

UConn | PROVOST'S MESSAGE

Dear UConn Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Students:

Yesterday President Katsouleas shared the [initial plans of our re-entry](#). By June 30, we will have a final decision regarding face-to-face classes for fall, with approval from the Board of Trustees. In the meantime, we know many of you are eager to make progress on fall course preparations and the return of students to our campuses.

As we look ahead to fall, we recognize that planning with many unknowns is a daunting task. As a resource, I have collaborated on this communication with Vice Provost John Volin and Assistant Vice Provost Peter Diplock to provide more guidance on what various instructional modalities look like in practice. Whether you are responsible for teaching in the fall or you're responsible for student or departmental support, we hope these details start to fill in a few more blanks for you.

All instructors should be planning for virtual delivery of courses in part or in whole. Even if face-to-face learning is allowed for fall, faculty and graduate student instructors still need to be prepared with some elements of virtual delivery as scenarios could be fluid. You'll see below in guidance from the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning that the options for virtual delivery are actually quite wide-ranging, with four of the seven modalities outlined still possible if face-to-face classes are not allowed for fall.

Above all, we encourage instructors to focus on the modality that best matches your comfort level, your delivery style, acknowledges social distancing constraints, and will best engage students in active learning. *Any faculty or graduate student instructor who feels most comfortable teaching online will be able to do so.* In some cases, this may require some flexibility in the courses taught and/or the times offered, but we will do all we can to accommodate instructor preferences. We also recognize that some programs have a structure (e.g., cohort based) that can create challenges for online instruction. In those cases, we will work together to balance students' preferences, program requirements, and safety.

Looking at fall courses, much like any semester, it is unlikely we will offer all courses in the exact same way across all sections. Some courses will be best suited for asynchronous delivery while others may be able to incorporate some synchronous and on-campus elements. We are eager to support a range of options to support flexibility and maintain course rigor.

- **Online.** A course that has been previously approved and developed for online and can be taught completely asynchronously. No dedicated specific synchronous meeting times are required to be listed in PeopleSoft. The course will be listed as www in PeopleSoft.
- **Distance Learning Asynchronous.** A course that has not been previously approved for online or developed through eCampus. No scheduled weekly meeting times are required to be listed in PeopleSoft. The course will be listed as www in PeopleSoft.

- **Distance Learning Synchronous.** A course that will be taught synchronously online (using WebEx, Blackboard Collaborate, or Microsoft Teams) with scheduled weekly meeting times required to be listed in PeopleSoft. The course will be listed as DL in PeopleSoft.
- **Distance Learning Flex.** A course that will be taught using a combination of synchronous online (using WebEx, Blackboard Collaborate, or Microsoft Teams) and asynchronous approaches. Scheduled weekly meeting times will be required although not all will be used for synchronous activities. This course will be listed as DL in PeopleSoft.
- **Hybrid/Blended Flex.** A course that will rely upon mostly asynchronous activities together with a more flexible irregular need to meet on occasion synchronously with students in person. Scheduled weekly meeting times are required (although actual use will be varied and more limited). This course will be listed as H/B in PeopleSoft.
- **Hybrid/Blended Platooning.** A course that will rely upon synchronous face-to-face instruction for a group of students physically present in the classroom with recorded or live lecture streaming for students not physically present in the classroom (e.g. MWF course schedule, 1/3 of students attend M, 1/3 W, 1/3 F, or Tu/Thur course schedule, ½ students attend Tu, ½ attend Thur). Scheduled weekly meeting times are required to be listed in PeopleSoft. This course will be listed as H/B in PeopleSoft.
- **In-Person.** A course that will be taught face-to-face in person and scheduled meeting times are required to be listed in PeopleSoft. Social distancing guidelines will require a larger classroom space than previously (e.g. a W section with 19 students will require a classroom size of ~60). This course will be listed as in-person in PeopleSoft.

As instructors develop courses for fall over the summer, the resources available on the eCampus website for the spring will still prove useful. Please be sure to reference <https://ecampus.uconn.edu/keep-teaching/>. Additionally, more information on public health and sanitization efforts for our campuses can be found at <https://reopen.uconn.edu/>.

Faculty and staff play an important role in supporting our students as they return in the fall and readjust after months of uncertainty and disruption academically and personally. Students may need more guidance and check-ins than usual from faculty and staff. In particular, graduate students are in the role of both being a student trying to learn in our current environment and supporting our instructional mission.

Beyond instruction, we can also play an important role in encouraging students to follow healthy practices, especially in choosing not to come to class or other campus activities when they are feeling unwell. Students need to know that they will have support in catching up on any material they miss in class or campus work because they have chosen to protect their communities by staying out of the public domain while they are feeling any symptoms of illness.

Most importantly, what doesn't change is the great strength of UConn's teaching mission and the true treasure we have in our faculty, graduate students, and staff providing instruction and support. Over the next month, we will balance thoughtful decision-making with prompt

communication of updates. In the meantime, we greatly appreciate your patience and all you are doing to support our educational mission.

Thank you,
Carl, John, and Peter

Carl Lejuez

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

John Volin

Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Peter Diplock

Assistant Vice Provost and Director, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Updates for the Academic Community

- **Vice Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs and Development search:** Last week we announced the search for the Vice Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs and Development. Since that time, we have added two faculty members to the search committee who represent our important faculty roles outside of the tenure track. Specifically, we have added Jean McCarthy, who is a Clinical Professor in the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, as well as Phil Birge-Liberman, who is an Associate Professor in Residence in the Department of Urban & Community Studies. In addition to their faculty roles, Jean brings considerable experience with AAUP and Phil has considerable experience teaching at multiple regional campuses. More details on the search are available here: <https://provost.uconn.edu/administrators-and-leadership/academic-leader-searches/>.
- **Tenure clock extension:** In light of the disruptions presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impact on scholarly productivity, the Board of Trustees changed the University By-Laws to provide for a one-year extension to the tenure clock for those tenure-track faculty who request it. Important information regarding the tenure-clock request form, procedures, and FAQs was emailed to Deans and Department Heads at the end of last week, and can also be found on the PTR page on the [Provost's website](#).
- **Restrictions on students and researchers from China:** On May 29, President Trump published a [Proclamation on the Suspension of Entry as Nonimmigrants of Certain Students and Researchers from the People's Republic of China](#). The proclamation intends to restrict the entry to the United States of students and exchange visitors for study or research if they have connections to any institution that supports China's "military-civil fusion strategy." It does not apply to students coming for undergraduate study, to those who are studying or conducting research in a field "involving information that would not contribute to the PRC's military-civil fusion strategy," permanent residents of the United States, to someone who is the spouse of

a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, and limited other exception categories. The proclamation leaves much of the details to still be worked out among the various government agencies who will need to implement the order, including students and scholars currently in the U.S. Global Affairs will keep the UConn community informed when there are operational details available from the federal government. For a more detailed analysis, please visit <https://iss.uconn.edu/2020/06/01/new-presidential-proclamation-issued/>.

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