

The Instructional Environment for Fall 2020

We are making a temporary adjustment to our academic calendar to reduce risk to our campus population and to provide a level of flexibility for future situations that we cannot predict. We will have our usual 15 weeks of instruction, with a week of final exams. Please note the planned adjustments below:

- The fall semester will begin on Monday, August 24th, as scheduled, with classes beginning on Wednesday, August 26.
- Classes will be held on Monday, November 23rd and Tuesday, November 24th. Thanksgiving Break will begin on Wednesday, November 25th.
- As things stand now, students will not return to campus following Thanksgiving Break. Classes will be held remotely after the break and will end on Monday, December 7. Tuesday, December 8 will be a Reading Day.
- Final exams will be conducted remotely during the usual time frame of December 9th-15th.

Teaching and Advising

- To reduce density on campus, Eastern will provide different modalities of teaching including hybrid rotating students, hybrid rotating classes, and some classes will be all online under certain conditions.
- The hybrid models provide the most flexibility, reserving the scheduled class meeting times for synchronous instruction if you choose. Under the **rotating students model**, you will be in the classroom for each meeting with some portion of your students while the rest participate remotely. It will be up to you whether you wish to use the technology available to have remote students participate synchronously in the class meetings. Students will rotate on ground versus online based on the days they are scheduled to be in each modality. Under the **rotating class model**, you will be scheduled to be on ground, socially distanced in a larger space (such as the FAIC Concert Hall), with all of your students for some classes and teaching all students remotely for other classes. We are working to identify and convert as many large spaces as possible, but this second model may not be available to everyone who wants it. Many faculty members are also considering the **flipped classroom model** where you record your lecture in advance for your students to view online and then maximize in class time for activities, exams, student presentations, etc. All of these models are explained in greater detail in the document “**Hybrid Instructional Models with Technology Possibilities.**”
- We have received \$350,000 from the System Office to purchase and install technology in the classrooms this summer. **All classes will be outfitted with a camera that can be pointed at various parts of the room and a free-standing microphone that will pick up all voices in the room. Collaborate is also being added to BlackBoard** and functions similarly to WebEx and Teams. These modifications will allow you conduct synchronous online meetings, so that all students participating remotely can see, hear, and contribute to class activities in real time, if you choose to conduct your classes in that manner.

- Many of you noted in the survey this spring that you needed additional hardware or technology to teach more effectively. While each classroom will have cameras and stationary microphones, **if you need additional equipment, please let your Department Chair know, providing as much detail as possible.** Your Chair will pass the information to your Dean who will send it to the Provost and CIO. **Please do not ask to use University money to pay for a Zoom subscription.** I have already asked and have been told no. With the addition of Collaborate in BlackBoard, however, we now have three platforms that allow you to interact with students remotely.
- **Office hours and advising will be conducted remotely.** Any exceptions must be based on a students' access to technology and should meet all requirements set forth by the University for in-person meetings.
- **Faculty and staff will be required to wear masks when in public areas.** A reusable mask will be provided to any faculty member who needs one. **Students will also be required to wear masks in all public areas, including classrooms.** Not wearing a mask will mean the student is violating the Code of Conduct, and these instances should be treated as if the student were smoking in class or causing some other significant disruption.

CIT and Training Resources

The Summer Faculty Development Committee is working to develop training and other workshops for you this summer. **More detailed explanations of how technology might be used in each hybrid model can be found in “Hybrid Instructional Models with Technology Possibilities.” The Committee welcomes your input on specific areas you would find helpful for workshops and training.** See below for the list of members.

In the Spring semester we surveyed faculty to assess their training needs for the possibility of online teaching in the Fall of 2020. Many of these same resources can be used for hybrid online teaching. Below you will find some data from the survey as well as some useful links to get started exploring this technology for possible use in your Fall 2020 classes. More information can be found on the CIT work from home toolbox page <https://easternct.makekb.com/entry/534/> . Faculty can also schedule one-on-one training sessions with CIT.

81 faculty requested training related to **Web Conferencing WebEx/Teams.**

[Using MS Teams for Classes](#)

[Polling in MS Teams](#)

[Sign Up for Webex Account](#)

[Using Webex for Polling and Whiteboarding](#)

[Webex Training - Breakout Sessions](#)

59 faculty requested training related to **Blackboard.**

[Blackboard Quick Start Guide](#)

[Recording Audio Over an Existing PowerPoint and Uploading to BlackBoard](#)

56 faculty requested training related to **Panopto Lectures**
[Configure your BlackBoard course for Panopto use](#)
[Installing Panopto](#)
[Recording with Panopto](#)

Members of the Summer Faculty Development Committee: Madeleine Fugere (Chair), JJ Cobb, Garrett Dancik, Steve Ferruci, Amy Groth, Greg Kane, Drew Hyatt, Lyndsey Lanagan-Litzel, Terry Lennox, Isabel Logan, Tanya Moorehead, Fatma Pakdil, Andrew Utterback, and Kim Ward.

We continue to navigate uncharted territory, one where the questions change on a daily basis and where we do not have all the answers. Know that many individuals continue to work very hard to plan our best path forward, one where we provide the best and safest experience possible for you, our students, and our staff.

Thank you,
Bill

William M. Salka
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs