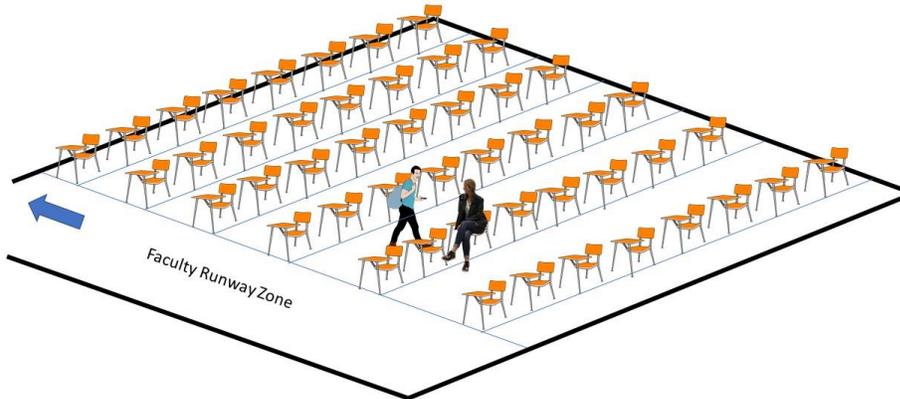


## Why 80 is the New 20 (ASF per seat, that is)

As colleges and universities grapple with how to accommodate fall classes given social distancing requirements, one of the first questions to explore is the extent to which classroom capacities will be reduced. Clearly, a 1,000+ ASF flat-floor classroom with 48 closely-packed tablet armchairs – and 20+ ASF per seat -- is no longer viable. So, what is – and why?

### Before Social Distancing

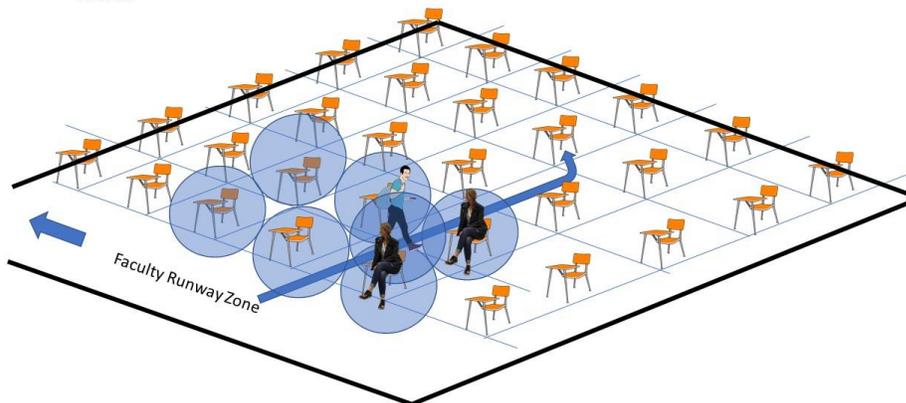
- 22.5 ASF/Seat
- 48 seats



Given the need for six-foot social distancing, the gut reaction might be 36 ASF per seat, but there are three inherent challenges with this scenario. First, it fails to consider the body mass of an individual who is larger than a point at the center of a hypothetical bubble. Second, the “bubble” only works once students are seated; since it does not account for circulation, a six-foot separation cannot be maintained while loading and unloading a classroom. (And never mind if a student in the back of the room needs to use the restroom during the class period, because the rest of the students would likely need to vacate the room.) Third, the instructor at the front of the room requires a full and consistent six-foot buffer from the front row of students. See the challenges?

### The 6-Foot Perception

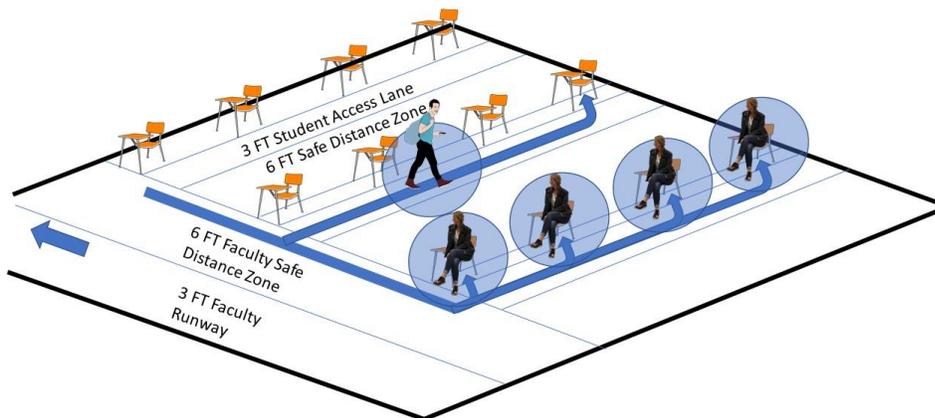
- 36 ASF/Seat
- 30 seats



The graphic below proposes that 80 ASF per seat would be required in this sample classroom, effectively reducing the number of seats from 48 to 12, or 25% of the original capacity. (It also presumes that the surplus seats are removed from the room – perhaps to create temporary instructional areas elsewhere on campus?) By applying a minimum of 80 ASF per seat in this model, the travel paths that students take to their seats keep them appropriately distanced from those students that are already seated. The faculty member at the front of the room also has a private teaching zone – but would need to enter the classroom last and leave first to maintain the appropriate distance.

**Minimum Social Distancing with Movement**

- 80+ ASF/Seat
- 12 seats



While 80 ASF per seat works in this particular example, it could conceivably be even higher, depending upon a classroom's dimensions, the location of the door(s), the nature of the furniture, and a host of other factors. The required ASF per seat will likely vary from 60 to 100 ASF in typical flat-floor instructional spaces. Ultimately, a test fit will need to be undertaken on a room-by-room basis to ensure that six-foot distancing can be achieved.

Once the modified classroom capacities have been determined, the next step is to align anticipated course sizes with the new classroom capacities. Spoiler alert: you will need to identify additional rooms – or even areas such as foyers -- that can be pressed into service. Creative scheduling alternatives must also be explored, as additional time can partially compensate for the loss of space and capacity.

We would welcome the opportunity to help you sort out your classroom occupancy and scheduling alternatives. Stay healthy!