

Introduction and Basic Instructional Directives

The Office of Academic Affairs will publish a series of memoranda that provide guidance, policy, and suggested practice for addressing issues and concerns associated with maintaining instructional and operational continuity throughout the current disruption of institutional operations.

These memoranda are to remain in effect until superseded by future memoranda or revoked by a return to normal institutional operations.

Given the highly dynamic circumstances we are currently navigating, it is essential to document guidance, policy, and suggested practice for clarity and precision in communication as well as to provide a record of institutional response.

Timeline:

On the afternoon of Tuesday March 10, 2020, Purdue University West Lafayette and the Indiana University System announced the suspension of face-to-face instruction and the subsequent transition to distance and online classes (hereafter referred to as digitally facilitated learning) among many other responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Purdue University Fort Wayne executive leadership convened on the evening of March 10, and again in the morning of Wednesday March 11 to formulate the initial campus response. The PFW campus announced the extension of spring break through Sunday March 22 as well as a transition from face-to-face to digitally facilitated learning beginning Monday March 23. After consultation with executive leadership at IUPUI, Indiana University Fort Wayne elected to also extend their spring break to align with PFW. All IUFW students will therefor also delay the start of digitally facilitated learning in both IUFW and PFW sections until Monday March 23.

On Wednesday March 11 Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management leadership and support staff met to create a first draft of a list of significant tasks and issues that must be completed or addressed in order to ensure continuity of instruction as the university transitions to digitally facilitated learning. This list is dynamic and will continue to be updated and revised as conditions change and additional information is gained. This series of continuity memoranda has been established to provide a single source of information for departments, programs, colleges and schools, and academic support units.

Basic Instructional Directives

- 1) All instructors are expected to effectively utilize the remainder of the semester to as best they can cover the material typically covered by their courses. The temporary suspension of instruction during the extended Spring Break of March 16 through March 22 allows necessary institutional response to a major change in instructional modality as caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The University has received guidance from the Department of Education that modification in curricula and contact hours caused by this disruption will not negatively impact student financial aid.
- 2) No instruction is to occur during the extended Spring Break period. Courses that are currently delivered through digitally facilitated modalities (online, hybrid) shall not deliver new instructional content or create expectations for the assessment of student learning prior to March 23.
- 3) Courses that were scheduled to begin as 8-week sections on March 16 are not to begin until March 23.
- 4) This transition to digitally facilitated instruction will continue for as long as in-person instruction is deemed inadvisable.
- 5) Through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CELT), Academic Affairs will support the transition to digitally facilitated instruction through a set of websites, best practice guides, training videos, and facilitated training. As an initial step, faculty are to consult the following

CELT resource page: <https://www.pfw.edu/movingonline/>

Purdue University resource page: <https://www.purdue.edu/innovativelearning/teaching-remotely/>

Inside Higher Ed resource page: <https://insidehighered.com/advice/2020/03/11/practical-advice-instructors-faced-abrupt-move-online-teaching-opinion>

Other resources will be made available as they are created.
- 6) It is paramount that all faculty and staff exercise the utmost understanding, patience, and flexibility during this difficult time. Our first goal must be supporting the continuity of learning for our students. In so doing we will need to afford greater latitude with respect to instructional structure and deadlines than would be typical during normal conditions. In so doing, however, we cannot compromise our expectations for quality and rigor. Through our professionalism, dedication to our students, and adaptability as teachers, we will achieve this difficult balance.

7) When made possible through the use of technology, faculty can expect students to be available for digitally facilitated synchronous instruction during the normal class periods for those sections that are transitioning from face-to-face to the digitally facilitated environment.

8) When crafting revised assessments of student learning (quizzes, tests, exams), faculty are expected to utilize methodologies that do not require proctoring. On campus testing services will not be able to accommodate groups of students arriving for synchronous proctored testing, nor will the university be able to contract for external test proctoring. Guidance on adapting assessments for online delivery can be found on the CELT resource page noted in item 5 above.

Courses operating online prior to March 10 who were scheduled to utilize on-campus Testing Services are able to continue to do so through the week of March 16, 2020. All testing after the week of March 16 will be expected to utilize methodologies that do not require on campus synchronous proctoring as described above.

9) Faculty are strongly encouraged to establish consistent procedures for responding to student emails and other communication. Practices such as “I will be responding to student inquiries from X:XX until Y:YY each day...” can help contain student expectations for immediate replies. Additionally, setting aside defined digital office hours can provide good opportunities for synchronous interaction with students. Reaching out to currently enrolled students as well as majors in your academic program, if only to reassure them that the university is actively working on solutions, is strongly advised.

10) Rules associated with the concentrated study period of the penultimate week of April 27 through May 1, 2020 (<https://www.pfw.edu/committees/senate/regulations/examinations.html> section 5.1) remain in place.

11) The Spring Final Exam period will continue as scheduled. Faculty are to utilize the techniques described in items 4 and 7 above when crafting final exams. For face-to-face sections transitioning to digitally facilitated instructional modalities, faculty are not to require exams to be submitted prior to the end of the regularly scheduled exam period for the class.

12) Given the uniqueness of this transition in instructional modality, it is essential that Department Chairs, departmental personnel committees, and future Promotion and Tenure committees recognize that non-normative student evaluations of courses and instructors may occur this term.

13) Faculty are strongly encouraged to recognize that this will be a time of great stress for our students. As such faculty and staff should make full use of the Dean of Students CARE (communicate, assess, refer, educate) team <https://www.pfw.edu/offices/dean-of-students/about/care-team> process of referral.

With gratitude for your extraordinary efforts,



Carl N. Drummond
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs