

1 MAINTAINING EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY IN THE CONTEXT OF CAMPUS EMERGENCIES AND 2 DISASTERS

3 INTRODUCTION

4 CAL STATE LA RAPIDLY TRANSITIONED ITS FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES TO REMOTE (DISTRIBUTED) ALTERNATIVE
5 INSTRUCTION IN SPRING 2020, DUE TO THE NOVEL COVID-19 PANDEMIC. THIS IS UNLIKELY TO BE A SINGULAR
6 EVENT: CAL STATE LA IS LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL DISRUPTIONS DUE TO EPIDEMICS,
7 PANDEMIC, AND NATURAL DISASTERS (SUCH AS EARTHQUAKES OR WILDFIRES, WHICH HAVE CAUSED
8 EDUCATIONAL DISRUPTIONS ON SISTER CAMPUSES) IN THE COMING YEARS. THIS POLICY IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE
9 THAT EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY CAN BE MAINTAINED IN THE FACE OF THE CURRENT TRANSITION AND FOR
10 FUTURE TRANSITIONS.

11 IT IS UNDERSTOOD BY THIS POLICY THAT THESE RAPID TRANSITION EVENTS ARE NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH THE
12 DEVELOPMENT, DESIGN, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FULLY-ONLINE EDUCATION. THIS POLICY ACTIVELY
13 DISCOURAGES FACULTY TEACHING A COURSE DESIGNATED AS A FACE-TO-FACE COURSE AS A FULLY-ONLINE
14 COURSE, AS STUDENTS WILL BE EXPECTING A MODALITY THAT MORE CLOSELY MIRRORS A FACE-TO-FACE
15 EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT.

16 NOTE: NOT ALL STUDENTS HAVE SECURE ACCESS TO INTERNET SERVICES, ACCESS TO A HIGH DATA USAGE LIMIT,
17 OR ACCESS TO PERSONAL COMPUTERS. FOR MANY OF OUR STUDENTS, THEIR CELLPHONE MIGHT BE THEIR
18 PRIMARY COMPUTING DEVICE WITHOUT ACCESS TO CAMPUS COMPUTER LABS. ALL OF THE FOLLOWING
19 CONSIDERATIONS TAKE THIS REALITY INTO ACCOUNT.

20 IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY EDUCATIONAL TRANSITION OR PROLONGED CLOSURE

21 FACULTY WILL BE EXPECTED TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS DURING AN EMERGENCY EDUCATIONAL TRANSITION
22 OR PROLONGED CLOSURE. IN ORDER TO EXECUTE THEIR DUTIES, INCLUDING THE STEPS OUTLINED BELOW, ALL
23 FACULTY SHALL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE ONGOING OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY TO EXECUTE
24 THEIR DUTIES AS ALLOCATED BY THE PRESIDENT AND THEIR DESIGNEES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE ACADEMIC
25 SENATE AND ITS DESIGNEES. INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO TRAINING, ACCESS TO HIGH SPEED INTERNET AND
26 ERGONOMIC EQUIPMENT AS NEEDED. DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OR PROGRAM DIRECTORS WILL COORDINATE WITH
27 ANY FACULTY ENCOUNTERING ISSUES WITH ADOPTING THESE STEPS OR OBTAINING NECESSARY TRAINING,
28 EQUIPMENT AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.

29 1. PLACE COURSE SYLLABUS AND ALL KEY COURSE DOCUMENTS (E.G., ASSIGNMENTS, READING LISTS) ON THE CAL
30 STATE LA LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS), SO THAT STUDENTS CAN ACCESS THESE REMOTELY. IF THE
31 COURSE HAS A SEPARATE WEBSITE AND/OR PUBLISHER CONTENT, PROVIDE THE LINK(S) TO THEM ON THE LMS.

32 2. ESTABLISH A COMPLETE AND REGULARLY UPDATED GRADEBOOK THAT MEETS FERPA REQUIREMENTS. IT IS
33 STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT FACULTY USE THE COURSE GRADEBOOK IN THE LMS FOR THIS PURPOSE.
34 GRADES SHOULD BE UPDATED THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER, WITH A RECOMMENDATION THAT THIS OCCURS AT
35 LEAST EVERY 2-3 WEEKS OR AS SOON AS FEASIBLE AFTER THE SUBMISSION OF EACH ASSIGNMENT. FACULTY
36 SHOULD ALSO REGULARLY COMMUNICATE WITH STUDENTS ABOUT WHEN STUDENTS SHOULD EXPECT TO SEE

37 THEIR GRADES UPDATED. THIS ALLOWS STUDENTS A MECHANISM TO VIEW THEIR COURSE GRADES THROUGHOUT
38 THE DURATION OF THE TRANSITION.

39 3. CLASSES THAT MEET SYNCHRONOUSLY MAY ONLY DO SO DURING THE PUBLISHED COURSE MEETING TIMES IN
40 THE CLASS SCHEDULE AND ONLY RECORD ATTENDANCE DURING THE PUBLISHED COURSE MEETING TIMES IN THE
41 COURSE SCHEDULE.

42 4. ADJUST CLASS PARTICIPATION METHODS TO INCLUDE ASYNCHRONOUS OPPORTUNITIES SO AS NOT TO
43 PENALIZE STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND SYNCHRONOUS MEETINGS DUE TO THE EMERGENCY. FOR
44 EXAMPLE, SSTUDENTS MAY BECOME ILL OR DISPLACED; STUDENTS MAY BE FRONT LINE RESPONDERS OR
45 ESSENTIAL WORKERS; STUDENTS MAY BE CARING FOR CHILDREN OR OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS.

46 5. CLASS OFFICE HOURS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE HELD DURING THE TIMES POSTED ON THEIR CLASS SYLLABUS.
47 CONSISTENT WITH THE OFFICE HOURS POLICY, OFFICE HOURS DURING REMOTE INSTRUCTION SHOULD BE HELD,
48 WHERE AT ALL POSSIBLE, SYNCHRONOUSLY VIA VIRTUAL MEETINGS AND/OR TELEPHONE.

49 6. TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND CLASS SESSIONS, CONSIDER RECORDING SYNCHRONOUS
50 CLASS SESSIONS AND UPLOADING THESE RECORDINGS ALONG WITH ANY ADDITIONAL MATERIAL TO THE LMS.

51 7. BEFORE RECORDING ANY LECTURES, EXPLICITLY INFORM STUDENTS THAT THE LECTURE, AND THEIR
52 PARTICIPATION IN THE LECTURE, WILL BE RECORDED. THIS ALLOWS STUDENTS TO TURN OFF THEIR VIDEO
53 CAMERAS AND/OR WATCH THE RECORDING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO BEING RECORDED.

54 8. DURING ANY SYNCHRONOUS LECTURES, THE FACULTY WILL NOT PENALIZE STUDENTS FOR HAVING THEIR
55 CAMERA (VIDEO) TURNED OFF. NOT ALL OF OUR STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO A CAMERA, AND PEOPLE MAY BE
56 ATTENDING IN LESS-THAN-IDEAL CIRCUMSTANCES (E.G., AT HOME WITH PETS/FAMILY MEMBERS; ISSUES WITH
57 THE SPACE IN WHICH THEY ATTEND THEIR VIRTUAL CLASS). EXCEPTIONS TO THIS INCLUDE LIVE ASSESSMENTS,
58 EVALUATIONS, OR CLASS ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE A LIVE PERFORMANCE OR DEMONSTRATION.

59 9. INSTRUCTORS SHOULD REVIEW THEIR LESSONS, COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADING POLICY, BASED ON THE
60 LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THE COURSE AND THE TRANSITION TO REMOTE (DISTRIBUTED) ALTERNATIVE
61 INSTRUCTION. THIS REVIEW SHOULD CONSIDER THAT NOT ALL STUDENTS HAVE SECURE AND/OR RELIABLE ACCESS
62 TO THE INTERNET SERVICES, **SUFFICIENT** DATA ALLOWANCES, AND/OR COMPUTING DEVICES THAT ALLOW FOR
63 STREAMING LONG VIDEOS OR COMPATIBILITY WITH SOME ADVANCED LMS TOOLS. AS PART OF THIS REVIEW, THIS
64 POLICY STRONGLY ENCOURAGES THE USE OF ACCEPTED PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES TO ADOPT ALTERNATIVES TO
65 TIMED, SYNCHRONOUS HIGH-STAKES TESTING.

66 THE POLICY ALSO STRONGLY ENCOURAGES **USING THE PRACTICE OF "HOLDING STUDENTS HARMLESS."** **HOLDING**
67 **STUDENTS HARMLESS REFERS TO THAT** ANY AND ALL CHANGES MADE INDIVIDUALLY AND INSTITUTIONALLY **TO**
68 SUPPORT STUDENTS **WHO ARE** STRUGGLING **UNDER EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES AND DOES NOT HOLD**
69 **STUDENTS ACCOUNTABLE FOR DUE TO** CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND THEIR CONTROL. **HOLDING STUDENTS**
70 **HARMLESS THIS PRACTICE** IS NOT A "PASS" TO ALLOW STUDENTS TO COMMIT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY – IT IS THE
71 RECOGNITION THAT EMERGENCIES OF THIS TYPE WERE NOT CAUSED BY STUDENTS, AND HOW THESE
72 EMERGENCIES CHANGE THEIR LIVES IS OFTEN BEYOND THEIR CONTROL. IT IS THE ADVOCATION FOR COMPASSION
73 AND WORKING WITH STUDENTS TO MEET LEARNING OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THOSE
74 CIRCUMSTANCES.

75 10. IT IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED THAT ALL FACULTY AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THE MANY RESOURCES ON CAMPUS
76 TO HELP TRANSITION COURSES TO REMOTE (DISTRIBUTED) LEARNING, PARTICULARLY TRAINING AND SUPPORT
77 OFFERED BY THE CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING (CETL).

Maintaining Educational Continuity in the Context of Campus Emergencies and Disasters

Introduction

Cal State LA rapidly transitioned its face-to-face classes to remote (distributed) alternative instruction in spring 2020, due to the novel Covid-19 pandemic. This is unlikely to be a singular event: Cal State LA is likely to experience additional educational disruptions due to epidemics, pandemics, and natural disasters (such as earthquakes or wildfires, which have caused educational disruptions on sister campuses) in the coming years. This policy is designed to ensure that educational continuity can be maintained in the face of the current transition and for future transitions.

It is understood by this policy that these rapid transition events are not synonymous with the development, design, and implementation of fully-online education. This policy actively discourages faculty teaching a course designated as a face-to-face course as a fully-online course, as students will be expecting a modality that more closely mirrors a face-to-face educational environment.

Note: Not all students have secure access to internet services, access to a high data usage limit, or access to personal computers. For many of our students, their cellphone might be their primary computing device without access to campus computer labs. All of the following considerations take this reality into account.

In the Event of an Emergency Educational Transition or Prolonged Closure

Faculty will be expected to take the following steps during an emergency educational transition or prolonged closure. In order to execute their duties, including the steps outlined below, all faculty shall continue to receive ongoing operational support from the university as allocated by the president and their designees, in consultation with the Academic Senate and its designees. Department chairs or program directors will coordinate with any faculty encountering issues with adopting these steps or obtaining necessary training, equipment and technical support.

1. Place course syllabus and all key course documents (e.g., assignments, reading lists) on the Cal State LA learning management system (LMS), so that students can access these remotely. If the course has a separate website and/or publisher content, provide the link(s) to them on the LMS.
2. Establish a complete and regularly updated gradebook that meets FERPA requirements. It is strongly recommended that faculty use the course gradebook in the LMS for this purpose. Grades should be updated throughout the semester, with a recommendation that this occurs at least every 2-3 weeks or as soon as feasible after the submission of each assignment. Faculty should also regularly communicate with students about when students should expect to see their grades updated. This allows students a mechanism to view their course grades throughout the duration of the transition.
3. Classes that meet synchronously may only do so during the published course meeting times in the class schedule and only record attendance during the published course meeting times in the course schedule.

4. Adjust class participation methods to include asynchronous opportunities so as not to penalize students who are not able to attend synchronous meetings due to the emergency. For example, students may become ill or displaced; students may be front line responders or essential workers; students may be caring for children or other family members.

5. Class office hours should continue to be held during the times posted on their class syllabus. Consistent with the office hours policy, office hours during remote instruction should be held, where at all possible, synchronously via virtual meetings and/or telephone.

6. To support students who are unable to attend class sessions, consider recording synchronous class sessions and uploading these recordings along with any additional material to the LMS.

7. Before recording any lectures, explicitly inform students that the lecture, and their participation in the lecture, will be recorded. This allows students to turn off their video cameras and/or watch the recording as an alternative to being recorded.

8. During any synchronous lectures, the faculty will not penalize students for having their camera (video) turned off. Not all of our students have access to a camera, and people may be attending in less-than-ideal circumstances (e.g., at home with pets/family members; issues with the space in which they attend their virtual class). Exceptions to this include live assessments, evaluations, or class activities that require a live performance or demonstration.

9. Instructors should review their lessons, course assignments, and grading policy, based on the learning objectives for the course and the transition to remote (distributed) alternative instruction. This review should consider that not all students have secure and/or reliable access to the internet services, sufficient data allowances, and/or computing devices that allow for streaming long videos or compatibility with some advanced LMS tools. As part of this review, this policy strongly encourages the use of accepted pedagogical practices to adopt alternatives to timed, synchronous high-stakes testing.

The policy also strongly encourages that any and all changes made individually and institutionally support students struggling under emergency circumstances and does not hold students accountable for circumstances beyond their control. This practice is not a “pass” to allow students to commit academic dishonesty – it is the recognition that emergencies of this type were not caused by students, and how these emergencies change their lives is often beyond their control. It is the advocacy for compassion and working with students to meet learning objectives within the confines of those circumstances.

10. It is strongly encouraged that all faculty avail themselves of the many resources on campus to help transition courses to remote (distributed) learning, particularly training and support offered by the Center for Effective Teaching and Learning (CETL).