

Guiding Principles for Online Course Adaptations, Fall 2020 | Area of Focus

This document forms part of the University of British Columbia's Guiding Principles for Online Course Adaptations, first published in 2020. Learn more about the guiding principles and access the full document at keep-teaching.ubc.ca.

Academic Delivery in the Health Professional Programs for the 2020 Winter Session

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The deans, associate deans academic, and directors of the health professional programs at UBC Vancouver have met as they plan for students' clinical learning activities moving forward amid COVID-19. As a result, a set of principles and key considerations have been adopted that are commonly applicable to all health programs at UBC, while allowing for appropriate customization to meet program requirements, external accreditation and regulatory needs.

At the high level, these principles include but are not limited to:

- Patient safety: Would the presence of students in the clinical environment jeopardize or promote optimal patient care and population safety?
- Student safety: Can students be protected from, or excluded from, excessive risk?
- Safety of teaching faculty and hospital staff: Would student placements jeopardize the safety or wellness of teaching faculty or other hospital staff?
- Clinical capacity: Is there sufficient clinical capacity available to support student learning?
- Learning: Can a valuable learning experience be provided?
- Supervision: Is there sufficient clinical teaching faculty available to provide student supervision?

With the above principles in mind, a number of tactical requirements that are specific to the health programs are necessary for successful implementation. These requirements include but are not limited to:

- approval (e.g., by health authorities or the relevant oversight clinical/public/private organizations) to allow clinical placements and related academic activities to take place on premise;

- availability of the appropriate personal protective equipment in the UBC campus and community clinical settings;
- access to virtual care (e.g., tele-health) as applicable in selected campus and community clinical settings as new learning opportunities for students.

A blended delivery option would work based on pedagogy, that is, to deliver non-didactic curricular components with face-to-face interactions, while didactic academic learning can be delivered online and with the use of modalities such as simulation. There is a limitation to the practicality of a blended delivery option: the non-didactic sessions that run face-to-face would require scheduling the learning activities over multiple sessions in order to maintain safe physical distancing. In addition, the health programs would also encounter the same considerations when designing a high-quality online learning experience as outlined for non-health programs.