

Gonzaga University School of Law

Sept. 23, 2021

Dean Rooksby provided the following information to the Gonzaga Bulletin on Sept. 22 in response to questions regarding our COVID-19 protocol. We are making them available in-full as a resource for students, faculty, and staff.

Are there protocols for students who test positive for COVID-19? If so, what are they?

Yes. Students who test positive for COVID should remain in quarantine per CDC and University guidelines and contact the University's COVID Hotline as soon as possible. They are also asked to alert Assistant Dean Susan Lee who can assist with individual student needs and accommodations.

Why isn't Zoom available for students who test positive?

According to the University's Back to Campus plan, which applies to the Law School, the teaching modality for AY 2020-2021 is on-campus, in person, face-to-face. Any student not able to attend class, for whatever reason, is encouraged to reach out to individual instructors in order to learn what they missed and view a recording of the class (if available).

Who oversees contact tracing for the law school?

The COVID-19 Action Response Team (CART) is responsible for all contact-tracing on campus and reaches out to any close contacts that are identified as being exposed. The Law School does not facilitate its own contact tracing process.

Spokane Regional Health Department has confirmed that the [CDC's K-12 close contact exception](#) applies to indoor classroom settings here at Gonzaga University. This impacts who CART notifies of their exposure. Per these guidelines, the University does not do classroom wide notification, nor does being seated near someone during class while masked constitute a "close contact" that would warrant quarantine.

What are the consequences for students who may need to miss in-person classes for health reasons?

ABA-approved law schools like ours are obligated to keep records of student class attendance for every course, every semester. ABA Standards require that students miss no more than 20% of their classes in a given semester. That equates to three full instructional weeks. This standard exists in order to provide fairness to all students and accountability mechanisms that ensure student learning, and student participation in learning, occurs as students progress toward graduation. No student at the Law School is

in danger of not being able to meet that standard at this time, no matter the reason for their absence(s) to date.

Have students reached out to your office with concerns over their safety/COVID-19 protocols?

We understand this is a stressful time for everyone. A limited number of 1L students have reached out to our office, and we have listened to their expressions of concern. At the same time, the Student Bar Association—which is the representative student group for all law students—has reached out to our office, via its elected President, to express that “we can say with confidence that the large majority of the 2L and 3L class understand the COVID Policy and are ok with it. We understand Hybrid classes like last year are not the product Gonzaga Law is offering barring any major unforeseen circumstance.”

Does the law school have plans to implement alternative options for students positive with COVID-19?

It is important to emphasize that our Assistant Dean of Students and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs & Program Innovation work with any student having to miss more than one class, due to health reasons or any other reasons. Those individuals liaise with students and their professors to assist with accommodations and get them back on track with their schoolwork. That practice, which is sensitive to the unique circumstances faced by individual students, has occurred before COVID, during COVID, and will continue after COVID. At the same time, we stand by the modality of instruction as laid out in the Back to Campus plan, which has been widely accepted and successfully implemented by faculty and students across the University community since the semester began. Any changes to that plan, to our knowledge, would have to be implemented campus-wide, and only after consultation with a multitude of stakeholders.

To your knowledge, are there students who have come to class while sick to avoid deferring?

Students who have tested positive for COVID or are awaiting test results while either experiencing symptoms of the disease or having been in close contact with someone who has it should not attend class. They should reach out to our Assistant and Associate Deans and communicate with their professors about their situation. We will do everything we can to assist the student and make sure they stay on track.