

Faculty Colleagues-

For those who have **face-to-face or hybrid sections that are being migrated online for Summer A and B**, I want to emphasize the role that synchronous learning will play in those courses. Through a series of conversations with Dr. Avendano, academic administrators and faculty leaders, we have come to the consensus that our small class sizes and strong position as innovative educators allow us to pursue something special in instructing our students this summer. Although we cannot provide the face-to-face experience students in these classes were hoping for, synchronous online class meetings (when a faculty member meets students online during regularly scheduled class times) are our best virtual alternative for approximating what we intended to deliver.

Our emergency transition this Spring opened many collective eyes to what can be accomplished in this format. Like any other course modality, it's not perfect. But it does provide students direct access to your instruction and direct access to *you*, a critical real-time human connection. In weighing all of the pros and cons, and remaining mindful of the substantial online options we already have, we believe the synchronous online approach will meet an important student need and, quite frankly, allow many faculty to leverage their "in class" skills in this environment.

From the instructor side, with today's announcement we will be calling on the Academy for Teaching and Learning, the Academic Technology Team, our Faculty resource specialists and the Center for eLearning to bring their expertise to support you. For those who lack the required hardware to teach synchronously (most typically a webcam), we will work to support that need. This also underscores the importance of communicating with your supervisor. Your supervisor will need to understand your readiness and your needs in order to help you. Supervisors will also be prepared to work with anyone who is not able to "go synchronous" in the summer, because we want to inform students in each face-to-face and hybrid section what the experience will be like. A clarifying comment: it's my expectation that a course's synchronous components will be the most substantial part of the course's delivery. At the same time, there is flexibility here: mixing synchronous meetings with asynchronous content is absolutely okay. Through conversations with peers, support services and supervisors, I'm confident each faculty member will find the right balance.

From the student side, students were also informed today of our approach to Summer A and B (see attached email). Over the next week, and again working with supervisors, we will be updating course notes in Campus Solutions so that students can confirm whether a class originally scheduled for face-to-face or hybrid delivery will be using a synchronous online approach instead. We are also aware that many of our students have constraints both in terms of online access and living situations that may mean synchronous online courses are not the right fit for them. We are working on technology solutions for these students and we will work with them to place them into sections that best align with their circumstances. It won't be perfect, but that is the goal we are pursuing.

Two final notes: First, at this point we will *not* be changing anything about the modality in which a summer course was originally encoded in our system. So, courses originally encoded as face-to-face or hybrid will still appear that way in the system. However, we will be working toward integrating technology-facilitated, synchronous teaching methods into those courses, which students will access over the internet.

Second, COVID-19 proves to be the crisis that keeps on giving. You have my awe and appreciation for all you are doing for our students and our mission, along with my personal wishes for your well-being and the same for those you love. Please reach out for help of any kind if you need it. Onward! -John