March 9, 2020

To All Faculty:

Although the risk of contracting COVID-19 (the novel Coronavirus) in the metropolitan Boston area and on campus remains LOW, cases are multiplying in the city and across the US and the rest of the world. Under these circumstances, it is essential for us to plan in advance for contingencies that could potentially require the University to limit physical access to campus out of concern for our community’s health and well-being. In such a case, given the University’s academic instructional mission and mandate to assure that students can continue to progress toward their degrees in a timely fashion, the University will continue to meet that mandate by moving its instructional operations to remote rather than on-campus modality.

Many faculty on campus are already well-positioned to move their instructional and advising activities online. Others will face significantly more challenges.

For those of you in the latter category, please be assured that the University is preparing to facilitate and smooth the way for you as you meet these challenges.

On page 3 of this memo, you will find a description of some options you may choose from, in order to provide instructional continuity through a potential disruption of physical access to campus. The simplest of these is probably to choose one of the live-streaming options. These will allow you, effectively, to continue to give your classes synchronously at their regularly-scheduled times— in other words, to continue to meet with your students, quasi-face-to-face, e.g., MWF at 10:00, TuTh at 1:00, or whenever your present teaching schedule dictates.

Maintaining instructional continuity in laboratory sections will clearly pose added challenges. I would ask faculty in departments that give lab sections to group up with each other, their chairs, and their deans to brainstorm about appropriate ways to respond to a general instructional switch to online modality.

A further point regarding planning:
Most Healey Library resources and services are available online to support uninterrupted teaching, learning and research. Faculty will need to determine alternatives for assignments involving print reserves books and print borrowing. The Library website will provide updated information and options as necessary.

Please see pages 2-4 of this memo for detailed information and protocols for maintaining instructional continuity, and please note that further information and protocols regarding research continuity and business continuity (including for non-faculty Academic Affairs employees like advisors and administrative assistants) will be forthcoming next week.

Sincerely,

Emily A. McDermott
Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Steps that all faculty should take now!

- **Immediately** decide how you will communicate with your students in the event that the campus is closed for an extended period of time and inform them of your plan. **Be sure to test this week (before students leave for spring break) that they can receive your emails by sending one and asking them to acknowledge receipt.** Options for emailing students:
  - Blackboard: within each course, click on Email (External), then choose between All Users, All Groups, All Teaching Assistant Users, etc., to send an email;
  - WISER: email - https://www.umb.edu/it/wiser/faculty_help/email_students_from_class_roster

- **Immediately** examine and consider the options presented below (page 3) for remote course delivery;

- Decide on your own **personal plan** for maintaining instructional continuity; **please feel free to call the IT team at 617-287-4200 for individual guidance as you weigh the options, and/or to take advantage of the options for group trainings listed on the next page**;

- Communicate your plan to your chair by **Wednesday of this week (March 11, 2020)** and to your students by **Thursday of this week (March 12, 2020)**; the communication to your chair will allow the deans, Registrar, Provost, and IT to coordinate a master list by which Zoom licenses may be deployed and IT support may be at the ready at the appropriate times; the communication to students will assure that they understand your particular plan before the campus community disperses for Spring break, which begins on **Saturday, March 14, 2020**;

- If you have not already logged into your Blackboard shells, do so now at https://umb.umassonline.net/webapps/login/ using your UMB user name (without @umb.edu) and password; every Spring 2020 course already has a Blackboard course shell, with students enrolled in it; if you have questions about logging in and using Blackboard, please email the eLearning and Instructional Support team at eLearning@umb.edu. **Please make sure you have logged into all of your shells before students leave for spring break on March 14th**;

- Upload course materials to your Blackboard shell, including your syllabus, handouts, and other materials such as readings, videos, quizzes/tests;

- **Before students leave on spring break, urge them to download and use the Blackboard Mobile app on their phones,** as not all of them may have a computer at home.

The more technically-inclined of you may want to offer moral support and helping hands to your less technically apt colleagues throughout this process; please let your department chairs know if you are willing to join this effort. But please also know that the IT and ELIS (e-Learning and Instructional Support) units on campus stand ready to guide and support all of you both through this preliminary preparatory process and (should it become necessary) through the process of actually shifting to online modality for an extended period of time.
We are here to help!
- eLearning & Instructional Design Team – eLearning@umb.edu;
- Blackboard offer 24 x 7 support - Technical Support/Live Chat - http://umb.echelp.org/ or call 1-855-789-7053;
- IT/eLearning team can offer group training for departments. Deans and/or Department Chairs may reach out to Apurva.Mehta@umb.edu to arrange these;
- Instructional Continuity Drop-In & Online Tutorials will be available on the schedule on the next page.

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<th>Start Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>March 10th</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>Campus Center 2315</td>
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OPTIONS FOR REMOTE COURSE DELIVERY

Live Stream your Lectures:

1. **Blackboard**: Each course has a Blackboard course shell, with students enrolled in it. On the course menu is a link to the Web Conferencing tool (Collaborate Ultra). This tool allows you to communicate with your students in real time and share your screen.
   - Instructions to use Collaborate Ultra:
     - Faculty: How to get started with Blackboard Collaborate Ultra:
     - Students: How to access Blackboard Collaborate Ultra
   - Blackboard Support 24/7 Help by visiting the page at: 24/7 Help or call 1-855-789-7053

2. **Zoom**: This web conferencing tool allows you to communicate with your students (or colleague) in real time and share your computer screen.
   - The University will be exponentially increasing its number of Zoom site licenses, to meet the expected increase in demand;
   - Please be sure your students know that they will need to install Zoom on their phone or computer and create an account. They can then join a lecture in real time with a link or a Meeting ID that you send prior to the meeting. In Zoom, a meeting can be set to repeat weekly until a given day.
   - Documentation on getting started with Zoom and best practices are available on the website: https://www.umb.edu/it/avsvc/conferencing.
   - email IT-ClassTech@umb.edu to learn more about using Zoom and to get a license.
• Zoom also offers 24 x 7 support: If you require technical assistance, please call 888-799-9666 (option 2) or if the matter is less urgent, fill out a Support Request here: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/requests/new

Record Your Lecture:

1. **VoiceThread**: This tool allows you to record your lectures off-line and post them on Blackboard.
   - More information on using VoiceThread is available at: https://www.umb.edu/elearning/tools/voicethread

2. **Universal Capture - Echo360 U-Cap**: This tool allows you to record your lectures on a personal computer or laptop. You can create the recording whenever you would like. To use U-Cap you will need to request an account by emailing echo360@umb.edu;

3. **Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and Zoom both have the option to record your session.**

If you are unsure about which solution might best meet your needs, please email eLearning@umb.edu and an instructional designer will help.

We have prepared a Learning Continuity Preparation Checklist to help get you started:

1. Develop a plan and a mode of communication to use. Options are: WISER or Blackboard. *Test/practice communicating with your students using one of these options.*

2. Decide how Teaching & Learning will continue.
   - **Use Blackboard web conferencing** or **Zoom** to connect with your students.

3. Use Blackboard and related tools to engage with students. Reach out to an **Instructional Designer** for a consultation on how best to be prepared.
   - Record a lecture – **VoiceThread** or **Echo360 (Universal Capture)** – request access to this software by emailing echo360@umb.edu. Install this software on your computer to record your lecture.
   - Use **web conferencing** or **Zoom** to connect with your students.

4. Encourage your students to download and use the **Blackboard Mobile app** as not everyone has a computer at home.

Blackboard 24 x 7 x 365 help is available at:

- Phone: 1-855-789-7053