



Date: March 6, 2020
From: Gillian Small, Ph.D.
Re: Academic Continuity Plan for Spring 2020

Due to the uncertainty around the current COVID-19 situation, we need to prepare for the possibility of a brief or longer-term suspension of face-to-face instruction. If this were to occur, we need to focus on ensuring that students continue to receive appropriate instruction to satisfy course requirements and have the potential to earn full credit for the Spring semester.

As of now, we expect classes to continue as usual following spring break, however, we have been developing plans to support continuity of academic services in the event of a short-term need for campus closure or suspension of in-person face-to-face contact. Please read the information below, and take the steps suggested to prepare so that you are ready for such an event were it to become necessary.

Communication

The most important first step is to ensure that you can communicate with your students. At this time, you should make sure that all of your student information is up-to-date and that it is electronically accessible.

- You should not need to create an FDU email account, however should you need to, view the following link: [How to create an FDU NetID Account](#).
- For each course that you teach, an FDU class listserv (mailing list) is created for you and sent to your Webmail address. The listserv addresses are sent to you via FDU Webmail by the second week of the semester. You should know your class listserv addresses and be able to use this resource.
- If you do not know the addresses for your class listservs, contact the University Technical Assistance Center (UTAC) at 973-443-8822. If you have a mobile device, you should configure your Mobile device to receive emails for your University email account. Click the following link for instructions on how to configure your mobile device to receive emails: [Accessing an FDU Email Account on a Mobile Device Using the Outlook App](#)

Preparing Courses for Delivery at a Distance

A plan for course preparation will allow you to deliver your course in one or more of the delivery modes described below. The plan should include learning objectives, class organization, content, learning activities, assessment and grading strategies.

If you are convinced that your course could not be offered even for a few days to a few weeks from a distance, you must contact your chair or director with an explanation. If you feel your students might require accommodations, please reach out to Disability Services to resolve the issue of accommodations.

Please direct the students to the following link regarding academic accommodations: [How to Receive Academic Accommodations](#). The University will need to be able to anticipate tuition reimbursement costs that will accrue if your course must be cancelled or accommodations cannot be met in a timely manner.

Even if your course usually requires hands-on work (for example laboratory, studio, or field or performance experiences), please think creatively. Focus on your learning objectives, and consider how you could meet these objectives by teaching at a distance. We understand that this is not ideal but in the short term if circumstances require, you will need to be as creative as possible

The content of your face-to-face class may include textbooks, written materials, lecture notes, multimedia materials, and the like. Most types of content can be used for distance delivery as well. However, if an emergency requires students to leave campus suddenly, they may not be able to bring textbooks or other materials. Further, some web services may be unavailable. Students may also connect to the internet in various methods which will make some websites difficult to use. Specifically, they may utilize mobile devices or personal computers to access information. Consider how you will approach instruction in a variety of situations.

Many of your learning objectives will best be achieved by having your students do something other than just read course materials. For example, students may participate in discussions, work on problem sets, or write research papers or essays. Many kinds of activities will be available to your class even if an emergency closes the campus. Discussions can be held using the Webcampus discussion boards, e-mail using the class listserv, via Zoom or Echo360 or by phone discussions. Students will be able to write papers, but some limitations may be imposed (e.g. inability to visit the physical campus library; intermittent access or no access to online library service).

Assessment and Grading

As you know, assessment is a process for identifying the extent to which your students are meeting your learning objectives. Grades are measures of individual students' progress. Grading should be approached as humanely as possible during an emergency. Be as flexible as possible, and keep your focus and theirs on achieving the learning outcomes.

Consider completing the following steps:

- For each learning objective, write down any assessments that currently measure progress.
- For each assessment, consider how you will adapt that assessment method to distance delivery.
- If your course relies heavily on exams, bear in mind that you will not be able to enforce a closed-book policy or any time limits if students complete exams off-campus. Plan your exams accordingly.

Delivery Modes

The delivery modes being made available to you include the following:

- Webcampus (using Blackboard software)
- WebEx
- Zoom
- Echo360
- Email

You may find that the best solution for your class will be a combination of two or more of these delivery modes. For example, in an emergency some students may have adequate access to the internet, while others will not. Do your best to prepare to reach all of your students. If you have additional ideas for emergency course delivery, by all means use them.

Webcampus

All instructors should be able to use Webcampus (Blackboard) to continue instruction if an emergency closes the campus. If you need to take some time to learn to use Webcampus please do so. The Office of Educational Resources and Assessment (OERA) has provided the following links below for instructors who need to get up to speed using Webcampus (Blackboard).

- [Blackboard Learn Help for Instructors](#) (Webcampus)
- Blackboard also maintains a YouTube channel with screencasts for instructors. Click the following link for the channel: [Blackboard Learn for Instructors](#) (Webcampus)
- [My Blackboard](#)
- [Course Menu Interface](#)
- [Basics of Webcampus](#)
- [Creating a Contact](#) (Screencast)
- [Creating an Announcement](#) (Screencast)
- [Creating an Item in Webcampus](#) (Screencast)
- [How to Create a Discussion Board Forum](#) (Blackboard Screencast)
- [Use Discussions](#) (Blackboard)
- [Creating an Assignment](#)
- [Grading an Assignment](#)
- [Posting assignments](#) (Blackboard)

These video tutorials are streamed and include closed captions. Blackboard also maintains a student focused resource and channel and it is suggested that you direct your students to the appropriate resources:

- [Blackboard Learn Help for Students \(Webcampus\)](#)
- [Blackboard Learn for Students \(Webcampus Videos\)](#)

WebEx

WebEx is a web conferencing service that the University offers as a service to both faculty and staff. Before initiating a session with your students, it is suggested that participants join a test session. By joining a test session, participants will be able to confirm that their mobile device or computer is properly configured for a WebEx Session. As a facilitator or participant you can confirm that your system is properly configured by clicking the following link and following the

instructions: [Where can I join a Test Meeting](#). In the event that you are unable to join a test meeting, reach out to University Technical Assistance at the following number: 973-443-8822. Prior to contacting University Technical Support, it is suggested that you have your Faculty ID available. If you are not aware of your faculty ID you can identify it in WebAdvisor. For additional information on Web Advisor please click the following link: [Webwhat](#)

Zoom

Zoom is a web-based video conferencing tool that allows users to meet online, with or without video. Zoom users can choose to record sessions, collaborate on projects, and share or annotate on one another's screens, all with one easy-to-use platform. It offers quality video, audio, and a wireless screen-sharing performance across Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, and Android. Zoom has a feature-rich, mobile app for both iOS and Android, allowing you to virtually connect from anywhere with an internet connection.

NOTE: FDU has acquired a university wide license for Zoom starting now until June 30th. We are working to extend the service thereafter.

To login to the Zoom portal page click the following link: [Zoom](#)

For additional resources on Zoom click the following link: [Getting Started with Zoom](#)

For technical assistance, please call the help desk at (973) 443-8822.

Echo360

Echo 360 will be available to all faculty by March 20, 2020. It provides methods for lecture capture that can be done through any supported device, including laptop, tablet or phone.

Echo360 can be accessed through the website at echo360.com, where you can click Login on the upper right hand menu, and use University credentials to log in. Your courses should be pre-loaded for access to add files.

For some YouTube tutorials on how to use Echo360:

Instructor Overview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEdSbwrRehE>

Adding A Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLxDDYHpSQk>

Editing A Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErQiYI9Z04w&t=3s>

Adding A Presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVpJNGasarI>

Editing A Presentation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBH_N3uM33M

Additionally, you can check out more instructional videos and tutorials at the Echo360 YouTube Channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPzf1TOJqm2Xs2Dv6_VVCDA