

**From:** John Cunningham  
**To:** Faculty  
**Sent:** Friday, October 23, 2009 5:09 p.m.  
**Subject:** Class absence policy and H1N1 absences

Colleagues:

Copied below is the annual memo summarizing the "University Policy on Class Absence". It has been customized to address the likelihood of an H1N1 flu outbreak on campus in the near future.

That section reads as follows:

***"As you are aware, H1N1 influenza is expected to have a significant impact on campus this year. UMass Amherst and University Health Services (UHS) are continuing to follow the prevention and treatment recommendations of the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.***

***Current CDC guidelines call for those with influenza-like illness to practice self-isolation and care unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider, and to remain isolated until they are free of fever for 24 hours without the use of medications. It is likely that many students who become ill will recover fully without being seen by UHS or another medical provider.***

***The CDC further recommends that institutions of higher education "do not require a doctor's note for students, faculty or staff to validate their illness or to return to work, as doctor's offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and may not be able to provide such documentation in a timely way."***

***Students with the flu are being advised to e-mail their instructors if they will be absent. Your accommodations for documentation of illness will allow UHS and community healthcare providers to focus on caring for those in need."***

Please pay special attention to the intervention plan and do not request documentation from a health care provider for absences due to flu. Students have been instructed not to report to UHS but, rather, to go home or practice self-isolation during active flu illness. Accommodations for students to engage with course material or complete missed work or tests will need to be more flexible than usual as we complete this semester. Provost Staros and I appreciate your cooperation and thank you for your efforts as the campus implements this public health intervention.

Sincerely,

John Cunningham,  
Deputy Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education