



Office of the Provost

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As I look back over the spring semester to date, it is remarkable how you have navigated the ongoing challenges due to COVID-19 and difficulties of unprecedented severe winter weather. Your care for our students and for one another has been inspiring, and I am deeply grateful to you for your continued perseverance.

We now face the challenge of addressing the lost instructional time. I know many of our faculty are already thinking about how you can make sure students are meeting the learning objectives outlined in your courses. Technology has enabled us to be more flexible in this endeavor, but many faculty also need more scheduled time with their students. There are two overarching priorities that we seek to achieve as we implement a revised calendar to make up lost time: 1) maintain the quality of courses by ensuring that we meet the learning outcomes for each course, and 2) distribute workload on students and faculty as equally as possible over the course of the remaining weeks of the term.

After consultation with the Calendar Committee, the Faculty Senate, the Provost's Council, and the Council of Deans, we have determined that the best approach is for us to reclaim March 9 (previously held as a Wellness Day) and April 29 (previously scheduled Study Day) as instructional days. Our plan is to not schedule any make-up instructional days beyond these two.

For the balance of instructional days lost last week due to weather, I am asking all faculty to document in revised syllabi how they have adjusted their assignments and instructional time to achieve the learning outcomes

for their courses. We will not be collecting these revised syllabi at the University level, but I am asking all faculty to submit their revised syllabi to their respective department chairs. This documentation is important for our SACSCOC accreditation.

Please review the revised, approved [academic calendar](#) for spring 2021.

Please note when looking at the make-up days, we are declaring April 29 an instructional day for Monday classes. Even though it is a calendar Thursday, the need for Monday class instruction is a greater priority for the make-up plan. We understand this will be a communications challenge. It will take all of us communicating this to students and colleagues to ensure this change is clear. We will be communicating this unique aspect of the calendar more broadly as April 29 draws closer.

Communication with students is critical as they, too, are thinking about how to adjust and complete the semester. They are likely wondering how they will catch up on tests, assignments, and instruction from last week while also navigating new assignments for the coming weeks. I would encourage you to have students focus on completing work that was scheduled for last week, and then consider how you will distribute next week's material across future weeks. Where possible, please avoid "doubling up" on the number of tests and assignments due during the next two weeks.

Thanks again for all you do for our students each day. We are indeed living through unique times, but your commitment to our students gives the entire administration great hope that we will finish the semester strong.

Yours sincerely,

Nancy Brickhouse, Ph.D.

Provost



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