sections, physical distance between seats in classrooms, enhanced cleaning, and required face coverings—will be made to improve safety and mitigate risk associated with exposure or spread of the coronavirus.

Blended: Blended (also known as hybrid) courses will use a combination of face-to-face and online teaching, learning activities, and assessments. The online content may be delivered asynchronously (accessed at any time) or synchronously (during a scheduled class time with real-time instruction, questions, and engagement). The particular mix will depend on an instructor's teaching strategies and the learning objectives of the course. This will be the case for most of your lecture-based courses.

We have placed priority on preserving as many experiential learning opportunities as reasonably possible, including labs, and other courses that use specialized equipment and spaces, while at the same time mitigating the risk of COVID-19 for both students and instructors, including graduate and professional students serving as teaching assistants or tutors.

Class schedules available August 3

Our academic departments are making individual decisions about how each of our fall veterinary medicine courses will be delivered. These determinations are being based on course size, room and instructor availability, and safety protocols to mitigate student and instructor risk.

As you can imagine, this work is detailed and time-consuming, and we appreciate your patience. Classes begin on August 17, and students may make changes to their schedules with respect to elective courses without instructor approval until Friday, August 21.

Changes to class schedules

In some cases, classes are being moved to a different meeting time and/or location based on the availability of classrooms.

In addition, starting and ending times for classes have been changed to allow students and instructors more time to move between classes. The instructional day will begin 15 minutes earlier, and end 20 minutes later, than usual. The teaching schedule and passing times between classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays will not change, but classes on those days will be scheduled for 75 minutes.

Choosing online courses

Some students, particularly those who may be at a higher risk for COVID-19, may prefer to take all of their fall classes online. Those students are encouraged to consult with the CVM's Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs to determine how best to maintain satisfactory academic progress, as not all classes will have an online option.

Completing coursework in quarantine or self-isolation

We want students to stay home when they are sick. It is likely that some students may need to self-quarantine or self-isolate during the semester. Core classes will continue to have Echo 360 recordings of lectures available online for students to stay current with the course work. Laboratory instructors may provide alternative options for labs and assignments that are missed.

Accommodations for students concerned about their risk for COVID-19

Students at a higher risk to develop severe illness from COVID-19 based on their age or underlying medical condition, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control, will be given preference for placement in online courses. Additional information on this process can be found on the [Dean of Students website](#). However, it is important to note that we will not be able to offer any core courses as an online-only option.

While we know this is a lot of information, we do want to keep you up-to-date as we prepare for the fall semester. Please check ISU's [COVID-19 Planning website](#) for additional information and updates. If you have questions or need additional guidance at this time, please contact COVID-19@iastate.edu. More specifics on fall plans will be coming from the College of Veterinary Medicine.

In the meantime, best wishes for a safe and healthy remainder of your summer!

With warmest regards,

Wendy Wintersteen
President

Jonathan Wickert
Senior Vice President and Provost