GUIDELINES FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

These guidelines are supplemental to the University plans found here:
https://www.memphis.edu/coronavirusupdates/plan/index.php

- Before holding class on campus, faculty should review classroom safety protocols (i.e. ingress, egress, distancing, etc…) with students over Zoom.
- Blend synchronous and asynchronous learning. All online courses will "meet" synchronously via Zoom a minimum of once per week.
- Lower level courses require approval from the Director to be solely asynchronous.
- Include remote learning technology requirements in your syllabus.

For In-Person and Blended Instruction

- Establish a flexible attendance policy so that students who report possible exposure or are symptomatic do not feel compelled to come to campus.
- Early in the semester, establish a protocol for entering and exiting the classroom so that students avoid gathering in close proximity.
- Segment the class so you do not exceed one-third of your assigned room's maximum capacity.
- Wear masks in classrooms at all times.

BEST PRACTICES FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

- Increase the frequency of your communications with students so they know exactly what to expect every week in terms of schedule, learning goals, assignments, and due dates. Explicitly guide students on how to be successful in your course, _especially_ if it is online.
- Similarly, increase the frequency of informal assessment. The reduction or absence of in-person interaction makes it more difficult for students to ask questions or show that they don't understand what you're trying to teach.
- Where possible, consider trimming content and assignments in ways that still maintain the quality of the course. Last spring, many students reported that they actually had less time for schoolwork when isolated at home due to family and work obligations/interruptions.
- Avoid assigning "busy work" and/or increasing the homework load to make up for a reduction in class contact hours. (See bullet point above.) Last spring, "busy work" was the number one complaint from our students.

- Make your course learner-centered. Relinquish control. Serve as a facilitator or guide, not as a dictator. Give students choices in what they study and how they demonstrate learning.
- It's important to establish your course as a true community of learners. Be transparent about it. Use humor. Build a culture. Acknowledge that social isolation contributes to domestic issues, mental health problems, and often means that students have LESS time to do schoolwork, not more.

For In-Person and Blended Instruction

- Be mindful that many students will be using their phones to access your course materials.
- Create an orientation video to acquaint students with your course during the first week.
- To reduce uncertainty and stress among students, establish a predictable weekly rhythm for course work (e.g., assignments are always due Sundays at 11:59pm).
- Create "microlecture" videos. Studies show that videos focused on one key concept that run no longer than six minutes work most effectively.
- Forget about making perfect videos. Detailed editing is not worth your time unless you plan to use the videos again in the future.
- Take advantage of others' work. Think of the media at your disposal: YouTube videos, documentary films, podcasts, and social media. And think of students' enthusiasm for these formats! Harness that by encouraging stimulating discussion around these sources.
- Make use of Zoom's recording function and post videos of all synchronous online sessions in eCourseware. This will enable students in attendance to review and students not in attendance to catch up.
- For blended instruction, utilize a "flipped classroom" approach where you use online lessons to present lower-order concepts and in-person class sessions to reinforce, discuss, apply, and extend course content.
- Researchers have found that online instruction is more effective when students collaborate rather than work independently. Facilitate this through discussions, small group assignments, and larger tasks that make use of the "Groups" feature in eCourseware.
- When using online discussion boards, be sure to adjust due dates to allot time for students to comment on each other's posts. For example, if assignments are typically due on Sundays, make initial posts due on Wednesday or Thursday and reaction posts due on Sunday. Also, consider using the "3CQ" protocol: student responses to their peers' posts must include a compliment, comment, connection (3C) and a question (Q). This helps prevent the ubiquitous "Great point!" or "I agree!" response.

RESOURCES

- Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) online teaching toolkit
- Remote Teaching Resources from 440 universities in this Google doc
- University of Central Florida's teaching online pedagogical repository
- Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University blended and online learning best practices
- College Music Society COVID-19 resources