Dear colleagues:

This email serves to let you know of our department’s plans to prepare for the impact of the Corona virus outbreak. I apologize for the length of the email but it is important that you read on and plan actions. A campus closure will strain resources and nerves, and it will be best to work together to pull through this with upfront planning and communication to have a clear plan that students can rely on our preparedness.

Winter Quarter 2020
As of now the campus is open. Instruction ends Friday March 13. We hope that the campus stays open for this week but you may want to plan that campus could close any day.

The main concern is how to administer exams during a campus closure. Depending on the class, take-home exams or on-line exams are feasible. Here is the guidance from the campus:

“While we are assuming that winter 2020 finals will be held as scheduled, we are enabling maximum flexibility.

- You can substitute a take-home exam or other assignment for your final exam.
- You can hold your final exam online. UC Davis has contracts with ProctorU and Examity. Email instructionaldesign@ucdavis.edu at least 48 hours in advance (ideally even earlier) to get started. Visit the "How can I deliver an online proctored exam?" section of Keep Teaching for additional information.
- You can drop your final exam and grade students based on already completed work. You can choose to reweight your graded material. For the least disruption, try to minimize major changes to how students will be evaluated.”
- Lastly, if necessary, instructors may work with individual students to take an incomplete grade and finish remaining coursework at a later time, although in most cases this would be the least desirable
Valley relayed this possible strategy: Cancel the final exam, base the final grade on re-weighting the completed exams and assignments plus dropping a low score. In communicating such a strategy to students, please be aware that some students will be unhappy as they are convinced that their final exams will be so stellar as to rescue their grade. In my experience, in only a small minority of cases does the final exam grade differ substantially from the previous exams.

We are trying to find more about on-line exam tools, and this is a topic for the faculty meeting on Friday March 13.

**Spring Quarter 2020**

We base our planning on the assumption that the campus will be closed for all or part of the Spring quarter.

The department is acquiring licenses for Zoom for all faculty, instructors and TAs to deliver classes and discussion sections by Zoom (interactive or webinar, depending on size). For some classes, lecture capture allows posting the content on the web. Moreover, each instructor needs to identify possible backups for each class in case the instructor becomes sick or is quarantined. We leave it to the individual instructors to reach out to possible backup instructors and the list below only makes suggestions.

Below is a summary of the current status. The situation is fluid and updates will follow.

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ACTION ITEMS:
1. Identify and coordinate with backup instructor. Let Mitch and Wolf know, who your backup is.
2. Set up BOX folder with all class materials and exams, provide access to Mitch Singer, Wolf Heyer and your backup instructor.
3. Provide access to your CANVAS site to Mitch Singer, Wolf Heyer, and your backup instructor.
4. Design syllabus with flexible exam schedule.
5. Plan for on-line and/or take-home exams.

USEFUL INFORMATION:
1. The Keep Teaching™ site has much relevant information about relevant webinars and CANVAS. The most important planning step is to inform your students on day 1 of class about the communication and instruction plans in the event of campus closure. Be clear on what you will expect of them. Put these points on your CANVAS course page.
2. There are limits as to what we can expect from students in the event of campus closure. For example, the Academic Senate guideline is that students cannot be tested on remotely presented material until 48hrs after return to campus, or you can change to online exam format given during a regularly scheduled class time. There are more guidelines from the academic senate here.
3. The department will acquire Zoom licenses for all faculty, instructors and TAs. Please familiarize yourself with how Zoom works.
4. This might be a good time to make short video modules for instruction on various topics. You can use screen capture functions built into your computer or record a PowerPoint presentation for upload onto Canvas. If you sign into the AggieVideo page (sign in is hidden under “guest” in the upper right corner), you can navigate to find the download link for Kaltura software (hidden under the + ADD NEW pulldown menu next to the sign in icon); this software will allow you to capture both your computer screen and video from your webcam so you can create your own lectures that can be uploaded to Canvas.
5. Please monitor the UC Davis COVID-19 and the Academic Senate web pages.
We will also have an opportunity to discuss this on Friday at our faculty meeting.

Our best wishes and stay healthy
Mitch & Wolf

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