

**AY 2020–21 ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION:
GUIDANCE FOR COLLEGES, SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENTS, AND PROGRAMS
FROM THE ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

Edition 2: June 18, 2020

Topics: First-Year Academic Experience, First-Year Cohorting, Class Scheduling, and Classroom Technology

Relevant Due Dates for Chairs and Directors:

- **June 19, 2020 (Academic Technology Survey)**
- **June 23, 2020 (inform students enrolled in canceled classes)**

Where we are now: update from the Academic Instruction Implementation Team

Departments, programs, colleges and schools have been hard at work re-imagining their fall 2020 course offerings in line with the last edition of guidance from the [Academic Instruction Implementation Team](#). We want to thank all the chairs and directors, along with the administrative leadership of the colleges and schools, for shouldering this immense task. We also want to thank the faculty, as well as the graduate students who hold teaching positions, for their creativity and flexibility in rethinking the modalities of their classes for the fall semester.

We appreciate all the questions, requests for clarification, and requests for further guidance we have received so far. These communications have helped shape this second edition of guidance. Individual faculty and other instructional personnel should continue to direct questions to their chairs and directors. Chairs, directors and school/college administrators should send all questions, requests for information, or other issues having to do with Academic Instruction Implementation to Katherine Eggert, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Assessment, at katherine.eggert@colorado.edu.

What's in this edition of guidance, and what's coming next

This edition of guidance is primarily a status update on projects in progress, including the first-year academic experience and first-year cohorting; class scheduling and classroom capacity; and academic technology requests. It also gives guidance to pass along to faculty regarding new resources to support teaching and learning; answers for students who request a remote option for an in-person class; and other FAQs. ***Feel free to email this entire edition of guidance to your faculty.***

Further editions of guidance will address topics including:

- How colleges/schools will identify which students are taking all their courses remotely
- Dates for student registration and adjustments to continuing students' class schedules
- Administering midterm and final exams
- The results of instructional space evaluation (see below)
- Progress to date and plans for instructional tech resources/support (see below)
- Building access for students after normal business hours
- Availability of campus space for student study and collaboration
- Policy on student behavior related to COVID-19 mitigation and the classroom
- Fall 2020 FCQs
- Class attendance policies in the COVID-19 era

Update: plans for the First-Year Academic Experience and Residential Academic Program personnel

The CU Boulder [Road Map to Fall 2020](#) sets out a new First-Year Academic Experience (FYAE) to create community, improve student support and student success, and enhance the academic experience for first-year students in AY 2020-21, while also helping to limit the spread of COVID-19. Here are the plans that are being implemented to make the FYAE available to all first-year (FY) students:

- All residential FY students will participate in a First Year Academic Experience (FYAE) during AY 2020–21.
- Students will not be charged a fee to participate in an FYAE.
- Residential Academic Programs (RAPs) as currently structured and operated will be replaced by this new model during AY 2020–21.
- RAP instructors and personnel who had been funded by RAP fees will now be funded by campus. Those personnel will continue in their positions, but with some modifications:
 - RAP instructors will be campus FYAE instructors. Most FY courses this fall will be taught outside the residence halls because of classroom capacity issues necessitated by physical distancing measures. For that reason, FYAE instructors, with some exceptions, will not be assigned to a particular residence hall. Instead, FYAE instructors will provide courses where needed to build strong academic programs for all FY cohorts in all residence halls. Of particular value is that FYAE instructors are skilled at working with FY students and experienced at teaching small, in-person courses that will be needed for all FY students this fall. Their courses may be modified to address the course needs of the FY cohorts.
 - RAP faculty directors and program assistants previously funded by RAP fees will continue in those positions and will remain in the residence hall to which they are currently assigned. Because of the large FY enrollments in the College of Arts and Sciences (A&S) and the Program in Exploratory Studies (PES), some faculty directors who previously oversaw A&S RAPs will now oversee either residence halls with mixed A&S FY cohorts and PES FY cohorts, or residence halls consisting largely of PES cohorts. In addition, the former RAP directors and program assistants should expect to help support, as possible, FY cohorts at Williams Village.

In progress: first-year cohorting

The First-Year Cohort Team—composed of representatives from Housing and Dining Services; the Office of the Registrar; associate and assistant deans from all schools, colleges and programs; and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education—is meeting regularly to plan and implement the creation of first-year (FY) cohorts and the academic programming for the cohorts.

Breaking large student networks, in which students take their classes across multiple student groups, into smaller student networks, in which students take the same group of in-person courses, can reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 through limiting student intermingling as well as supporting contact tracing. The cohort model also provides a smaller, residential college experience within a larger university setting and will allow FY students to start off strong, complete required courses, and work toward earning their degrees while staying safe on campus.

The structure of FY cohorts is as follows. FY students are not choosing their residence hall; they are being assigned to a residence hall based on school/college/program affiliation. First-year cohorts are being created from the students assigned to particular residence halls. In some cases (e.g., A&S and the College of Engineering and Applied Science [CEAS]), those cohorts may be tied to a student's declared major. Smaller class cohorts will exist within a larger cohort, providing "community within community." In most cases, the residence hall provides the larger academic cohort. The size of the smaller academic cohorts may vary from 50 to 150 students depending on academic interests and the courses in which the students are enrolled.

Guidelines for creating cohorts include:

- Most cohorts are being academically determined by the school/college/program of the students. Some residence halls may include students from only a single school, college or program (e.g., A&S or CEAS). Other residence halls will include academic cohorts from different schools, colleges and programs, especially if those schools/colleges/programs have smaller numbers of entering FY students. In those instances, the organizational structure of the residence hall (wings or floors) will be used to separate cohorts. Larger schools, colleges and programs will also occupy multiple residence halls.
- Flexibility is being provided for current learning communities (e.g., MASP, SASC, BOLD, A&S Honors, Global Engineering, Honors Engineering) that have academic programming in place to create cohorts.
- Flexibility is also being provided for other existing campus groups (e.g., Athletics) to create cohorts that include academically diverse students. Plans for providing academic programming for these groups are underway.
- Some FY students are choosing not to live on campus this fall, and schools, colleges and programs will work with those students to provide appropriate courses to ensure academic progress.

In progress: class schedule updates and modality requests

The Office of the Registrar is evaluating and compiling the curricular spreadsheets submitted by the schools and colleges on June 12. Next steps include coordinating the requested schedules and modalities with classroom availability. Here are updates on the Registrar's strategy and on forthcoming requests to departments/programs:

- Currently existing classes will be updated as follows:
 - Meeting times will be updated to include the new 20-minute passing period
 - Classes marked to be canceled will be processed after enrolled students have been notified (see below)
 - In-person classes will be switched to remote and/or online modality, as requested in the curricular spreadsheets
 - Classes will be re-roomed into available spaces (based on adjusted capacities)
 - Hybrid and rotating meeting day adjustments that require room assignments will be updated
- **By the end of business on Tuesday, June 23, departments should notify all students enrolled in classes to be canceled.** We encourage departments/programs to offer guidance to these students on class options and alternatives, including remote/online classes in which capacities might be raised.
- If rooms cannot be assigned to all in-person classes because of limited classroom availability, departments may be asked either to prioritize their in-person classes or to choose new meeting times during which rooms are available.
- Additional/new sections will be created and roomed (if applicable) after changes to existing sections are made. Departments are encouraged to choose extended day/evening meeting times for additional/new sections.
- Classroom assignments will continue to be made throughout the summer as new instructional spaces are identified. (See below.)
- Wait list processes have been paused for continuing students. The campus will need to determine how to handle wait lists for in-person classes, since (due to room capacity rules) wait-listed students will not be able to sit in on in-person classes in the early days of the semester. For classes moving to remote and/or online, increasing capacities will help accommodate wait-listed students.

After the majority of the fall schedule changes are made, the Office of the Registrar will communicate with all students, encouraging them to review their schedules for updates and cancelations. Academic advisors are encouraged to help with questions and outreach regarding schedule questions and adjustments to ensure students stay on track in their degree programs.

In progress: evaluating instructional spaces and capacity

A team from Facilities Management continues to evaluate instructional space on campus and to determine space capacity based on guidelines and best practices for social distancing. This space evaluation includes centrally scheduled classrooms, departmentally scheduled classrooms, and other

spaces on campus and adjacent to campus that can be converted to instructional spaces. The results of the space audit, when available, will inform the Office of the Registrar's rooming of classes.

The team is evaluating possible options for teaching outdoors. However, **departments and programs should not expect extensive outdoor teaching opportunities.** Preparing outdoor space for most types of classes is very resource intensive (requiring installation and upkeep of classroom technology, protection from the weather, amplification equipment, etc.). Most outdoor spaces being set up for specific activities will be better suited to those that require less in the way of equipment, including dining, informal study space and other events. Any outdoor spaces available for teaching will be prioritized for individual classes whose pedagogical methods are particularly suited to an outdoor setting.

In progress: academic technology

Academic technology enhancements in progress

Instructional space and instructional technology are interdependent. OIT is already taking the following actions to enhance instructional technology on campus:

- As of AY 2019–20, about 50 centrally scheduled classrooms were equipped with “lecture capture” capability, which includes simultaneous broadcast for viewing by remote students as well as class recordings for students to watch later. OIT is proceeding to render an additional approximately 300 central classrooms “lecture capture” capable, meaning that most centrally scheduled classrooms will have this capability as of AY 2020–21.
- Remote student interactivity in the classroom can be gained by, for example, setting up an ongoing “chat” during a class via Zoom or similar mechanism. In some cases this interaction might be best managed by a teaching or learning assistant. OIT is working to secure funds to hire students (not from the class they are helping with, although that too would be possible if appropriate) for this function.
- OIT is investigating various kinds of faculty audio amplification resources. However, in some instructional spaces, these might be technically difficult to implement.
- OIT will provide video editing/capture software from MediaSite for use by individual faculty on their own device, typically a laptop.
- With the Resource Alignment Implementation Team, OIT is exploring the possibility of supplying new laptops for instructors who have significant teaching duties and are not eligible to acquire adequate laptops.
- OIT is pursuing enhancing WiFi in outdoor campus spaces that may be designated as teaching spaces.

Survey on academic technology needs and requests

On Monday, June 15, Katherine Eggert and Larry Levine (representing the Academic Instruction Implementation Team) sent out a survey on academic technology needs to follow up on the curricular spreadsheets previously submitted by colleges, schools, departments and programs. (For the survey questions, see the supplemental document, “Fall 2020 Technology Needs and Requests.”) **Responses from each chair/director/dean are due Friday, June 19th.**

This survey will help provide transparency around the prioritization and funding of academic technology requests, and will help OIT provide:

- A common-good approach to solving technology requests and needs when possible (e.g., proctoring software, recording from home, technology support)
- Standards and best practices to enable schools and colleges to prioritize and solve more individualized requests and needs

A unique survey link was sent to the chair or director of each department/program. (Note: in the case of Leeds, Education, Music, Law, Libraries and Continuing Education, the survey was sent to the dean, rather than a department/program chair or director.) The chair/director/dean chooses how to obtain and compile the requested information from instructional personnel into one survey response. For A&S, CEAS, and the College of Media, Communication and Information (CMCI), OIT will aggregate the responses from the chairs/directors for the dean (or for the divisional deans in the case of A&S). OIT requests that these deans and divisional deans review the aggregate data for their respective college or division and submit a summary of technology requests and needs that they approve.

The week of June 22, OIT will aggregate all of the college/school responses, along with OIT recommendations, for use by the Roadmap to Fall 2020 planning committees. Decisions on purchasing and technology solutions for fall 2020 will be made by approximately the end of June.

Tell your faculty: new resources for fall 2020 teaching

- OIT serves as the campus hub for information about instructional technology, working in sync with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). OIT has published [a new guide for faculty](#) to identify their teaching modalities for their courses (in-person, remote, online, and hybrid), and to map their course plans onto the software and classroom technology available for those modes of teaching. OIT is continually updating web content, creating new web content and aggregating web content to make information about evolving instructional technology resources as accessible and navigable as possible.
- The Center for Teaching & Learning serves as a campus hub for resources and programming that support teaching. Explore the [CTL website](#) to:
 - Access campus [resources for teaching online and remotely](#)
 - Develop strategies for building [inclusive](#) and [accessible](#) courses
 - [Schedule a consultation](#) to meet with a CTL staff member one-on-one, or request a group session
 - Find information on events and programs relating to teaching and learning

Tell your faculty: what to do when a student asks for remote instruction for an in-person class

The [Road Map to Fall 2020](#) establishes that the “goal of each college, school, department and program should be to offer sufficient classes in remote-only, online-only, hybrid remote/online, or

simultaneously in person/remote modality . . . to assist undergraduate and graduate students in completing their coursework via distance learning, while still offering classes that are largely in person.” The campus is committed to equitable remote options for vulnerable/at-risk populations and meeting the needs of students whose health or personal circumstances require them to learn remotely. A foundational principle of our Academic Implementation Team is ensuring the campus will offer enough fully remote and/or online options that students who cannot attend courses in person can make progress toward their degrees. However, not every class will be offering remote/online instruction, and this may require a student who cannot come to campus to choose different classes.

Academic advisors who are asked about fully remote/online options for particular in-person (or hybrid in-person/remote) classes should refer students to the respective instructor, and faculty and other instructional personnel should be prepared to answer such inquiries before the fall semester begins. Faculty should understand that students who request a fully remote/online option for an in-person class are not obliged to divulge the reason for the request. However, if the student shares information that relates to something covered under the American with Disabilities Act (or they are unsure), the faculty member should refer the student to Disability Services.

Faculty teaching in-person classes are not required to prepare to teach each of their courses as simultaneously in person and remote. If the faculty member is unable to provide a fully remote/online option to an in-person class, they should refer the student back to their academic advisor to choose a different class.

All those teaching in-person classes should also be prepared, however, to accommodate students who need to work remotely for a shorter period of time because of medical circumstances such as quarantine or self-isolation due to COVID-19. Faculty should treat these circumstances as they would other absences for medical reasons, offering make-up work and assignments and accommodating reasonable requests for the student to access class lectures if possible.

Finally, all faculty and other instructional personnel teaching in-person classes should be mindful that public health circumstances may require the entire campus to pivot to entirely remote/online teaching on short notice, and should ponder “Plan B” remote/online options that they might need to put in place to restructure their in-person teaching.

Tell your faculty: other instruction-related FAQs

The following FAQs have arisen since the June 1, 2020 edition of guidance to chairs and directors:

Should I hold my office hours in person, or remotely? Office-hour meetings should follow physical distancing guidelines, and most faculty offices are too small to do so. We recommend that office hours be held remotely. The campus is working on identifying classroom space that can be used for in-person faculty-student meetings when needed.

Will students have access to buildings after hours? The campus is working on guidance for this and related questions. One thing to note: because we will need to utilize an expanded class schedule (in order to facilitate social distancing in classrooms and on buses, walkways, etc.), more students will likely be on campus during what we might previously have regarded as “after hours” than is typically the case.

Will students be held to standards for COVID-19 precautions in the classroom? Instructors are empowered to exclude students from the classroom for disruptive behavior, and to report students to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#) for sanctions. Over the summer, the Office of Student Affairs is updating the student conduct policy to define failure to practice COVID-19 mitigation as disruptive behavior.

May I put a statement on my syllabus that students have to wear masks and conform to physical distancing guidelines? The campus will supply a standard syllabus statement that students are required to follow COVID-19 protocols in the classroom. This will be part of the syllabus statement guidance sent as usual to faculty before the semester begins.