

Caraga State University Guidelines on the Conduct of Limited Face-to-Face Classes

Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic has taken the world by surprise, including the education systems, which resulted in sudden and unexpected disruptions. This global health crisis has brought a severe blow, on a global scale, to the economy; livelihoods; and foremost, to the health and lives of the people. Although beset by challenges, Caraga State University heeds to the unequivocal call to formulate and strategize education interventions.

The fundamental goal of this document is to provide guidance in the curriculum implementation of programs implemented via face-to-face modality. While CSU is given the flexibility to adjust, modify, and reduce requirements in the implementation of blended learning, it cannot be gainsaid that there are skills and competencies of the students that can only be achieved and best developed through critical laboratory exercises, plant visits, thesis work, capstone design and OJT.

The provisions of this guideline are predicated on the existing policies, rules and regulations issued and promulgated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Inter-agency Taskforce on Emerging Infectious diseases (IATF-EID), Department of Health (DOH), the World Health Organization, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the local government unit and health authorities, such as Joint Memorandum Order (JMC) No. 2021-01, CMO No. 19, series of 2021 and other issuances of CHED. To ensure tailored-fit translation of such policies in the context of Caraga State University, the following committees and bodies in the University shall be highly involved: Task Force Jeremiah (TFJ) or the CSU's Crisis Management Committee, DRRM Team, Management Information System (MIS), Campus Safety and Security Services, and College Deans of both Butuan and Cabadbaran campuses.

While it is also highly anticipated that the post-pandemic New Normal is characterized by uncharted transformations in higher education landscape, this guideline is hereby presented to promote and protect the safety among all the students, faculty members, staff, and all stakeholders involved in the face of these massive transitions.

1. General Guidelines

- 1.1** Resumption of limited Face to Face (F2F) Classes in Caraga State University shall only be allowed if the area having jurisdiction of CSU campus is placed under Levels 1-3, or in an Alert Level determined by CHED, LGU, and IATF-EID.
- 1.2** Should the area having jurisdiction of CSU Campus be classified to a more restrictive alert level, the campus shall automatically suspend F2F classes and adopt the flexible learning modality. If there are two (2) or newer confirmed COVID-19 positive cases, the limited F2F classes shall likewise be suspended subject to the recommendation of the City Health Office and/or local IATF.
- 1.4** For Alert Level 1, the allowable maximum seating capacity is 100%. Should the alert level be reclassified to Level 2 or 3, reduction of seating capacity must follow a clustering scheme. Students who may be allowed to participate to F2F classes shall be classified under the following scheme:

Cluster 1: Laboratory, thesis/ dissertation, and internship programs

Cluster 2: Graduating undergraduate and graduate students

Cluster 3: Second Year and Third Year undergraduate students and graduate students

Cluster 4: First Year undergraduate students and graduate students

1.5 CSU shall gradually implement the limited F2F classes subject to the determination of the Task Force Jeremiah (TFJ), the University's Crisis Management Committee; and upon approval of CHED.

1.6 CSU shall notify CHED Regional Office - Caraga through submission of an accomplished self-assessment checklist and notarized affidavit of undertaking prior to the start of the limited in-person classes

1.7 All the provisions herein shall be read in conjunction with CHED-DOH JMC 2021-01 and CMO No. 1, Series of 2022.

2. Requirement on COVID-19 Vaccination and Health Insurance Coverage

2.1 Only students and faculty members who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 shall be allowed to participate/hold F2F classes. For purposes of these *Guidelines*, an individual shall be considered as fully vaccinated two (2) weeks after the second dose for 2-dose vaccines or one (1) dose for single-dose vaccine (e.g. Janssen). Vaccination Cards issued by LGU or DOH, or VaxCertPH generated via vaxcert.doh.gov.ph shall be considered as the only proof for the immunization status.

2.2 Students who prefer and are allowed to attend limited F2F classes shall be required to be registered as members or dependents in the Philhealth Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) and/or any medical insurance that covers medical expenses related to COVID-19.

3. Formulation of FLGCs and LCP

3.1 The Vice-President for Academic Affairs, together with the College Deans and Chairpersons concerned, shall formulate a Flexible Learning Course Guides (FLGCs) and submit the same to CHEDRO 13.

3.2 The Office of Curriculum and Instruction Development (OCID) shall submit to CHEDRO-13 a learning continuity plan to include the requirements for flexible learning strategies and deliveries as well as the limited face-to-face learning activities and assessments.

3.3 Fifty percent of workshop and laboratory exercises can be done through alternative learning activities while face-to-face learning shall constitute the remaining 50% to ensure the attainment of learning outcomes.

3.4 F2F modality shall be allowed only for the following purposes:

- i. Conduct of laboratory classes
- ii. One-on-one faculty consultation
- iii. Conduct of thesis/research or library visits
- iv. Major examinations (midterm and final)
- v. Board Exam Review
- vi. Practicum Activities to Host Company

3.5 If the student prefers to do flexible learning during the pandemic, CSU shall permit and let the student take the F2F class, whenever possible without prejudice to readmission and maximum residency. The University shall respect the decision of students and their family

who may opt to continue with the online distance learning modality. It shall be the responsibility of the College to provide the students with the equivalent learning experience comparable to those students who will take the limited face-to-face option.

4. Setting Appointment

4.1 Prior to the participation to F2F classes, the students shall be required to present the following:

- a. Parental Consent to participate in F2F classes
- b. Copy of Membership Data Record of PhilHealth or any medical health insurance
- c. Vaccination Card issued by LGU or DOH reflecting the type of vaccine and date of vaccination

4.2 The following students are allowed to enter the CSU Campus:

- a. Students enrolled in courses with approved limited F2F classes
- b. Students doing flexible learning and have approved appointments from their respective colleges to pick up learning materials, submit academic requirements, consult with their professors, access learning facilities for a limited time, conduct laboratory work or field work for their theses/ dissertations, or take the major examinations.

4.3 Maximum Time Allowed for Students

For Alert Level higher than Level 1, students shall be allowed to access the campus and its facilities for a maximum of four (4) hours per day only. Having meals inside the premises shall not be allowed. The 4-hour stay in the campus shall be limited to the following activities and corresponding time limit:

- i. 3 hours laboratory and/or examination and 1 hour study/research at the library per day
- ii. 2 hours consultation with faculty members and 2 hours study/research at the library per day
- iii. 4 hours laboratory work for thesis/ research implementation, course project completion
- iv. 4 hours major examination
- v. 4 hours board exam review

5. Online Appointment App

For purposes of facilitating contact tracing, the names, time-in, and time-out of students, faculty, and staff shall be recorded by ensuring the use of the Online Appointment app all the time. All students who intend to go to the campus in-person shall secure an online appointment via Online Appointment App.

5.1 Students shall provide accurate and honest disclosure in filling out the Health Declaration Form in the Online Appointment App. Non-disclosure of health status shall be grounds for disciplinary actions in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

5.2 Students shall present the QR code from the Online Appointment app upon entry to the campus premises and its facilities including but not limited to library, laboratory, classrooms and other Offices.

5.3 The DRRM Directors shall monitor and update Alert Level of localities of origin of students who are deemed qualified to participate in the limited F2F learning modality.

5.4 The University shall ensure that all constituents of the academic community who shall be involved in the limited face-to-face learning modality are properly informed of the risks of COVID-19 infection. Constituents with co-morbidities or living with individuals with co-morbidities and who are not yet fully vaccinated shall be advised to consider continuing with the flexible learning modality or delay taking the limited face-to-face classes in succeeding semesters or whenever possible without prejudice to readmission and maximum residency.

6. Laboratory and Examination Rooms

6.1 Laboratory/Examination Room personnel shall scan the QR code upon entry of the students in the assigned area for ingress.

6.2 Partitions between the faculty and students shall be installed in classrooms and laboratories and must be disinfected every after use.

6.3 Colleges concerned shall identify classrooms/ laboratories to be occupied with due consideration of foot traffic and adequate ventilation.

6.4 Colleges concerned shall require faculty to have approved seating plans indicating the assigned seats of students and with due consideration of the identified maximum capacity of the laboratory and classroom.

6.5 Each building shall implement a one-way human traffic system to limit human intersection, contact and interaction. Markings on the floors indicating directions and proper distancing from the entrance gate to the room and within the room.

6.6 Students, faculty, and staff shall always wear their facemask and face shield inside the classrooms/ laboratories, unless the government, through the IATF or respective LGU relaxes this requirement.

6.7 Classrooms/ laboratories/ other school facilities as well as equipment used by the students shall be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each school day.

6.8 The Instrument Room shall be equipped with UV-C Lights. Instruments and equipment must be subjected to daily disinfection before and after use.

6.9 Colleges shall formulate disinfection protocol for any chemical-sensitive and photo-sensitive devices, instruments, and equipment.

6.10 Laboratory/Examination Room personnel shall scan the QR code upon exit of the students in the assigned area for egress.

7. Library

7.1 Library personnel shall scan the QR code upon entry of the students to the library in the assigned area for ingress.

7.2 Physical distancing of at least 1.5 m shall strictly be observed inside the library.

7.3 Students, faculty, and staff shall wash or sanitize their hands before entering the library facilities.

7.4 Silence or "No Talking Policy" shall be strictly observed inside the library.

7.5 Students without laboratory classes or scheduled appointments or examinations who intend to use the library shall be given a maximum time limit of 2 hours per entry per day. The number of times he or she can enter the library is two times per day.

7.6 If books/journals/library materials are borrowed and brought home or taken outside the library facilities, there shall be a dedicated drop box for their return. These shall be subjected to UV-C disinfection before they are again included for circulation.

7.7 Library personnel shall scan the QR code upon exit of the students to the library in the assigned area for egress.

8. Leaving the Campus Premises

8.1 Students, faculty, and staff shall leave the campus immediately after their work, appointments, classes, or library visits.

8.2 Each Campus shall have a designated exit gate. Students, faculty, and staff can only pass through this gate to leave the campus.

8.3 Each Campus shall regularly remind students, faculty, and staff on how to be safe on their way home.

8.4 CSU campuses shall coordinate with their respective LGUs on crowd management outside the school premises.

8.5 Security personnel shall scan the QR Code upon the exit of students in the University premises.

9. Plant Visits, OJT, and Practicum Activities

9.1 The University shall forge MOUs with the companies that will accept plant visits or OJT.

9.2 Plant visits and OJT may also be conducted in remote mode or in blended mode.

9.3 It shall be the responsibility of the College concerned, through the designated OJT Coordinator, to determine the appropriate mix of remote and face-to-face activities for plant visits and OJT to achieve the learning outcomes of these courses.

9.4 The OJT Coordinator shall conduct readiness assessment of students.

9.5 The OJT Coordinator shall conduct readiness assessment of the host company for face-to-face plant visits and/or OJT activities based on the IATF guidelines and recommendations to ensure the safety of the students who will be undergoing plant visits, OJT, and practicum activities.

9.6 The OJT Coordinator shall ensure that the host company has a Safety Seal Certificate pursuant to DOLE-DOH-DILG-DOT-DTI Joint Memorandum Circular No. 21-01 Series of 2021.

9.7 The OJT Coordinator shall ensure that the host company is compliant to health protocols and guidelines set by IATF and have in-place proper quarantine protocols so as not to disrupt the operations of the host company.

10. Sanitation and Engineering Control

10.1 Entering the Campus and Screening

10.1.1 All students, faculty and staff shall undergo health status check protocols upon entry.

10.1.2 Anyone with a body temperature of 37.5 degrees centigrade and above and/or other COVID-19 symptoms shall not be allowed to enter the campus premises. This individual may be temporarily placed in the isolation room (see Annex K of CHED-DOH JMC 2021-01) until transported to his/her home or health facility.

10.1.3 Each campus shall ensure that there are no choke points in their respective entrance gates.

10.2 The layouts of the classrooms, laboratories and communal areas (office lobbies, library, study halls/centers, etc.) shall be re-engineered, re-designed, or retrofitted to ensure that physical distancing of at least 1.5 meters is strictly observed.

10.3 The Office of Physical Plant and General Services, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Development, shall conduct a space analysis of the facilities to be used for the limited F2F classes to determine the maximum capacity taking into consideration the physical distancing requirements.

10.4 Closed areas with air conditioning units (ACUs) shall have high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaners. The Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR) to Room Size shall be calculated to determine the number of HEPA filters per room.

10.5 Visible, readable, and adequate number of signages and signals shall be placed or posted in strategic and conspicuous places inside the campus.

10.6 All areas assigned for ingress and egress shall be installed with pedal-operated hand sanitizer or hand washing stations.

10.7 Students, faculty, and staff shall wash or sanitize their hands before entering any rooms or facilities within the campus.

10.8 Commonly shared computer units shall be cleaned and disinfected before and after use. Tables and chairs shall be marked to inform the students, faculty, and staff where to sit and not to sit.

11. Infection Control and Prevention Measures Inside the Campus

11.1 Mass gatherings on campus for extracurricular activities including but not limited to sports, musical events, and competitions, among others, shall not be permitted.

11.2 Conduct of in-person graduation ceremonies is not allowed until permitted by IATF, LGU, and CHED.

11.3 All members of the academic community shall strictly adhere to all restrictions imposed by the LGU concerned and the IATF.

11.4 Students and faculty members involved in the limited F2F classes shall bring his/her own personal hygiene kit which shall contain the following items: ethyl alcohol (70%) or hand sanitizer, cleansing wipes/ tissue paper/hand towel, extra face mask, and hand soap. The hygiene kits shall be inspected by the security personnel upon entry. Failure to bring hygiene kits shall be a reason for refusal of entry to the campus premises.

11.5 Anyone who presents any COVID-19 symptoms shall be required to stay at home and must report their conditions to their professors/ deans/ unit heads. The personnel from the Health and Wellness Office shall monitor their health status. For continuity of learning, colleges concerned shall implement the appropriate flexible learning mode for affected students. Established Work-from-Home arrangements shall be followed for affected faculty and staff.

11.6 Students who are permitted to enter the campus premises shall proceed to their respective classrooms, office, or facility. Students who arrive early shall proceed to a designated holding area. In the holding area, everyone shall strictly observe the health and safety protocols (wearing of face masks, face shield, and observing correct physical distancing). They shall not be allowed to loiter.

11.7 Smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited inside the CSU premises.

11.8 Students shall not be allowed to leave the campus during the appointment hours except on emergency cases.

11.9 Each person shall only be permitted one entry and one exit per day.

11.10 The University shall continue to conduct regular fire, bomb threat, earthquake and other pertinent drills adherent to health and safety protocols most especially physical distancing and use of PPE.

11.11 Personnel from the Health and Wellness Office shall regularly monitor the health status of all university constituents. They shall report probable cases of any constituent who presents COVID-19 symptoms and implement isolation, contact tracing, and disinfection immediately.

11.12 Safety officers shall roam around buildings, facilities or areas designated for limited face-to-face learning to enforce strict observance of the health and safety protocols.

11.13 Safety Officers in each Campus shall conduct Daily Monitoring of Retrofitted Facilities using the checklist template in Annex M of CHED-DOH JMC 2021-01.

11.14 Review of the Contingency Plan shall be conducted in cases of changes to issuances and guidelines of IATF, DOH, CHED and Butuan City Government.

12. Infection Control and Prevention Measures Outside the Campus

12.1 Staying in dormitories outside the campus shall only be allowed if such dormitories are duly accredited by LGU.

12.2 The University, through the Office of Student Affairs and Services, the Health and Wellness Office, and in close coordination with LGU shall conduct periodic inspection of dormitories/boarding houses to assess for compliance with minimum health protocols and shall form part of the requirement for dormitory accreditation. The University shall communicate the list of accredited dormitories to the students.

12.3 For students who live in shared accommodations, the proper distancing of beds and working desks shall be arranged. Strict infection prevention measures should also be instituted when using common areas such as the kitchen, receiving area, living room, and toilet/bathrooms.

12.4 Students, faculty and staff should refrain from going to areas where there are high rates of infection.

12.5 Students, faculty and staff should bathe right away and change new clothes upon arrival in their lodging areas.

12.6 Exposures and infections occur when individuals eat together since masks are removed and they talk while eating. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to eat in confined spaces and follow the 1.5-meter minimum distance, especially when eating in places other than their house or lodging areas.

12.7 In going home to their families, students, faculty, and staff should strictly follow infection control measures of strict handwashing, physical distancing, and proper wearing of masks and face shields.

13. Contingency Plan for COVID-19 Cases

13.1 In the event that any university constituent develops COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. fever, cough and colds, difficulty of breathing, loss of smell and/or loss of taste, etc.) in the University premises, the following shall be strictly observed:

- a) The University constituent shall proceed to the isolation area designated in the workplace and shall observe the mandated health and safety protocols.
- b) Personnel of the Health and Wellness Office attending to the university constituent shall wear the prescribed PPEs. They shall also coordinate with the Barangay Health and Emergency Response Team (BHERT) for appropriate action.
- c) If any university constituent has severe symptoms such as shortness of breath, decreased level of consciousness, chest pains, among others, refer immediately to the nearest hospital. In transporting, the accompanying clinic personnel and the driver shall wear PPEs.
- d) Restrict contact with the infected worker to what is absolutely necessary. Any person providing assistance to the affected worker should wear a hazmat suit, face mask, face shield and gloves.
- e) Other university constituents who may have come in close contact with the suspect COVID-19 worker shall go on 14 days home quarantine and shall monitor any signs and symptoms. An individual is considered as close contact in the following circumstances:
 - i) Face-to-face contact with a probable or confirmed case within 1 meter and for more than 15 minutes; (enclosed or ventilated space)
 - ii) Direct physical contact with a probable or confirmed case
 - iii) Direct care for a patient with probable or confirmed COVID-19
- f) Those who are considered as close contact shall subject themselves to rapid antigen testing or RT-PCR testing upon the recommendation of attending medical professionals.
- g) Identify the affected worker's close contacts among co-workers (up to 14 days prior to the symptom onset) to identify other workers who could be considered as being exposed.
- h) The decontamination of workplace shall be in strictly adherence to the following:
 - i) Workplace shall be decontaminated with disinfectant (chlorine bleaching solution and 1:100 phenol-based disinfectant)
 - ii) After thorough decontamination of the work area, work can resume after 24 hours

13.2 The University shall closely collaborate with the health authorities in any epidemiological investigation.

13.3 The TFJ shall conduct risk assessment of the situation and implement the appropriate health and safety protocols such as, but not limited to, contact tracing, cleaning and disinfection of facilities, or suspension of classes and operations.

13.4 CSU, thru the Monitoring and Evaluation Team of the Task Force Jeremiah, shall submit the monitoring and evaluation reports to CHEDRO-13 to ensure that compliance with the health and safety protocols and CHED circulars on a regular basis as required by CHEDRO-13.

13.5 Close contacts who remain asymptomatic for 14 days may return to work without need for a test.

13.6 Those who have recovered from COVID-19 shall be allowed to return to participate in limited F2F Classes provided that they shall present an isolation completion certificate or medical clearance as being fit to go back to work. Furthermore, the following shall be strictly adhered to:

- a. In severe to critical cases, after being discharged from the hospital or isolation facility, the university constituent must first undergo 14 days of home quarantine or on a duration recommended by the attending medical professional.
- b. Ensure that the workplace and all practices are safe to avoid any “relapse”
- c. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services shall be provided for constituents who tested positive with COVID-19.
- d. Provide a platform for the constituent to share experiences.
- e. Encourage to practice healthy habits to boost immune system

13.7 The contingency plan shall undergo a periodic monitoring and evaluation to ensure that all provisions are in compliance with the latest guidelines and policies set by the local and national authorities.

14. Any issuances of the IATF-EID, DOH, DILG, CHED, LGU or any competent authority not covered in these guidelines shall be implemented in conjunction with the provisions herein.

15. In case any provision herein shall be declared invalid, unenforceable, or obsolete by virtue of future controlling issuances, the validity and enforceability of the remaining provisions shall not in any way be affected or impaired thereby.