

DATE: Monday, March 23, 2020

FROM: S. Jack Hu, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Rahul Shrivastav, Vice President for Instruction

TO: Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants

RE: Preparation for resuming classes on March 30, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

The last week has been unprecedented for all of us as we work to deliver our classes and instructional activities remotely. While these circumstances bring great challenges, it has been gratifying to see the hard work and dedication of our faculty and the creative ideas and solutions you are developing to maintain effective teaching.

While many of you are familiar with the [Teaching and Learning Continuity website](#) as a resource to help you transition to remote teaching, we also continue to receive new suggestions and hear some concerns from faculty and students. To address some of these issues, we request the following:

- **Connect with your students:** Many students remain anxious about what to expect in their courses and how they may be able to finish the semester. It is important for students to hear directly from their instructors about any modifications to the course syllabi, requirements such as assignments and exams, and general expectations for class attendance, participation and other interactions. If you have not already communicated with your students directly, we ask you to contact the students about such details no later than Tuesday, March 24, 2020.
- **Test your technology:** If you have developed your plans for teaching remotely, take some time this week to test them out. We know several instructors have already held office hours remotely or have had student volunteers attend a mock virtual class. Some have worked with graduate teaching assistants or peer instructors to try out the technology and their instructional materials. These steps not only help you test out your own comfort with technology, but also allow students to test their end of the technology and familiarity with various tools. We ask you to test your remote instructional technologies and tools, preferably by inviting student volunteers, no later than Thursday, March 26, 2020.

The [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) as well as the [Engineering Education Transformations Institute](#)(contact: Associate Director [John Morelock](#)) can help you with these efforts. The Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Online Learning are also hosting a series of virtual sessions to help plan for teaching remotely. There are two sessions daily this week, and you can sign up for these [here](#).

- **Plan your assessment strategy:** Assessing student learning and conducting examinations remotely while maintaining academic integrity will bring new challenges. You will need to find

creative solutions for your classes. Unfortunately, exam proctoring services will be difficult to be scaled up at this time and may not be a viable option for most classes. We have listed alternate approaches to assessment on the teaching continuity [website](#) and will continue adding new information as we learn more from you.

- **Plan for flexibility:** Flexibility in your teaching and class structure is critical at this time. Remember that many of your students may be facing significant challenges of their own, ranging from limited technology and internet access, to health and disability, or economic hardships faced by themselves and/or their families. While we have some broad [guidelines](#) to assist you with necessary accommodations for disabilities, your general support and empathy towards your students will make a significant impact on their ability to complete the semester successfully.
- **Help students with strategies for remote learning:** The Division of Academic Enhancement has developed a set of materials to help students navigate remote instruction more effectively and to maximize their learning in the online environment, including a non-credit opportunity on eLC to learn some tips and strategies to learn in a remote environment. Every student has been enrolled in this eLC experience and will see it whenever they log on to eLC. Consider recommending this to your students in preparation for resuming classes next week.
- **Be aware of student privacy:** Finally, be considerate of student privacy. FERPA laws are still in place, and a specific COVID-19 FAQ released by the Department of Education can be found [here](#). To help maintain student privacy we encourage you to use tools that are supported by UGA's central authentication systems, which include UGA email and eLC for your classes.

These steps will not only help students be prepared for classes next week, but also allow you to proceed to instructional activities quicker and reduce the time you spend on class management and organization.

Thank you for all your help and dedication during these challenging times.