Day 1 Remote Teaching

Greetings.

As many of you know, I am a pilot and, from my perspective, we have just experienced an emergency. My flight instructors have ingrained on me the need to stop, count to 3 slowly, and then begin to execute a plan for recovery. I strongly recommend that each of us do the same.

Martha’s message asked “faculty to begin that transition now so that after spring break all instruction – for the rest of the semester – will be online”. During this transition, we have an equal responsibility to continue to deliver to our students the most effective and quality experience that is consistent with the resources and circumstances. Maintaining that high standard of quality will require intentional consideration of the differences between in-person delivery of content and alternate forms of delivery and interaction. There remain two and a half weeks before we all need to be in this new mode; let’s use that time to develop protocols and support mechanisms to remain the unique experience that reflects Cornell’s stature and reputation.

For faculty that are already comfortable with alternate delivery formats and want to begin immediately, please go ahead and help us understand any technical limits. CTI has been working on supporting this mode of instruction (see Alternative Course Delivery) and I encourage you to reach out to them for support as required.

For other faculty, including those with limited experience in on-line interactions, we are developing internal college training and support to complement the resources in CTI. Today or tomorrow morning you will receive a survey from Kathy Dimiduk that asks you to identify needs and requirements in your individual courses. We will plan to develop training around on-line tools for faculty, and equally important, your TA, and begin the process of scheduling resources for lecture capture and virtual classrooms.

While Zoom is one clear mechanism for alternate content delivery, think more broadly about the most effective form of delivery for your particular class. In some cases, a shift to flipped formats (textbook for content with in-person focus on problem solving) may be appropriate. For others, mentored small group discussion and work may be more effective. We will work to support all of these models within our own constraints and limited resources.

There are equal number of questions and concerns around our professional (M.Eng) and graduate students. My advice to stop and count to three very slowly (maybe one count per day) is still sound. Expect to hear from the college leadership regarding these issues as well in the next few days.

Mike

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