MEMORANDUM

To: All URI Faculty  
From: Donald DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Date: March 13, 2020  
Subject: Faculty support for remote teaching

As you know, in order to safeguard the health of the URI community, slow the spread of COVID-19, and ensure continuity of education for our students, the University is transitioning to remote delivery of all classes through at least April 3, 2020. More information resides on the URI homepage. Please read through that notice if you have not already done so: https://web.uri.edu/coronavirus/2020/03/11/important-uri-covid-19-updates/

I recognize that this abrupt transition to remote teaching requires an unprecedented and significant adjustment for each of you, as well as many others in the URI community. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and efforts as we pull together as a community to ensure our students can complete their academic work in a timely and effective manner this semester. Our goal now is to be certain that you have the support and resources you need to navigate the hurdles and successfully deliver your courses, especially for those with limited experience teaching in a remote learning format. We encourage peer to peer support and sharing of ideas to help us all get through this together.

At this time, we are gearing up for a three-phased support system:

First, the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (ATL) and ITS Teaching and Learning (ITS T&L) have developed a robust set of remote and/or face to face workshops and guidelines for faculty at all levels of experience with remote instructional delivery. Please consult the ATL website at https://web.uri.edu/atl/ and attend one of the ATL & ITS in-person or remote workshops, which can help you jumpstart the transition from face-to-face to remote learning approaches.

Second, and also on the ATL site, we have developed a FAQ's list https://web.uri.edu/atl/remote-teaching-and-learning-faqs/ which we will continue to update, specific to academic work and transitioning courses to remote learning formats.

Third, with support of the Faculty Senate and AAUP leadership, we are forming a Remote Teaching and Learning Task Force comprising faculty across disciplines and skill levels and key staff to monitor progress, problems, and challenges experienced along the way during this transition time. Follow the link to the charge to the Task Force:

Finally, there is one straightforward and very important step that you can take now or early next week at the latest. That is, please reach out to all students on your class roster with a reassuring message. It doesn’t need to include specific details at this time. It might be as simple as:

Dear Students in (name of my class):

I hope you and your family are safe and healthy. I am working on re-formatting our class to allow for remote instruction for this transitional time period. I’ll be in touch prior to March 20th with more details as to how class will proceed beginning March 23rd. Stay calm and check your email often for updates. We will all get through this together. Most importantly, be careful and stay safe.

Faculty can send emails to students through their Sakai (Messages tool) or Brightspace course site or through their e-campus class roster https://web.uri.edu/enrollment/view-your-roster/. If you have difficulty, please contact your College IT support staff or the ITS helpdesk for assistance. They stand ready to assist.

Thank you again for your patience and extra efforts. Let’s get through this by supporting each other. Most of all, be safe and follow all hygiene protocols.

c: Deans, Department Chairs