The information in this document is a collection of existing policies and previously released guidance on fall instruction, compiled for here for the convenience of instructors.

The default mode of instruction for all Fall 2021 courses is in-person, in compliance with the conditions of our WASC accreditation. In-person instruction is defined as class meetings (including lectures, labs, and discussion sections) that are at least 50% face-to-face, on a weekly basis, and from the perspective of the student. There is no required modality for office hours.

It is clear that the pandemic will continue to impact Santa Barbara County and UC Santa Barbara during the Fall 2021 academic quarter. The Senate, in consultation with campus administrative leaders, has planned for various instructional scenarios to allow for efficient decision-making in the event of rapid changes in public health conditions.

The mode of instruction of a course may not be changed (by an instructor, a chair, a dean, or other individual) without the consent of the Academic Senate via the online course approval process, or the requirements for emergency remote instruction described below.

Approved Online Courses
All courses offered at UC Santa Barbara should meet the same high standards in terms of the educational experience they offer to students, regardless of the mode of instruction. Online courses have been approved by the Academic Senate to be offered in this modality on an ongoing basis. Online courses are identifiable by a “W” prefix (e.g. HIST W 8).

To seek approval for an online course, instructors must submit a Master Course Approval (MCA) request, course syllabus, and supplemental questionnaire to the appropriate college/school Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) for review. Following review by the FEC, the course proposal is considered by the Committee on Courses and General Education (CCGE) for final action. Depending upon the timing of submission, the volume of committee business, and the thoroughness of the initially submitted proposal, the approval process may take from several weeks to several months. Online course approvals are valid for a period of two years from the requested effective date. Continuation beyond the initial approval period requires submission of a renewal request.

Courses with Approval for Continued Emergency Remote Instruction
A very limited number of courses have been approved for continued emergency remote instruction in Fall Quarter 2021:

1. Courses which do not involve instruction, but are instead departmental colloquia or workshops with participants and/or speakers from multiple campuses, and which can
therefore not be conducted in-person since some participants/speakers are necessarily virtual;

2. Courses identified in spring 2020 as serving a large fraction of international students who were, at that time, facing extended delays in obtaining visas (note that since visa delays for such students appear to be largely resolved, no new courses are being approved for remote instruction solely for this reason).

Instructors with Approval to Teach Remotely due to Medical or Visa Issues

There are a limited number of exceptions under which instructors may secure approval to teach their course(s) remotely during Fall Quarter 2021, described below. Please note that for the purposes of this roadmap, the term “instructor” includes all faculty and graduate student teaching associates/assistants associated with the course. It is possible that one of the course’s instructors is eligible to teach remotely for one of the following reasons, while the other instructors are still expected to teach in-person.

1. Medical Accommodation. Instructors who are themselves at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 because of an underlying medical condition/disability may request reasonable accommodations through the Workplace Accommodations team in Human Resources. The Workplace Accommodations team can provide guidance and assistance to identify reasonable accommodations that could reduce COVID-19 related risks.

   Depending on the circumstances, some examples of workplace accommodations may include: providing additional personal protective equipment (PPE); enhancing physical distancing or modifying the work location; modifying work schedules; modifying non-essential job functions; or a leave of absence. Approval for remote instruction as a medical accommodation for instructors is allowed, at the discretion of the Senate, only in Fall Quarter 2021 at this time (see Remote Instruction Beyond Fall 2021, below).

2. Workplace Adjustment. Instructors (including Teaching Associates and Teaching Assistants) may request a temporary workplace adjustment allowing them to teach remotely in fall quarter if they live with a family member or household member who is moderately to severely immunocompromised, as defined by the CDC’s current recommendations (effective August 23, 2021) for an additional vaccine shot. This workplace adjustment is offered at the discretion of the Academic Senate and is different and distinct from medical accommodations for instructors (above).

   The Senate has delegated to the academic deans of the various Schools, Colleges, and Divisions the authority to grant a workplace adjustment involving remote teaching when the instructor provides a completed Workplace Adjustment Request Form, including:
a. A physician’s certification that a member of the instructor’s household has one of the qualifying medical conditions; and
b. An attestation of cohabitation.

Permission to teach remotely due to a workplace adjustment involving family or household members is valid for Fall Quarter 2021 only at this time. A dean and/or department chair can also provide, at their discretion, other workplace adjustments, such as alternative teaching quarters, that do not include remote teaching.

Since K-12 schools and childcare centers are open and fully operational in our area as of fall 2021, having unvaccinated children at home is not a justification for a workplace adjustment involving remote teaching.

3. International Remote Work. All employees who have legal authorization to work in the United States must be physically located in the United States (U.S.) as of the start of Fall quarter 2021, unless they are on an approved leave. The temporary exception permitting UC employees to live and work remotely from an international location ended after summer 2021. However, the University understands that there may be proposed or continuing academic appointees who are not able to arrive in the US by the start of fall quarter, due to continued visa processing barriers or international travel restrictions. In such cases, the individual may seek an exception permitting temporary remote work from abroad, up until the end of December 2021.

Exceptions will only be granted to requests that clearly document visa processing barriers or international travel restrictions, and require approval from the Academic Personnel Office. Those who wish to request an exception must complete and submit the UCSB Overseas Telework Exception Request Form for Academic Appointees. Additional information is available in the June 17 memo issued by Academic Personnel.

Temporary Remote Instruction for Quarantines, Isolation, and COVID-19 Related School Closures
Instructors who are required to quarantine or isolate during fall quarter may be able to continue teaching, but only if they can do so remotely. Instructors who are parents of children required to quarantine or isolate may find themselves similarly constrained. In these cases, the Senate will allow a temporary exception to the requirement for in-person instruction, authorizing teaching in emergency remote mode. In each of the following scenarios, the instructor must notify their Chair and their students of any temporary change in the mode of instruction in a timely manner.

1. Medically-required Quarantines. An instructor who is required by Public Health or campus officials to quarantine or isolate during fall quarter may continue to teach remotely during the medically-required quarantine or isolation period. An instructor
who has direct care-giving responsibility for a child under the age of 12 who is required to quarantine or isolate during this time may choose to teach remotely during the child’s medically-required quarantine or isolation period. Remote teaching for the purpose of quarantine or isolation will not normally exceed 2 instructional weeks.

2. Childcare/K-8 School Closures. If a childcare center or K-8 school in the County in which the instructor has one or more children under the age of 12 enrolled should close during the fall quarter due to the public health emergency, and the instructor has direct care-giving responsibilities for these children, the instructor may choose to teach remotely until such time as the childcare center or school reopens.

Temporary remote instruction during this type of instructor quarantine or school closure is expected to remain synchronous as much as possible, and when synchronous, must be offered at the regularly scheduled class time. Instructors should remain local and available to restart in-person instruction as soon as conditions allow. Not being local is not an acceptable reason for either instructors or students to fail to participate in face-to-face instruction, whenever such instruction is required. According to the Academic Personnel Manual (APM 730), all faculty are expected to be in residence during academic terms, unless on an approved leave.

Changes in Pandemic Conditions or Public Health Orders
The COVID-19 Working Group, which meets most weekday mornings, is monitoring COVID-19 infection rates closely, both on our campus and in the County of Santa Barbara. If the conditions of the pandemic change significantly during the quarter, remote instruction may become necessary and mandated by public health orders. If the campus experiences a serious outbreak and, in consultation with the Santa Barbara County Department of Public Health, directs that students living in campus housing must shelter in place, or that the campus must close, all instruction will be conducted remotely until the emergency is lifted. If any of these situations occur, the Academic Senate and the university administration will provide more information to instructors and students about necessary adjustments.

Remote Instruction Beyond Fall 2021
Decisions about possible uses of emergency remote teaching options beyond fall quarter will be announced in November, based on the progression of the pandemic and public health projections at that time for winter quarter. We also expect further guidance from our accreditor, WASC, during fall quarter regarding future parameters for remote/online instruction.