**COVID-19 Modifications and Contingencies Plan**

**Title:** TITLE OF YOUR PROGRAM

During the anthropogenic disaster of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), all Spring 2020 courses at the University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO) switched to online modalities mid-semester. The University is scheduled to resume face-to-face classes in the Fall 2020 semester; however, safety measures for face-to-face courses and the significant increase in online courses (both synchronous and asynchronous) may require modifications to our proposed research plan. We also must be prepared for a new outbreak of COVID-19 that necessitates the movement of all courses and team interactions online once again. In this short document, we outline the safety measures that will be taken during this project, potential modification resulting from an increase in or complete shift to online courses, new potential threats to the internal and external validity of the study and steps to limit those threats, and potential opportunities for advancing knowledge offered by the unique circumstances.

**Campus and Data Gathering Safety**

UNO is preparing to resume in-person teaching and learning for the Fall 2020 semester beginning Aug. 24. Five working groups are addressing areas of academics, facilities, student services, communications, and events/athletics in order to ensure a safe return. Campus will be opened with “reduced density” of people on campus so as to reduce the risk of transmission of infections. This means that while all offices will be open, some functions and staff will be available by phone or video conference, and meetings will occur only for smaller groups. Further, many of our classes will be offered through alternate modalities for delivery.

Students, faculty, and staff coming to campus will be required to comply with new safety standards established by the University of Nebraska Medical Center. At least initially, this will include wearing personal protective equipment (facial masks) while on campus, a daily self-screening using the “1-Check COVID” app to identify potential health risk factors, and maintaining physical distance in public spaces. The University is providing two face masks free of charge to all students, staff, and faculty, and will be maintaining strict building access protocols and procedures.

With respect to the project, all researchers and participants will be required to conduct the work under the policies and established safety standards at all times, whether on campus or not. Details for your specific project’s data collection methods (3 sentences).

**Increased Prevalence of Online Courses**

For the Fall 2020 semester, departments and individual instructors have been given the option to move all or significant components of their courses to digital means. Course modalities are as follows: (1) “In-Person instruction” refers to instructors and students attending synchronous classes on campus; (2) “Hybrid instruction” refers to a mix of in-person instruction and online instruction, with reduced contact time on campus; (3) “Synchrounous online instruction” refers to instructors and students meeting synchronously using digital technology at the scheduled times; and (4) “Asynchronous online instruction” refers to instructor-student interactions using digital technology, with students able to interact with each other and the instructor at flexible hours. There will be a dramatic increase in the number of fully online courses for the Fall 2020 semester, and at this time, all indications are that this trend will continue through at least the Spring 2021 semester. Based on a survey of department chairs compiled by the Office of Academic Affairs in late April, the percentage of courses under study in this project to be offered in Fall 2020 via various modalities are as follows: 35% in-person, 4% hybrid, *23% remote (synchronous online), and 38% asynchronous online*. This represents a significant increase in the prevalence of online courses being offered by the target population.

This increase in online courses represents both a threat to the internal validity of the study and opportunities. Discuss how you’ll mitigate the impacts with your research (0.5-1 pg).

**Potential Opportunities**

As a project that measures teaching practices, there is no doubt that it will be affected by a pandemic that has fundamentally altered the structure of a large number of university courses. However, the potential modifications outlined here as a framework should mitigate those effects on the internal and external validity of the project and its results. We anticipate no major roadblocks to achieving the project’s originally stated goals, answering the project’s research questions, and producing the proposed deliverables. In fact, we believe that the pandemic offers several potential new opportunities to gain more insights than previously anticipated, and could result in even more deliverables than planned.

Specifically, as outlined above, potential for new deliverables and insights include the following: Your project-specific details (2-5 sentences). Time and budget constraints may require trade-offs as we move forward, but these trade-off decisions will be based on evidence at the time, consensus of the project leadership team, and in consultation with the external evaluator and the NSF program officer.