

Subject: Day 6/7 Virtual Teaching –

Apologies for the length; circumstances necessitated a delay of day 6's text and so I'm making up time.

Things have changed so fast in the past week that I feel like I'm riding a giant roller coaster; a feeling I'm sure many of you share. Every day brings new challenges, and at times our efforts turn out to be deprecated before we even have the chance to see them in action. As President Pollack said in her message we've been dealt miserable cards but we still have to play. Fortunately, we have tremendous resources around us in the experiences and expertise of our colleagues, and together we hope to, not only survive, but thrive.



Despite the rapid change, it is critical to recognize that April 6... while it may appear far off... is barely two weeks away. We have time to prepare, but it does require intentional effort.

First – the promised Faculty Needs Survey: We have opened a Qualtrics survey to quantify our (your) readiness for April 6th, and to help prioritize support and training based on faculty plans (things were again in flux Wednesday delaying the survey's release yet again). Please complete one copy for each course you teach. This first survey focuses on lecture centric courses; a follow-up will likely go out to assess lab, discussion only, and seminar courses.

https://cornell.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d6Zk0Jv12M1eSPj

Outline of content in this message:

- Quick announcements and updates
- Planning your virtual course
 - College mandates on course delivery
 - Advice on structure from University (CTI)
 - Critical decisions you need to make soon
- Two examples and resources
 - Kaltura video of Friday's training from Rob Vanderlein

- Panopto video lecture (David Schneider–SysEn) on challenges and opportunities
- Parking

Quick announcements and updates:

- **TA Training:** Great news on this front. Rob Parker (Leadership program) and ELI (Lisa Schneider-Bentley) are developing engineering specific training programs for both faculty and TAs. This will be coordinated with the McCormick Teaching Excellence Institute (MTEI) and with existing training developed by CTI.
As further good news, we will likely “repurpose” some work-study students to be facilitators and help faculty (who are not lucky enough to have a TA) with live interactive sessions. Stay tuned...
- **Academic calendar extension:** Expect this to be finalized imminently. Can’t promise, but likely you will regain 5 class days (semester extend) followed by a study period and exam week.
- **Classrooms for recording course content:** We currently do expect to have access to classrooms for asynchronous recording of lectures (or synchronous if necessary). However, no students are allowed in the classroom before, during or after lectures.
- **Contact with students before April 6:** Please feel free to contact students in your class over the next three weeks. They may even appreciate that you are thinking of them. The only **limitations** are (i) absolutely no work or suggestion of work during the period and (ii) no activities that would disadvantage any student unable to participate before April 6.
- **Pre-registration:** Delay any neuron activity on this front for the moment. It is on the radar...
- **Back of mind awareness of the worst-case scenario:** Looking across the country, circumstances may escalate to “shelter in place” (or not if we all behave now). It would be prudent to at least be thinking about the possibility of starting a plan around the potential requirement of having to fully develop a plan to someday deliver your course from your home office.

Planning your virtual course:

College mandates on course delivery:

The College is leaving most decisions regarding course delivery to individual faculty and departments, who can better evaluate needs and capabilities. The College has only 3 absolutes:

1. All content delivery **must be recorded** and made available to students; this is especially critical if you are planning to be primarily synchronous (highly discouraged).
2. You must have some **substantial and intentional interaction** with students. Recording lectures, posting homework assignments, and sitting back and relaxing is not an acceptable option.
3. You must have some structure in the course to support students with limited internet access at home; only in the most extreme cases can an Incomplete (INC) be considered.

Unless there are compelling reasons, we also ask that you use your standard meeting time, augmented by additional times as necessary to address time-zone challenges.

Expect to write two short paragraphs describing how you will handle your course documentation.

Advice from the University as you think about course delivery formats (from the *Cornell Chronicle*):

“We’re asking faculty to think about how they’re interacting with students and how students are interacting with each other in their current courses,” said Robert Vanderlan, CTI senior associate director. “Then think about what’s most valuable to the student learning and how best to translate that on-line.”

For example, a seminar would likely work best as a ZOOM session, where students and an instructor can see each other and rapidly share ideas. [For a course that relies more on lectures, recording talks ahead of time and posting them on-line, along with related exercises and virtual office hours, might be a better option.](#) But whatever specific format instructors choose, enabling communication and community is key to success, Vanderlan said.

“Faculty have spent all semester building community in their face-to-face classrooms, but we can’t assume that will duplicate online – especially after the break,” he said. “We know that students [succeed in online environments when they feel connected to the course, to the instructor and to the other students.](#) And so, creating discussion forums where they can talk to each other, or creating group work or other ways for them work together is going to be really important.”

Critical decisions you need to make soon:

- **Identifying challenges you will face with your course:** Each course is going to face different challenges with respect to student access to technology and spread of time-zones. Allison Hutchison in the Engineering Communications Program (ECP) program provided me with an example of a survey she sent to students in her ENGR 3500 course (attached). The University is also running a survey, but (i) I don’t know how or when this will be disseminated to faculty, (ii) students are more likely to respond to you and (iii) you may want to seek additional course specific details. As you run into particularly challenging student circumstances (e.g. no computer), let us also know; the University is trying to mitigate these problems but does not have a sense of the scale yet.
- **Content delivery mode:** Decide between mostly asynchronous delivery of content (recorded lectures or mini-lectures, textbook or notes, etc.) and mostly synchronous delivery with recording. More on this decision tomorrow (this is already too long).
- **Method and location of lecture recording:** Recording may be through ZOOM, Panopto, Kaltura, YouTube (viable as long as no students can see it yet), or video processing from iPhone/Android cameras (to Kaltura). Each have advantages and limitations. Where you record depends on your own personal preferences: a home office, recording studio, or cave; your campus office; your existing lecture room; or a room with dedicated lecture capture and appropriate distance tools.
- **How to keep students engaged:** This may be the most difficult part and we will try to provide more guidance. This may involve using normal lecture time as problem-solving sessions, more use of virtual office hours, incorporation of quizzes or questions, etc.

Two immediate examples and resources:

- The training last Friday by Rob Vanderlan (CTI) is now online. This is an example of a **ZOOM** session that was recorded and minimally edited (cut) using Kaltura on-line tools. Click here to view:
 - https://vod.video.cornell.edu/media/CuratedA+CTI+Training+for+Remote+Course+Delivery/1_wzlg3q0g

- David Schneider (Systems Engineering) recorded a **Panopto** lecture discussing some of the challenges and opportunities. He, and Systems Engineering in general, have extensive experience and I will be looking to them for advice and recommendations. David's slides are attached and his lecture (disclaimer - his views and perspective) can be viewed here (thank you Dave):
 - <https://cornell.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=37709d2d-6f7a-4922-937e-ab8100d10f2d>

And, finally, perhaps the most important announcement:

Cornell Transportation will **not enforce regular parking permit** restrictions, with the exception of a few areas, now through Friday, April 10. Most permit-restricted or Parkmobile spaces are available during this period, with no permit or payment required. Cornell Transportation will continue to enforce fire lanes, loading zones, no parking areas, accessible spaces and reserved spaces, including client spaces at the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Cornell Transportation will continue to monitor the availability of parking, with a determination as to the resumption of regular enforcement to be made by April 10. (Confirmed as of 3/19 – see <https://www.cornell.edu/coronavirus/faq.cfm#transportation-parking>)

Stay safe and healthy,
Mike

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