

# MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

## Guide for Faculty in Transitioning to Online Teaching

March 2020

### **I. PURPOSE**

In consideration of the state of emergency declared by the Governor in the state of New Jersey and the recommendations of the CDC and WHO, President Cole has determined that, in order to assure that students have the opportunity to complete their spring term courses, while at the same time reducing the risk of contagion from the Coronavirus, all current semester instruction must move to fully online delivery modes, wherever possible, effective March 23, 2020 for the remainder of the term. Every faculty member must be ready to make such a move, and this Guide is designed to assist faculty in this urgent transitional work and to identify the available resources.

The Guide takes as its primary focus the preparation for and shift to remote course delivery through the University's Learning Management System (LMS), *Canvas*, and provides guidance for alternate modes of student/faculty interaction at a distance, i.e., Canvas Conferences, or Zoom.

A full suite of tools and resources for moving to emergency delivery modes can be found at [Teaching During University Closures](#) (Instructional Technology & Design Services, ITDS).  
[MSU Canvas Orientation for Faculty](#)  
[Pedagogical Strategies and Practices: Online and Hybrid Learning](#) (ITDS)  
[Empowering Online Teaching and Learning](#) (ITDS)  
[Back-Up Teaching Toolkit -- Ensuring Academic Continuity](#), (Office for Faculty Advancement, OFA).

### **II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **DEPARTMENT AND FACULTY LEADERSHIP**

Working closely with, and relying especially on tech-savvy faculty, department chairs and directors will direct faculty to disciplinary and departmental resources for online and emergency teaching, organizing support for adjunct faculty, newer faculty, and faculty for whom online teaching is less familiar or comfortable. Chairs and directors must be prepared to share these sources with all faculty through department listservs, internal websites, or direct emails and texting. Where possible and appropriate, faculty teaching the same course would be expected to collaborate and work together in adjusting courses.

All faculty will be well served to be familiar with their disciplinary associations' teaching websites and be subscribers to teaching listservs where resources, strategies, and best practices are shared.

E.g., Anthropology: [AnthroGuide - Learn & Teach](#)

Individual departments will know best which sites provide the most and most useful resources.

## **DEANS**

Deans and their staff will work closely with department leaders, helping them communicate with and support individual faculty in developing strategies for transitioning to effective online instruction. Deans will represent the needs of their faculty and students, informing the Provost of instructional areas where additional instructional or technical support is needed, and suggesting specific remedies.

As a first step Deans will identify staff within their units who have instructional or technological abilities who can assist individual faculty in the delivery of on-line instruction; for example, instructors of large classes may need individuals who can act as assistants in responding to students' discussion posts; instructors providing synchronous, online video instruction may need assistance in managing chats and providing online support to individual students who are unable to successfully access or engage in the online instruction. Deans will coordinate the redeployment of their staff's time for instructional and technical support.

Deans and staff will be available to students in their colleges and schools who request support, help, or guidance that department leadership is unable to provide.

Deans will evaluate the effectiveness of alternative strategies for teaching and learning through both informal and formal methods, providing the Provost with regular updates on student and faculty experiences with teaching and learning in the online environment.

## **THE PROVOST**

The Provost and his staff will support the Deans to ensure that the personnel and resources needed for faculty and students are provided, with clear identification of new and reconfigured services that will be made available. These include but are not limited to:

- ITDS Instructional Design training, tutoring, and helpdesk service to support faculty in the preparation and delivery of emergency instruction through the University's LMS (Canvas) and through other University-supported technologies for teaching (Panopto, Zoom). These Workshops will be closely modeled on the ITDS program which has successfully introduced hundreds of MSU faculty to *Canvas* and online instruction. See their web addresses below, Sections III-IV; these sites provide extensive guidance and materials.
- Course redesign support as provided by the Office of Faculty Advancement (OFA) through "just in time" online workshops, expert faculty workshops, and strategies and resources presented on the OFA website.
- Helpdesk services to support students in adapting to the technological demands of the new learning environment
- Tutoring services delivered in a variety of alternate modes to ensure students' academic achievement.
- Non-academic resources and services that faculty and deans can direct students to as needed: CAPS, Social Work, and other non-academic services and support in Student Development & Campus Life.

The Provost will regularly inform the President as these services evolve.

### **III. MOVING CLASSES INTO FULLY ONLINE MODE USING CANVAS**

The *Canvas* Learning Management System is our most accessible and efficient means of remote instructional delivery if classrooms are not accessible. All faculty are expected to be familiar with the use of *Canvas* and all its functions. Self-paced Training material with regard to *Canvas* is found in the [MSU Canvas Orientation for Faculty](#). All *Canvas* functions/activities referenced below are addressed in this course. All University courses are automatically populated and published in *Canvas* every semester for faculty and student access and participation

### **IV. EMERGENCY TRANSITION TO ONLINE OR REMOTE CLASSES**

Listed below are strategies that will assist you with the transition.

1. **Communicate.** Reach out immediately to your students, and make sure they're well-informed about your expectations and how the course will operate. You can use Messaging students through *the Canvas* Inbox, which allows communication without leaving the *Canvas* environment. This tool allows faculty to send messages to individual students, groups of students, sections of a course, or the entire course roster. You can also email students through the university's Gmail service.
2. **Facilitate synchronous (real-time) virtual class meetings** through *Canvas* Conferences to maintain a sense of class community, when possible. *Canvas* Conferences makes it easy to conduct synchronous online class meetings; alternatively faculty may use the University supported conferencing tool [Zoom](#). You can learn how to access and use Zoom using the [support information](#).
3. **Post your syllabus** in your *Canvas* course.
4. **Record and post lecture videos, or share vetted professional videos.** [Panopto](#) is the University-supported all-in-one video platform, though faculty may use other tools as well. You can access and learn to use Panopto [by clicking this website](#).
5. **Upload course content** into *Canvas* courses and organize the content using Modules. Ensure course materials are posted in accessible formats.
6. **Post quizzes/tests** in *Canvas* courses.
7. **Use discussion tools to replicate conversations planned for face-to-face class sessions.** *Canvas* discussions provide an easy way for instructors to create and facilitate asynchronous interaction amongst students. Online discussions can be created as an assignment for grading purposes (which is integrated with *Canvas* Gradebook), or simply serve as a Q & A to answer students' questions, or a forum for students to share information.
8. **Post assignments** and track student submissions in *Canvas*.
9. **Use the *Canvas* Gradebook** to assess student assignment submissions and provide feedback in *Canvas*.
10. **Set up virtual office hours** through *Canvas* Conferencing, Discussion, Chat, or other tools.
11. **Ensure access to all online resources.** If another online platform is used in teaching or content delivery (for example, a publisher provided product), request IT to evaluate/implement integration of that e-platform with *Canvas*.
12. **Supplement *Canvas* with Google Apps** (G Suite) for Education, a suite of communication and collaboration tools that all faculty, staff and students have access to by logging into google with an MSU email address (netid@montclair.edu). Google Docs, Slides and Sheets are useful in extending the classroom to an online environment. Collaboration features include: sharing, editing, commenting, suggesting, and chatting in documents online. These

may occur in real-time, during a scheduled work session, or asynchronously. Learn more about [Google Applications](#).

13. **Non-lecture courses.**

The following from the North American Network of Science Labs Online and the Kent State site for online labs are suggestive and informative.

[North American Network of Science Labs Online](#)

[Online Science Laboratories from Kent State University](#)

**b. Studio and Performance Classes:**

1. Assign at-home work, with presentations via photo, video, or other digital presentation tools.
2. Shift to lecture (video, audio, presentation) on performance, craft, or context.
3. Engage in reflective exercises involving self-analysis of aesthetic creations or performances.

## **CONTINUITY OF LIBRARY SERVICES**

The Harry A. Sprague library will remain open and all current technology services and resources remain available. Materials not held in the Library will still be obtained through Inter-Library Services for students, faculty and staff. Montclair State University constituents will be able to obtain assistance, such as academic or public libraries from remote locations.

## **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

During this period, advising support and registration services will continue as normal, and primary advisors, regardless of their role as faculty or staff, are expected to provide academic advisement to their assigned students. For those who serve as faculty advisors, the University has options to facilitate virtual academic advising. Two technologies, Navigate and Zoom, will be utilized to promote appointment scheduling, virtual conversations, and documentation in preparation for registration. In the coming days, a guide to conducting advisement online will be made available, accompanied by opportunities for hands-on technical support.

## **V. PLANNING FOR POTENTIAL INTERRUPTIONS TO CANVAS**

1. Maintain back-up copy of student names and contact information on your computer hard drive.
2. Export/Download class rosters via your *Canvas* Gradebook to obtain a list of all students and their NetIDs so that emailing students without Canvas is possible.
3. Maintain back-up copy of gradebook from *Canvas* courses.
4. Ensure students have phone, email and text contact information for the instructor and also for the department chair/director or their designee.
5. Instruct students to keep copies of critical course materials.

6. Use Google Apps (G Suite) for Education. Faculty can also use G Suite to not only back up their teaching materials, but also to deliver teaching content and facilitate student discussion, interactions and collaborations should Canvas become unavailable.
7. Consider using web-based synchronous meeting software. *Canvas* Conference can also be used outside of *Canvas*. Zoom, Google Meet, etc. can be also used to conduct online meetings, assuming the web remains available.
8. Remind students regularly about the importance of keeping backup electronic copies of their assignments.
9. Review Montclair State University's privacy policies under the [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act](#) with special attention to safeguarding student information. In particular, if using resources other than *Canvas*, Zoom, MSU Google, or other MSU supported technologies, faculty need to review these resources' privacy and security policies and be prudent in the types of activities and tasks they require of students in these environments.