



March 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Like you, I am very sad that we are not going to have our students on campus for the rest of spring term. As you saw in President Crutcher's message, we will be working hard to get the seniors back to celebrate their days, education, and achievements at UR. Our regathering of our students is one of the rays of light ahead. We are a couple days into this week of transition to remote teaching and I know you are working hard to make sure our students can complete the final weeks of the semester. There is significant uncertainty and concern around our circumstances and the challenges we all face. We will need to work together and rely on each other. Today, I write to clarify a few of the outstanding academic questions and issues that have surfaced to date.

### **Scheduling of Classes and Exams**

- Our academic calendar will remain the same. The last day of instruction for undergraduates is still April 24. Final exams will occur as currently scheduled. To avoid conflicts with other classes, any on-line synchronous instruction with your classes should occur during scheduled class times. Please see further guidance on the [Continuity of Instruction](#) website.

### **Learning Goals**

- The broad learning goals for your classes should remain the same even as you may need to adapt how and what you teach.

### **Accreditation/Federal Requirements**

- Fortunately, we are not required by accreditation authorities to make up the missed undergraduate class time from the extended spring break. However, even while teaching remotely we continue to be required by federal rules that each unit of credit awarded involve what you estimate to be an average of 10-14 total hours of student work per week *including class time* overall for the semester. Since that has long been our existing standard, there is no reason to communicate that requirement to students at this time of anxiety. Indeed, please do reassure them that you will work with them to get through the semester and achieve the most important learning goals. As we know some students will do 5 hours, others 18 hours. This is simply a request that you be aware of this in assigning work (reading, papers, problem sets, on-line comments outside of class time, etc.).
- Law, SPCS and graduate business faculty should follow the guidance of their Deans.

### **SEIs**

- We are encouraging the use of SEIs in all schools this semester, particularly for the purpose of instructors and schools learning what they can from this unplanned experience. However, SEIs

from this semester will be primarily for developmental purposes and will not be used for merit or promotion and tenure purposes unless the instructor requests they be part of the record. Each school will decide how those principles work best.

### **Support**

- The transition to online teaching is supported by the [Faculty Hub](#) and [Information Services](#). The Library is supporting the [scanning of resources and texts for classes](#).
- Faculty members who need books from the Library should contact [Cassandra Taylor Anderson](#).

### **Special Course Materials/Software**

- Essential materials necessary for the recent move to on-line teaching should be requested by instructors on behalf of students. In no case should students be required to pay extra costs for assigned instructional materials or software licenses needed for the transition. If approved, the costs will be covered by the University. The Provost's Office is working with IS and the Library to identify available solutions to such requirements. To seek approval for covering the expense of additional essential materials, please contact [Tim Vest](#).

### **Access to Campus**

- Faculty and staff are able to access campus as usual. Facilities such as labs, computer rooms, studios, practice rooms and classrooms, however, are closed to all except faculty and staff who need them for remote teaching and/or research. Please know that Facilities is working with a much smaller staff and that normal support services may not be available.

### **Advising**

- Advising will take place remotely. Faculty can expect further guidance on this by the end of the week.

We recognize you have many more academic related questions. We will be in regular communication to provide updates as information becomes available. In the next few days we will be establishing a FAQ on many academic-related issues relevant to faculty and staff in that area. Please be in touch with your colleagues to check on each other and do reach out to me, your department, division-head, and deans with relevant questions or suggestions.

In the meantime, thank you again for all your good work.

Sincerely,

Jeff

Jeffrey W. Legro  
Executive Vice President and Provost  
University of Richmond