URI Remote Teaching & Learning Task Force

UPDATE 4/01/2020

IMPORTANT UPDATE
Faculty Senate Special Meeting to Consider Alternative Grade Option

The Faculty Senate has scheduled a special emergency meeting for Thursday, April 2, 2020, 4:00-5:00 PM to consider an alternative grading option. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee motion prepared for consideration by the Faculty Senate is available here:
https://web.uri.edu/facsen/files/Alternative_Grading_Scheme_Option-2.pdf

You can join the meeting through WebEx:
https://rhody.webex.com/rhody/j.php?MTID=md338dfa6025625186976a49b88f26ac5

Task Force Feedback on the Motion
The Remote Teaching & Learning Task Force members invited feedback on the motion from their departments and colleagues. Students have also been contacting faculty, staff and administrators to report the challenges they are facing during this transition. The Task Force met on 3/30/30 to share feedback and discuss elements of the motion and offers the following recommendations for consideration:

- Push the deadline back to April 28th, the last day of classes.
- Develop an online form/portal managed by Enrollment Services where students can submit their opt-in intent.
- Add a grade of S-, allowing for S, S-,U* (no-credit, non-punitive), in place of the proposed S, U*, F grading scheme.

The full text of the Task Force Feedback is attached.

What are other college/universities doing?
Many other institutions have been adopting plans for a spring 2020 alternative grade option. This blog provides details for quite a few institutions:

https://oudigitools.blogspot.com/2020/03/feedback-alternate-grading-in-crisis.html

Here is info on some schools in our region:

UConn: https://uconn.edu/public-notification/coronavirus/covid-19-academics-and-research/

Students may elect Pass/Fail grading at any time by the last day of classes of spring 2020. In the event that students select Pass/Fail grading, the course is graded in the usual way by the instructor and the instructor submits a letter grade. This letter grade is translated into a 'P' ('D-' or above) or remains an 'F.' Course taken under the Pass/Fail option will not be included in the computation of the semester or cumulative grade point average.

UMass: https://www.umass.edu/coronavirus/spring-term-2020-guidelines-regarding-passfail-and-satunsat-options

All Letter Grading only courses will be changed to Letter Grading with Pass/Fail option. Students will be allowed to select Pass/Fail grading for any course through Wednesday, April 29th. The instructor will submit a letter grade earned for every student. If the letter grade is F, it is factored into the GPA. If the student receives a passing letter grade, an initial computation of the cumulative average will be made. This average will include all graded courses from prior semesters as well as graded courses from the current semester. If the course elected Pass/Fail during the current semester carries a grade higher than the initially computed cumulative average, the reported letter grade will be recorded and the cumulative average recomputed; otherwise the P or F will be recorded. This ensures that there will be letter grading (A through D) for students whose GPA will be helped by receiving the actual letter grade they earned in the course.

UNH: The Academic Standards and Advising Committee (ASAC) and the Faculty Senate are working on this issue with input from the provost's office.

Rutgers: https://nbprovost.rutgers.edu/grade-change-academic-deadlines

Undergraduate students who have undergone serious disruption in their academic progress adversely affecting their academic performance due to COVID-19 will have the choice to opt for a change from letter grade to Pass/No Credit grade. Students will be allowed to make this choice through **Friday, May 22, 2020**, one week after final grades have been submitted. Students will be allowed to choose whether they designate one or more courses to be Pass/No Credit (P/NC).

UMaine: https://umaine.edu/coronavirus/2020/03/18/umaine-undergraduate-programs-pass-fail-protocols-march-18/

The University of Maine will extend the time frame for undergraduate students to select a pass/fail option in each undergraduate course for this term. Students could then elect to take a pass/fail grade between April 10 and May 1, 2020, for the spring semester.

- P, Pass, normally represents a C- or above. Credit is earned, but the grade point average (GPA) is not affected. Note: for spring 2020 only, a P will count as a C or above.
- LP, Low Pass, is a D+, D, or D-. Credit is earned, but the GPA is not affected
- F*, Failed, means that no credit is earned and the GPA is not affected.

OTHER NEWS/UPDATES

FREE WIFI Access available for all RI Students with a smartphone
To ensure that all Rhode Island students have access to WiFi necessary for distance learning at home, the Governor today announced that all households that have a smart phone with a WiFi hot spot feature and have cell phone service from the four most common providers in our state – Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint – will be able to activate the hot spot feature for free. There will be no activation fee, no usage fee, and no overage fee. This policy will last until at least May 13. Additionally, Cox is providing two free months of in-home internet for qualifying families.
https://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/AdditionalInformation/COVID-19TechnologyInformation.aspx

Article about coping in a time of crisis
Why You Should Ignore All That Coronavirus-Inspired Productivity Pressure

https://www.chronicle.com/article/Why-You-Should-Ignore-All-That/248366?utm_source=at&utm_medium=en&utm_source=Iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=campaign_1113619&cid=at&source=ams&sourceId=2121607

RESOURCES

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

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/

Instructional/IT 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.

Support Session Schedule: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/its-atl-training/

Individual Consultations and Updated Remote Teaching Resources
ATL Staff are available for individual consultations and have continued to update the Remote Teaching Resources: https://web.uri.edu/atl/.

Assessment in the World of Remote Teaching
The ways we have done things -- strictly lecturing, in person exams, face to face involvement -- cannot be the ways we do things going forward, at least for the time being. To address that latter issue of assessment, the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning has developed this "living" document with advice, information, and links to resources, which will be updated regularly. Please use what you find useful!
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ez9YaGMIPzfalp8Mq55Kk4Pu2FzAYdsBhdbGIPmEp1Y/edit

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.

ITS Support
Visit - https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/ for quick links to remote instruction needs.
Call 874-4357 or email helpdesk@uri.edu for assistance.

Trouble with Login?
If students, faculty or staff are having difficulty logging into any of the URI ITS platforms (Gmail, Sakai, Brightspace, TutorTrac, TechsmithRelay, Office 365, WebEx, Starfish, Google Meet, etc (everything but e-campus), please have them complete the single sign-on password unification step available here: https://password.uri.edu/

File Compression Options
Free image resizer online: https://www.img2go.com/compress-image
Compress PDFs and other Word docs: https://docupub.com/pdfcompress/

Spaces to record a lecture
A number of recording "Suites" have been established on campus: https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/recording-spaces-on-campus/

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

Support for Students

Academic Enhancement Center is Online:
Online support is now available: https://web.uri.edu/aec/
The AEC has prepared "Tips for Remote Learning". Please share this with your students.
https://web.uri.edu/aec/files/URI-AEC-Tips-for-Remote-Learning.pdf

Writing Center - appointments can be booked online through uri.mywconline.com. More detailed instructions can be found on the Writing Center webpage at uri.edu/aec/writing.

STEM Tutoring - is offering online tutoring on a weekly basis and an as-needed basis. Students can search for online availability by logging into aec.uri.edu. New availability is being added as quickly as possible.

Academic Skills Consultations – WebEx appointments with David Hayes can be booked via Starfish. Tips for online learning are available here: https://web.uri.edu/aec/i-need-help-with/

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. https://campusstore.uri.edu/SiteText?id=74512
- Get FREE access to Cengage Unlimited for the rest of the semester (includes courseware) https://www.cengage.com/covid-19-support/

Disability Services for Students
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.

URI Student Emergency Assistance

Please share the [URI Student Emergency Assistance Check-In](#) with your students.   Student Affairs is trying to assist URI students with emergency needs in light of COVID-19, but need to better understand their greatest concerns at this time.

It is a short (2-3) minute survey that provides the list of current resources at URI (Student First Fund, Rhody Outpost, Ramtech laptop rental), in the community, and unemployment links for CT, MA, and RI. They can also schedule a follow up meeting with Jacqui Tisdale.

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

Support for You and Your Colleagues

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/

Navigating the Balancing Act
Share your "balancing" ideas and experiences with your colleagues through the [Faculty Support Network – Balancing Family Care with Remote Teaching](#) Google doc hosted on the ATL website. Our hope is it might serve as a supportive resource for the URI teaching community.

Have Remote Teaching Knowledge to share?
Try Yammer, part of the Office 365 suite, as a platform for supporting each other. Go to office.com, log in with your SSO credentials, then click "All Apps" and then the "Yammer" button. Looks and feels a like facebook, but is open only to 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/

Faculty/Staff Stress Management Support
https://web.uri.edu/its-covid19/chilling-out/