

In-class Teaching Lab COVID-19 Guidelines

Department of Earth Sciences

July 22, 2021

General Safety Measures

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow general COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements, including wearing a well-fitted mask that covers the nose, mouth and chin at all times, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette, mandatory self-screening prior to coming to campus daily, and using the QR codes when entering/exiting a lab.

The Department will impress on all students, Teaching Assistants, and Instructors, the importance of vaccination for COVID-19. We cannot require that all Carleton Earth Sciences members are vaccinated, but we will emphasize the importance of vaccination in the protection of those at Carleton as well as family and friends off-campus.

Crush Space Congestion

Only one lab or workshop session will be scheduled in the Department at any one time, so staggering of lab start times is not necessary. Two of our three laboratory rooms include sinks with handwashing stations, while the third laboratory room is opposite our Server room which has a sink and handwashing station. The department will set up marked queuing stations in the hallways outside of each lab room.

Students will be instructed to arrive promptly at the beginning of lab or workshop times in order to minimize queuing outside of the lab.

Attendance and Tracking Data

Instructors and TA's will ensure that all users (students, TA's, instructors) of teaching lab rooms will use the QR code system to register their attendance in those rooms. If the QR code system is not functioning, then the instructor/TA will take attendance.

Lab Start and End Times

Start and End times of labs and workshops will be adjusted by five minutes to give students time to wash hands, take their seats, clean their work areas and leave the lab. For example, labs that start at 8:35AM will actually begin at 8:40AM, and labs that end at 11:25AM will actually end at 11:20AM.

Teaching Lab Occupancy and Circulation

Occupancy limits in our teaching labs have been set in consultation with Sal Ugarte. Those occupancy maxima will be posted on lab doors.

Students will be directed from the entrance door to the handwashing stations at the back of HP 2120 and HP 2130 through floor signage. After hand washing, students will circulate clockwise to the marked sitting stations in the lab. All sitting stations will be a minimum of 2m apart. Each sitting station will have a chair designated for that station. All excess chairs will be removed from the rooms. At the end of the lab period, students will exit from their stations to their right, one row at a time from front to back, and exit through the front door on the right. Students will maintain distancing of 2m while exiting and entering, and will always be 2m apart during the lab or workshop. If lab materials are located at the front of the lab, then the floors will be marked to indicate 2-metre distancing while students are lined up for those materials. Alternatively, lab materials will be moved to students in the room by the teaching staff.

In the case of HP 2110, students will use the Served sink and handwashing station before entering the lab.

Inform Students About Procedures

Course syllabi will include laboratory procedures if in-person labs or workshops are part of that course. The Department will post videos on our website and on Brightspace courses demonstrating the safety protocols in all teaching laboratories.

At the beginning of every lab or workshop, the students will receive verbal instructions on how to enter and leave the lab room.

All lab or workshop materials will be set up in advance of the arrival of the students.

All shared equipment, primarily polarizing microscopes, will be cleaned by the students prior to use and after use. Each student will be using one microscope and one microscope camera during a lab or workshop session. The use of an ocular camera means students do not set their eyes on the microscope and only will touch the stage and focus knobs. The correct cleaning materials will be provided to each student. In rare cases, a student may be using a Department laptop computer that will be carefully disinfected after use.

Lab and workshop room procedures will be prominently posted in each lab room.

High-Touch Surfaces / Shared Equipment / Shared Data

Students will be instructed on the cleaning of their lab sitting station prior to starting and after finishing their lab/workshop. Cleaning materials will be provided. We will provide videos of the correct cleaning techniques on Brightspace and in the lab sessions. Instructors will clean computer keyboards, the table, and any other touched surfaces at the front of each teaching lab.

Instructors and TA's will ensure that the teaching labs are indeed properly cleaned after each student group leaves. This includes door handles, sink faucet handles, storage cabinet handles, etc.

Cleaning procedures, especially for high-touch surfaces such as microscope focus dials, will be prominently posted in each teaching lab room.

Brightspace will be used to provide teaching materials for labs or workshops as much as possible, including all lab safety and cleaning protocols.

Contamination Control

Students will bring all of their gear (backpack, coats, etc.) to their sitting station, but will be asked to bring a minimum of gear with them.

Cleaning supplies will be provided in each lab room, and TA's will organize their distribution to students. The supplies will be re-stocked by B. Halfkenny on a daily basis.

Obtaining Assistance

All participants in in-person labs or workshops will be instructed on how to get assistance while in the room. A hand must be raised to signify the need for help. Students will be asked not to leave their sitting station except for using a washroom. While providing assistance, TA's and instructors will keep a maximum distance necessary from students and, if necessary, wear gloves. Some cleaning of equipment (e.g., microscope focus knobs) may be necessary after the assistance is rendered.

Personal Protective Equipment

Earth Sciences labs or workshops do not require lab coats, safety goggles, gloves, or other PPE.

Training

The Department will provide video training for students on COVID-19 protocols (distancing, hand washing, masks, face-touching, sneeze and cough etiquette, importance of vaccination). We will especially emphasize that students and instructors should not come to campus if they feel unwell. University COVID-19 posters will be prominently displayed, along with Department posters concerning room procedures.

Reminders of protocols, and communication of any changes to those protocols, will be conveyed by e-mail from the Department Chair as well as by instructors at the beginning of lab/workshop sessions.

Non-Compliance

A student who does not comply with posted university or teaching lab protocols will first be addressed by the instructor and, if the behaviour continues, with Campus Safety officers.

If the behaviour repeats, then the Department Chair and Student Affairs will be informed.

Student Illness

A student who falls ill during a lab or workshop will be asked to go home immediately and self-isolate, and to complete the Carleton COVID-19 symptom reporting web tool. If a TA, instructor, or other staff member becomes ill, then their supervisor/manger must be informed.

If the student is incapacitated, then Campus Safety (ext. 4444) must be contacted. The student should be kept at least 2m from other people in the room until help arrives.