

TO: COVID-19 Medical Response Office  
Officers of University of Pittsburgh

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DATE: February 3rd, 2022

SUBJECT: Move to Hybrid Learning in the University of Pittsburgh

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## **Abstract**

In-person learning is problematic during pandemic. The Omicron variant would inevitably affect the health of students and university staff members. The final policy is responsible for the wellness of a massive community. Therefore, I have the notion to move to hybrid learning during the Spring 2022 semester at the University of Pittsburgh.

## **Introduction**

On January 27th, 2022, the University of Pittsburgh switched from online to in-person, On the same day, COVID-19 Medical Response Office at Pitt reported 438 total positive cases within the Pittsburgh campus. COVID-19 viruses, especially the Omicron variant, can infect and spread through people with full vaccination. Although popular vaccines can reduce the symptoms, the strength wears off after three months. The boosters can only maintain the protection for a month.

## **Description**

### Virus Threat

The virus transmits effectively in the school environment. People with positive results cannot attend classes. The inadequate attendance would disrupt the course flow. Still, forcing face-to-face curriculums puts all students and faculty at risk, due to the latent period. Infectant

can look deceptively healthy and carry a significant amount of virus. The factors pose threats in the college learning experience.

### Remote Learning

A great number of students wish to take courses remotely because of the concerns above. Remote learning can guarantee the maximum safety for individuals. Pitt has invested in online learning environments such as Zoom and Canvas since the start of the pandemic. They supported online learning through the year of 2020-2021.

### In-Person Demand

The demand for in-person curriculum rises among students and faculty. Remote environments added more distraction to the process of learning for the students. Lecturers also lost the connection to their audiences. The lack of productivity harms the quality of remote classes. Eventually the school decided to re-open all the classrooms and continue the traditional university routine with face masks.

### Solution: Hybrid Learning

In hybrid learning, lecturers choose to teach in classrooms or in virtual meetings. Students can choose to attend an in-person class or the corresponding Zoom meeting. The solution balances the interests of both in-person and remote appeals. The remote option accommodates people with positive results. The class will not freeze for a student because they get a positive test result.

The arbitrary technical or financial difficulties do not exist. The facilities and software expenses are included in the students tuition. Students and faculty members have developed experiences using them. The school has proceeded hybrid learning in the previous semesters with success.

## **Conclusion**

Life does not stop its pace during pandemics, but the decision of being fully in-person denies the struggle that the entire world is fighting against. Students and faculty members need the right to choose between online or in-person to protect themselves.

Together we can defeat COVID.