



Dear Colleagues:

As you may be aware, [Kent State University is working closely with local and state public health agencies to monitor the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus in the U.S.](#) As with any communicable disease, public health officials recommend that the infected stay away from the healthy, and that the healthy wash their hands frequently.

In light of the current, global increase in novel coronavirus infections, as well as the current flu season, I ask you to consider and apply flexibility regarding the need for documentation of absences. [Kent State University Policy 3-01.2](#) (J) states that students shall "provide verification from their medical provider."

Many students do not seek out medical care when reporting flu symptoms/fever, and recover in a few days, but require rest to improve. Though a student has been ill and their absence is reasonable, documentation may not be present. **Requiring documentation under these circumstances may force students to unnecessarily incur medical costs or encourage them to attend class when they are ill and possibly contagious.**

I hope you will be flexible in your request for documentation of flu-like illnesses and that you will **also encourage your students not to attend class when they have a fever, excessive coughing, or a flu diagnosis.** I believe these actions will contribute to the safety and health of our campus community.

In order to assist faculty in determining how to excuse missed work, deadlines, and assignments, we are compiling examples from faculty and departments that we will include on an [education resource page](#) of the Center for Teaching and Learning. If you find that a practice/procedure you have used in the classroom has been very effective, please share this with us. Please send this information, (including a relevant description from the syllabus) to the [CTL Flashport Portal](#).

Many of our international students, faculty, and staff may be very concerned about their families in regard to the news they are hearing about the coronavirus. Let's be mindful of the stresses our community members may be feeling and be sensitive to and show care for them.

Remember, Flashes Take Care of Flashes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Melody'.

Melody Tankersley, Ph.D.
Interim Senior Vice President and Provost

Kent State University

cc:
chairs and directors
deans