

STANFORD
UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST



September 14, 2009

To: Stanford Faculty
From: John Etchemendy, Provost

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

Welcome to the new academic year. I hope your summer was as restful or as productive as you hoped (though they rarely seem to be!).

As you know, this fall's influenza season is expected to affect large numbers of people in our community. In addition to the normal seasonal flu, we need to prepare for the H1N1 flu (swine flu), which has already been spreading rapidly at other colleges and universities. I am writing to ask you to take some steps that can decrease the incidence of H1N1 on campus.

- First, be attentive to your own health and encourage your colleagues and teaching assistants to do so as well. If you are even mildly sick with flu-like symptoms, please stay home. Seek medical attention if your symptoms persist. You should return to work only after your fever and symptoms have abated for 24 hours.
- Avoid policies that encourage infected students to come to class or examinations. Develop contingency plans for dealing with student absences because of flu. We expect a greater than normal number of students to be sick and unable to attend class for as many as three to five days. If students feel obligated to come to class while sick, this will endanger both you and other students in your class. Because large numbers of students may be ill, Vaden Health Center may not be able to provide medical excuses as they have done in the past.
- Don't compromise academic standards, but do think about alternatives for accomplishing your course goals under unpredictable circumstances. You may want to provide directions on your course syllabus about how you will handle absences.
- Finally, while it will not prevent H1N1 strains of flu, the seasonal flu shot is nonetheless highly recommended this year. Flu shots are available to Stanford faculty and staff at Vaden Health Center beginning October 12. The full schedule of clinics is available at <http://vaden.stanford.edu/>.

The University maintains a website with information about the H1N1 flu at <http://ucomm.stanford.edu/flu/>. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control provides a wealth of helpful information, including strategies for limiting spread of the flu, at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/exclusion.htm>.

With best wishes for the academic year,

John Etchemendy