URI Remote Teaching & Learning Task Force

UPDATE 3/17/2020

Introduction: We know that you will have many questions as we transition to remote instruction over the coming week. The Remote Teaching and Learning Task Force was formed to support the URI teaching community and serve as a liaison to faculty from various disciplines, departments, and colleges. The Task Force is comprised of faculty and key knowledgeable staff representing a cross-section of disciplines, remote teaching skill levels, and pedagogical experiences in a broad array of courses learning goals and approaches.

Have a question or a suggestion?
Send us your questions or suggestions through the COVID-19 Faculty Question/Suggestion Form, available on both the ATL web page (https://web.uri.edu/atl/) and the Provost's home page (https://web.uri.edu/provost/).

NEWS

Training available to support your transition to remote learning:
ITS and ATL are partnering to offer a daily menu of training opportunities. If you click on a session on the training schedule, you can add it to your Google Calendar and start the WebEx or Hangout Meet right from there.
https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/its-atl-training/
Not sure where to start? Attend a "Getting Started" workshop

University Libraries has a new "Coronavirus and the URI Libraries web site.
For information on accessing information and getting research assistance from off-campus, please see https://uri.libguides.com/covid.

Expanded FAQ section on the ATL website
Check the FAQs at https://web.uri.edu/atl/, and if you don't find the answer you need:
Submit your academic questions to the question form on the ATL site.
Submit your IT related questions by calling 874-4357 to submit a help ticket.

Bookstore announces FREE re access to e-texts.
VitalSource Helps, is providing aid to students with course materials during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students can visit VitalSource and **borrow up to 7** ebooks until **May 25, 2020 at no cost.** Students must use their URI email access create an account and access the database. Offers access to textbooks from a number of different publishers (textbooks only, not associated courseware). https://bookshelf.vitalsource.com/#/user/signin

Online Virtual Faculty Café
This is a virtual faculty lounge for faculty and staff at URI to chat about teaching with technology ideas, share resources, and provide support to meet the needs of students in remote learning contexts. https://www.facebook.com/groups/2676405559259318

News from previous Updates available at:
https://web.uri.edu/provost/2020/03/13/supporting-faculty-during-the-transition-to-remote-learning/

RESOURCES

ATL is your home for instructional support.
Visit https://web.uri.edu/atl/ to access remote instruction resources and workshop information. This includes a rapidly expanding FAQ section with answers to many of your questions.

ITS Support
Visit - https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/ for quick links to remote instruction needs.

URI COVID-19 Response Information
Centralize location for information related to the URI COVID-19 response, including information for - https://web.uri.edu/coronavirus/

UPDATES & ANSWERS

The task force met this afternoon to share questions and concerns from the teaching community. Here are some of the topics addressed.

Reminder: Class work expectations this week:
Face-to-face classes are cancelled from March 16 to 20 so students cannot be expected to participate in classes during this week. Some students may not yet have access to the internet or to their school materials, which may still be in their dorm room. Students can work on assignments given before spring break, but no new work should be assigned this week and due dates should be extended into the period when classes are back in session after March 23rd.

Please reach out to your students and ask about their internet connectivity.
Offer a reassuring message with any details you have about how your class is going to proceed next week.
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.*

Below is a sample set of questions you can send to your students either via email, Google Forms, or any survey tool of your choice. The answers to these questions can help you determine which remote teaching tools are best for your students. If you hope to use videos, add a question about how well they can stream videos.
Sample Questions (check all that apply)
- Yes, I have access to a device (laptop, desktop computer, tablet). Maybe not great, but I feel that I will be able to complete the course requirements.
- Yes, I have access to internet service, maybe not great, but I feel that I will be able to access Sakai and submit work through Sakai.
- I will have internet service only sometimes. I am very concerned about my ability to access course materials.

- I will rarely have access to a computer. I am very concerned about my ability to access and complete the course requirements.
- I will only have my smartphone for access to course materials.

What if we don't hear from students in our classes after reaching out?
Note – this is a clarification of what was posted on 3/16. This clarification is needed because Early Alert needs to remain available to support students of concern that may be in distress. The website https://web.uri.edu/earlyalert/ has information about this service

- Faculty should make a few attempts to reach students before they raise a flag or reach out for help. We do not want faculty to make one attempt and then raise a flag.
- As mentioned below, the primary function of EA is to support students of concern who are likely in distress. They are only 2 people.
- Faculty can raise an Academic Concern flag in Starfish and add a comment that the student is non-responsive to faculty outreach.
- UCAS Academic Advisors will monitor Academic Concern flags and support faculty in contacting the student.

For faculty not on Starfish, here is a link for training on raising flags (See Slides 14-20): https://web.uri.edu/starfish/files/Starfish-Faculty-Staff-Guide-The-Basics.pdf

Some of us are having connectivity glitches and dropping video on WebEx

Bandwidth issues will be related to your home connection (or wherever you are working remotely), as well as how much data you are using at any given time; it is not a campus-related issue. Your best bet is to limit use. Try shutting down all streaming services and background apps, in addition to any other devices that may be using the same network, in order for your learning resources to stream/download faster. Also, creating a schedule of who can do what and when in your household so too many people are not trying to connect simultaneously would be helpful. Ipads are historically large users of bandwidth, and by taking ipads off of the wifi in a household, the residents will find that other streaming and downloading services will work better.

How are we going to make-up the lost week of classes?

The Faculty Senate has indicated that we are not going to alter the academic calendar to make up the missed days. Each faculty member will therefore decide how to modify their course schedule in order to achieve the critical learning outcomes of their course.