URI Remote Teaching & Learning Task Force

UPDATE 3/19/2020

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

Looking for a previous Update? Check here:
https://web.uri.edu/provost/2020/03/13/supporting-faculty-during-the-transition-to-remote-learning/

NEWS
For Latest information on the URI COVID-19 Response: https://web.uri.edu/coronavirus/

Training available to support your transition to remote learning:
ITS and ATL are partnering to offer a daily menu of training opportunities.
The upcoming training sessions are listed: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/its-atl-training/
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.

Not sure where to start? Attend a "Getting Started" workshop

Additional resources are being listed at: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/ and at https://web.uri.edu/atl/

New additions:
- Relay: https://web.uri.edu/brightspace/relay-for-lecture-capture/
- Google: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/g-suite-remote-solutions/
- Office 365: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/o365-collaboration-tools/
- Webex: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/webex-meetings-faculty-and-staff/

Unable to attend a training session?
Check the Remote Teaching and Learning resources link here: https://web.uri.edu/atl/. New Resources are being added daily.

You can view the ATL First Steps Session slides here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/157uDvk7kJyQBkKtIOIBxkcJd0uUDpy0n/view

And the remote instruction planning document is here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KQOY18yvDWqGzQ2tdPTmLZg4K8Ygeb7m/view

And check our new Assessment in the World of Remote Teaching here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ez9YaGMIPzfalp8Mq55Kk4Pu2FzAYdsBhdbGIPmEp1Y/edit

Get your assessment questions answered – Daily ATL "Brown Bag" Q&A Next week!
If you are thinking about Assessment there will be trainings available next week (check the calendar: https://web.uri.edu/atl/covid-19-workshop-calendar/

UPDATES & ANSWERS

The Faculty Senate held a COVID-9 response forum today with presentations from senior leadership, ATL and ITS. In addition, faculty have been submitting questions/suggestions to the Task Force and the question form (find it here: (https://web.uri.edu/provost/).

Here are some of the topics addressed.

Thank you to all the faculty.
The Faculty Senate and University Administration expressed deep gratitude for the incredible work being done by the URI faculty over the past week and acknowledge the heavy lift being undertaken over the weeks to come. They thank you for all that you are doing as we move forward under the new reality of fighting this global pandemic.

Please reach out to your students.
Students will have questions following the announcement that instruction will be offered remotely for the rest of the spring semester. Please reach out to them with a reassuring message, share your plan if its ready, or let them know when you will contact them again. Invite them to share any concerns they have about accessing remote instructional materials. See https://web.uri.edu/atl/remote-teaching-and-learning-faqs/ for a sample survey to access students needs.

How will this affect the tenure clock for tenure-track faculty?
The COVID-19 response is affecting both teaching and research activities. The Provost and AAUP recognize that this is a concern, particularly for early career faculty. They do not want this to have a negative impact on the career trajectory of those faculty and will work together to address this concern.

Will we be administering IDEA student feedback surveys this semester?
The administration and AAUP are in general agreement that administration of the IDEAs will not occur this semester given the transition to remote instruction. Faculty may, if they wish, collect their own feedback from students.

Can pass/fail (or incomplete) be an option for students?
We have received a number of inquiries from faculty and students about the possibility of a pass/fail option for students. We have forwarded these comments to the attention of the Faculty Senate and Senior Leadership so that they are aware of the interest in examining this possibility.   This topic is also on the 3/20 agenda of Remote Teaching & Learning Task Force.

I'm concerned about how I will assess my students.
Many instructors will be considering alternative forms of assessment with the transition to remote instruction. ATL will hold daily Q&A sessions from 12-1 through the coming week – details on how to attend will be posted on their ATL site - https://web.uri.edu/atl/

Should I be offering my classes synchronously or asynchronously?
Although synchronous instruction may work for some small classes, we encourage you to have mostly asynchronous learning sessions vs synchronous. For many students with limited or sub-optimal internet connectivity, or with limited access to laptop or devices, it is easier for them to access their learning if it is asynchronous.

Where can we go if we want to record a lecture?
A number of recording "Suites" have been established on campus: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/recording-spaces-on-campus/

I'm overloaded with ideas. Some of us need to hear that its okay to keep it simple.
Keep it simple! Start with what you know. The simpler the better. Know that your students may not have webcams, bandwidth, etc. ATL offers training sessions that help faculty make decisions about what will work best for them. Please look at the First Steps materials for help in this.

How will we meet the needs of our students with accommodations?
DSS has created a web site with information to support both students and faculty during this transition - https://web.uri.edu/disability/covid/
If you have concerns about a particular student, you can also reach out to their case manager directly; each accommodation letter indicates which case manager approved the accommodations at the top.

How are we supporting our student's mental health?
The Counseling Center is going online. Currently they remain available by phone M-F 8:30-4:30. Visit https://web.uri.edu/counseling/covid-19-update/ for details.
The Counseling Center number is 401-874-2288, and 24/7 services are being provided.

What about Faculty? What if they need help supporting their well-being?
State employees, dependents and household members can receive free confidential assistance with personal and job-related problems through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) https://web.uri.edu/hr/benefits/eap/

What do we tell students who are concerned about internet connectivity and data limits?
ITS has put together some resources for students and is working to provide more laptops can be loaned to students. https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/equipment-guide/
Many internet and phone providers are opening up access, removing data limits and in some cases providing free or very low cost connections. Students should check with their mobile phone provider and/or local cable/internet provider for details.
Cox, Comcast, AT&T are also providing free access to their public WiFi hot spots.

Do we need to worry about network burden when everyone in K-12 and higher education goes online next week? Should we expect some glitches or outages
Undoubtedly, yes. All of the major providers are gearing up for this, but you should expect some disruptions. This is one of the reasons you are encouraged to consider asynchronous instruction, which will allow students to engage with the course materials later in the day when traffic is lighter. Next week, ITS will be rolling out new resources and training on bandwidth-minimizing ways to deliver materials for students.

I've tried using WebEx and it seems to be glitchy.
For those on home wifi it could be due to overuse of your home wifi bandwidth. Remove devices from the wifi (phones, tablets) and make sure nothing is streaming or downloading in the background (games, Netflix, etc) and then the service should clear up. Ipads are historically major bandwidth users, as they download and restore apps in the background even when not in use, so try turning them off while you are using WebEx.

Starfish currently communicates by email, but students respond more readily to texts. Can we implement text messaging through Starfish?
Although technically possible, this is a difficult. We do not currently own the required plugin and do not have complete/accurate records of all student cell phone numbers. In addition, the FCC has very strict text-spamming rules that carry stiff fines ($5,000/violation) and Starfish falls under those regulations.

Can we use Relay to host video content made outside of Relay? Editing and annotation is somewhat limited in Relay.
Yes, you can host videos in Relay including ones from other sources. For videos from other sources, there are always copyright considerations you should follow. That said, Relay videos are internal only, not on the public web, so Fair Use may cover usage of external videos.

Will the Help Desk be open over the weekend?
We will be working to keep the service desk open this weekend, staffing permitted. We are currently working to establish remote options for some students to increase staffing. We will do our best, and you can always email helpdesk@uri.edu for help.

Is there a way to donate leave hours to staff who are on leave without pay?
HR will check into this possibility.

See: https://web.uri.edu/atl/ for more questions and answers.

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.

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

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

University Libraries
For information on accessing information and getting research assistance from off-campus, please see https://uri.libguides.com/covid.

Students separated from their textbooks or didn't purchase the textbook?
- URI Campus Stores is collaborating with VitalSource Helps, providing aid to students with course materials during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students can **borrow up to 7** ebooks until **May 25, 2020 <u>at no cost.</u>**
  VitalSource and publishers **have increased** the available ebook "borrow" database to **165,000 titles**. 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://campusstore.uri.edu/SiteText?id=74512
- Get FREE access to Cengage Unlimited for the rest of the semester <u>(includes courseware)</u>
  https://www.cengage.com/covid-19-support/

URI Counseling Center
https://web.uri.edu/counseling/covid-19-update/

URI Employee Assistance Program
State employees, dependents and household members can receive free confidential assistance with personal and job-related problems through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
https://web.uri.edu/hr/benefits/eap/

Looking for a way to socialize with your colleagues? Try the Online Virtual Faculty Café
This is a virtual faculty lounge, created by and 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/URIChatCafe/