

**AY 2024–25 ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION:
GUIDANCE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL AND FOR COLLEGES, SCHOOLS,
DEPARTMENTS, AND PROGRAMS
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST**

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Topics: Guidance and Resources for Spring 2025 Teaching; Curriculum Planning and Teaching Assignments for Summer 2025 and Beyond

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The purpose of Academic Instruction Guidance

Academic Instruction Guidance, published before each fall, spring, and (if needed) summer term, provides instructional personnel and academic units essential information to start the new academic term. Supplemental editions of Academic Instruction Guidance may also be published if needed in between these intervals. For instructional personnel, guidance includes important reminders for course planning and highlights pedagogical opportunities and student needs. For those planning the curriculum, guidance highlights policy and procedural standards and changes.

Spring 2025 course planning reminders

Set up your course in Canvas and check out the new campus Canvas template

Canvas course creation is now automatic, and instructors no longer need to request their academic

courses be created. These courses are created in an “unpublished” state by default, and will not be visible to students until instructors publish them. For more information, please review the [Canvas Automatic Course Creation FAQ](#).

To set up your course in Canvas in a way that saves you time, is clear to your students, and makes it easy for students to find the course information and resources they need, consider using the campus’s new [Canvas course template](#), created by faculty and staff experts as part of the [Buff Undergraduate Success initiative](#). To create the template, a working group of nine faculty members joined the [Center for Teaching & Learning](#), [Arts & Sciences Support of Education Through Technology](#) (ASSETT), the [Office of Information Technology](#) (OIT), the [Digital Accessibility Office](#), and [Continuing Education](#) to share effective practices in instructional design and designing course templates, develop a list of essential features to be included in a Canvas course template, identify resources and support needed for implementation of the template; and iteratively provide feedback on a template prototype.

To get help with integrating the Canvas template into your courses, participate in one of [OIT’s training sessions](#) on the new template.

Include required syllabus statements

Required syllabus statements, which distill CU Boulder or University of Colorado System policy related to students and faculty in the classroom, are sent each semester to teaching faculty. *Syllabus statements are updated each semester to reflect changes in campus procedures and to keep web links current. Please use the [updated version of the syllabus statements](#).* Note that, as of fall 2024, [the “COVID-19” required syllabus statement was discontinued](#).

Include an AI syllabus statement and articulate your standards for using AI in your course and in thesis/dissertation/independent study work

CU Boulder does not have a policy on how generative AI may be used in student work and thus does not have a single required syllabus statement on AI. As a matter of academic freedom, faculty may allow AI to be used in a range of different ways, including not allowing it at all. In order for your students to understand what uses of AI are allowable in your course vs. what uses will be regarded as academic dishonesty, it is strongly recommended that you:

- Include in your syllabus a statement about the permissible use of AI in your class. Over the fall 2024 semester, the [Boulder Faculty Assembly \(BFA\)](#) and the [Center for Teaching & Learning \(CTL\)](#) facilitated a working group of faculty, staff, and students to develop [recommended syllabus language](#) regarding student use of generative AI in classes. [This document](#) will be refined over time based on further input from campus experts.
- For each assignment, re-articulate your policy so that students are informed and prepared.
- Have a [dialogue](#) with students about acceptable uses of generative AI in your course.
- Communicate clearly with students about acceptable uses of generative AI in out-of-classroom teaching and learning situations, including their work on theses, dissertations, independent studies, and the like.
- Stress that students are ultimately responsible for the work they turn in and that any violations of your policy may be referred to the [Office of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution](#) as a potential [Honor Code](#) violation.
- Check [Artificial Intelligence at CU Boulder](#) for more information about AI efforts on campus, guidance and resources about responsible use of AI, and how to get involved.

Consider a recommended syllabus statement on mental health resources

Upon the recommendation of the Boulder Faculty Assembly, a syllabus statement on mental health and wellness resources is now available in the same document as the [required syllabus statements](#). You may wish to add this statement to your syllabus to help your students understand their options.

Plan an attendance and make-up work policy that accommodates health-related absences and religious obligations

When creating your attendance policy for your class, please consider that students may have to miss class or an exam for health-related reasons or for religious obligations. *Students should not be penalized for missing class or an exam for health-related reasons or religious obligations.*

In particular, it violates [CU Boulder policy](#) and may be an act of discrimination if you penalize students for missing class or an exam for religious obligations. Therefore, *if you have a class attendance policy, classes missed due to religious obligations should not be counted as an absence. If you allow your students the opportunity to skip an exam or drop their lowest-scored exam, an exam missed because of religious obligations should not be counted toward that opportunity.* For more information on accommodating students' needs for religious accommodations, see [guidance and FAQs from the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

You may not ask a student for evidence of their religious obligations or query the legitimacy of a student's religious affiliation or belief.

Please make clear on your syllabus how you will handle student absence for health-related reasons or religious obligations, including how students should notify you of absences (including timing of advance notice for religious obligations), how they can make up work or exams, and how they should request assignment extensions.

In addition, you should not ask students to provide appointment verifications, otherwise known as "doctor's notes," to document illness. Requiring doctor's notes puts a strain on medical services and forces students to make unnecessary trips to the doctor. Student health services on campus—Medical Services at Wardenburg Health Center, Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS), and Student Support and Case Management (SSCM)—do not provide "doctor's notes." See also [Guidance for those who have or are exposed to respiratory illnesses](#).

Instructors are encouraged to develop attendance policies that build in flexibility for students who must miss class for health-related reasons or for religious obligations. The Center for Teaching & Learning has provided [ideas and resources](#) for planning effective attendance policies and encouraging student attendance.

While faculty teaching in-person classes should provide make-up opportunities for students who miss their classes for health reasons or for religious obligations, those opportunities do not have to include making arrangements for students to attend class remotely, giving remote exams to these students, or sharing your class notes or slides with these students. However, you may choose to do so if you wish. You may also use other practices for helping your students keep up with their work, such as having other students share class notes with the student who is absent.

Establish clear grading policies and use Canvas to help students understand their grades

In 2023–24, as part of the [Buff Undergraduate Success initiative](#), a working group of nine faculty members joined the Center for Teaching & Learning and the Office of Information Technology to create [Grade for Student Success](#), a faculty guide for using grading policies and the Canvas gradebook to enhance student success, while making grading more efficient and customizable.

Faculty and students alike expressed that these practices aid students' learning, as well their understanding of their grades:

- Articulate your grading policies clearly and transparently from the outset of the semester.
- Post grades in a timely manner.
- Set up a [grading scheme](#) that shows percentage cutoffs for letter grades.
- Avoid changing grading policies after the start of the semester.

Other useful practices involve making effective use of the [gradebook](#) and other features within Canvas:

- Post all [assignments](#), [quizzes](#), [graded discussions](#), etc. for the entire course at the beginning of the semester, and assure students that they can trust the grades they see in Canvas.
- Include due dates for all assignments, and provide guidance to students on when and where to find feedback.
- Provide multiple significant grades before the drop deadline.
- If applicable, ensure that the [weighting](#) of assignments or [assignment groups](#) aligns with the syllabus.
- If students have the option to complete a subset of assignments from an assignment group (e.g., taking 3 of 5 quizzes) or dropping a certain number of assignments from an assignment group. (e.g., dropping their lowest score out of 5 quizzes), ensure that this is accurately reflected in the [“rules”](#) of your gradebook.

For more grading resources, please review the [Grade for Student Success](#) faculty guide on the CTL website, which also includes video resources and tutorials to support implementation.

Give your students significant graded feedback before the grading basis change (pass/fail) and withdraw deadlines

For undergraduate students especially, it's important that students know how they're doing in your class before the deadline for students to declare a class pass/fail (or to change a pass/fail designation to a grade) or to withdraw from a class, so they can make informed decisions about changing a grading basis (pass/fail) or withdrawing from a class. Please make sure you've assigned and graded significant assignments by this point. The deadline is currently the end of the tenth week of classes (prorated for [special session](#)/shorter-term classes). For spring 2025, that deadline is **Friday, March 21**, for full semester courses. (Instructors of short-session classes should help students understand the specific deadlines applicable to the course, as this can be confusing for them.)

Plan to use Course Alert for undergraduate classes

The [Course Alerts system](#) applies to all undergraduate classes and plays a key role in supporting student success. Course alerts are designed to encourage students to engage with their professors and utilize academic support resources when needed. They are an essential tool for identifying students who may be struggling and providing early intervention.

A course alert can be submitted for undergraduate students who are not completing assignments, missing classes, performing poorly on tests or assignments, or otherwise facing challenges that may require additional support. The feedback form is available from weeks 2–13 of the semester (or prorated for shorter courses) and can be submitted multiple times during the term, though only once per student. Both the student and their advisor are notified whenever a course alert is submitted.

Be sure to submit feedback as early as possible during the term and in advance of the drop deadline. Submission dates for spring 2025 and instructions are posted on the [OIT Course Alerts page](#).

If you wish, you may add the following information to your syllabus or your Canvas page:

Course Alerts: This class is part of a campus initiative aimed at providing early feedback to students regarding their grades, attendance, or other aspects of academic performance. The goal is to give students a clear understanding of their progress in the course and connect them with resources and support, ensuring they have ample time to make positive changes and succeed.

Plan for the last week of class and your final exam

Your syllabus should include the date, time, and delivery mode of your final exam. The [Final Examination Policy](#) and the spring 2025 final exam [schedule](#) are posted on the Office of the Registrar website.

Check your class instruction mode(s) below for guidance for scheduling and delivery modes of final exams and for policy around assignments during the last week of class and on Reading Day.

All classes

All classes must follow the campus [Final Examination Policy](#) exam scheduling provisions:

- For classes in sessions of 10 weeks or longer, no examinations may be given during the week of classes preceding the start of the campus's final examination period; however, assignments listed in the syllabus such as papers, lab practicums, presentations, portfolios, and projects may be due during that week.
- Class sessions or graded assignments of any kind, including papers, lab practicums, presentations, portfolios and projects, may not take place or be due on a day designated in the academic calendar as a Reading Day. For regular-term courses in spring 2025, Friday, May 2, is designated as a Reading Day. (Note: the Reading Day and final exam period schedule for Colorado Law is different and is posted on the [Colorado Law website](#).)
- When students have three or more final examinations on the same day, they are entitled to arrange an alternative examination time for the last exam or exams scheduled on that day. When students have two final examinations scheduled to meet at the same time, they are entitled to arrange an alternative examination time for the course that meets later in the week during the

term or, if the two courses meet on the same day during the term, the course that meets later in the day.

In-person classes

- Final exams for all in-person classes should be administered during the [designated time for that class](#) during the final exam period (May 3–7). (Note: the Reading Day and final exam period schedule for the Law School is posted on the [Law School website](#).)
- Final exams for in-person classes are normally held in person, but may be administered remotely at the discretion of the instructor of record.
- The class syllabus must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

Remote (synchronous) classes

- Final exams for all remote (synchronous) classes must be given remotely. They should be administered one of two ways:
 1. During the [designated time for that class](#) during the final exam period (May 3–7). Be prepared to accommodate students who have computer or connectivity problems during that time slot. (Note: the Reading Day and final exam period schedule for Colorado Law is posted on the [Colorado Law website](#).)
 2. Within a time window of at least 24 hours, as long as that time window (a) includes the entirety of the [designated final exam time for that class](#) and (2) begins and ends within the final exam period (May 3–7). (Note: the Reading Day and final exam period schedule for Colorado Law is posted on the [Colorado Law website](#).)
- The class syllabus must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

Online (asynchronous) classes

- Final exams for completely online (asynchronous) classes should be offered during a time window, inclusive of start and completion times, of at least 48 hours. The window allows students to fit the exam for an asynchronous class into the rest of their exam schedule.
- Final exams for online (asynchronous) classes must be administered during the final exam period (May 3–7). They may be offered at any time during that period, as long as the administration time window of at least 48 hours begins and ends within that final exam period. (Note: the Reading Day and final exam period schedule for Colorado Law is posted on the [Colorado Law website](#).)
- There is an exception to the above two bullet points: Some online classes are included on the [common final exam schedule](#) for exams to be given at a specific time during the final exam period. These online classes may require the final exam to be taken remotely at that specific time. For those teaching one of these courses, please communicate your expectations clearly to your students about whether their exam will be given during the established common exam time.
- The class syllabus must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

Hybrid classes

- Final exams for hybrid classes may use the guidelines for either of their instruction modes, as specified above. For example, a hybrid in-person/remote class may follow the guidelines for either in-person classes or remote classes.
- The class syllabus must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

Exam delivery mode for common exams

- Departments that offer common final exams may choose to offer an exam in person or remotely. If the course includes remote or online sections, a remote exam must be administered to students in those sections. The department may also choose to administer the common final exam remotely for students in all sections. (See “In-person classes,” above.) Those teaching a class with a common final exam should check with the department about the exam delivery mode.
- The class syllabus for each section must specify the final exam timing and mode of delivery.

Be aware of the CU Book Access subscription service

The [CU Book Access course materials program](#) is a subscription service that provides degree-seeking undergraduate students access to all of their required course materials before the first day of class for a one-time flat-rate price. The cost for the 2024–25 academic year is \$269 (plus tax) per semester—\$10 lower than in 2023–24. Students may opt out of the program and have until the deadline for dropping a course without financial penalty to do so. This semester, that deadline is Wednesday, January 29, 2025.

Materials in this program are provided in a digital first format on or before the first day of class via Canvas, CU Boulder’s online learning platform. Should a particular class require print materials, students will receive an email letting them know they have a pick up at the CU Book Store. The CU Book Access website explains more about [how the program works](#) and answers [frequently asked questions](#).

Be aware of resources for students who speak English as an additional language

International and domestic students who speak English as an additional language may access free tutoring and enroll in elective academic English courses LING 3200 and LING 3210, which are for first-year and continuing students. Students practice writing, pronunciation, public speaking and reading, and learn about U.S. academic culture and expectations. Visit the [International English Center’s English Language and Academic Support Services](#) for details.

What to do in cases of instructor or TA illness or absence from campus

Chairs, directors, and deans have the discretion to work with their instructional staff as appropriate to make sure instruction is covered in case of instructor illness or temporary absence from campus. Similarly, instructors of record have the discretion to do the same with their TAs.

- Faculty members who plan to be absent from campus due to travel must follow the campus [Policy on Faculty Absences](#) to inform their chair/director/dean and to make sure their classes are covered. This policy applies to any faculty member who has teaching responsibilities, regardless of rank or job title.
- A temporary shift from in-person to remote teaching is allowable, but it must be approved. An instructor should notify their chair or director (or, in schools and colleges that do not have

departments, their dean). A TA should notify the instructor of record for the class. ***Higher-level approval is not required for a temporary shift to remote teaching.*** The instructor/TA will need to be in close communication with their students about the class's temporary shift to remote instruction mode and should return to the classroom as soon as possible.

- If an instructor/TA becomes unable to teach due to illness or absence from campus, the department/program or college/school should use their usual procedures for covering the class.

Campus respiratory disease protocols

Guidance for those who have or are exposed to respiratory illnesses

CU Boulder employs a framework for public health that follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance. The CDC has issued omnibus guidelines for respiratory illnesses including flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and COVID-19. Members of the campus community should follow [CDC guidelines for physical distancing, masking, and/or staying home if they are sick or test positive for a respiratory illness](#).

The CDC no longer recommends isolation for those who have been exposed to a respiratory illness such as COVID-19 but do not have symptoms and have not tested positive. Instructors and students should not stay home or be excluded from class if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or other respiratory illness but do not have symptoms and have not tested positive.

Guidance for instructors if a student has COVID-19 or other respiratory illness

There are no longer any campus procedures for notifying others in the CU community who were in proximity to someone who has COVID-19, and the university no longer does contact tracing for COVID-19. If a student tells you they tested positive for or have symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses, you should not notify others in your class or lab.

No required syllabus statement on COVID-19 protocols

Because the CDC no longer has separate guidance for COVID-19, the campus has retired the syllabus statement on COVID-19 protocols that was required from fall 2021 through summer 2024.

What to do if you are concerned about a student's mental health or behavior

CU's [Red Folder](#) is a resource designed for instructional personnel that provides information on how to recognize and respond to students in distress. Faculty can be uniquely positioned to recognize when a student is experiencing distress and to refer students to the many [resources](#) on campus. You can download a [Red Folder shortcut](#) for your computer desktop (Windows or Mac) or your mobile phone/device (Android or iOS.)

If you are unsure how to respond to a specific student, you may also consult directly with [Counseling and Psychiatric Services](#) (CAPS). A CAPS counselor will assist in identifying approaches you can take with the student as well as support you in the referral process. Each college and school has an [embedded therapist or Health and Wellness liaison](#) who can also serve as a resource. Reporting options, support resources, and skills for identifying and responding to concerns are included on the [Don't Ignore It](#) website as well.

If you would like to develop additional skills for how to respond, consider registering for the "Skills for Mental Health Support" Skillsoft course offered by Health & Wellness Services. The course takes 15

minutes to complete and provides additional tactics and resources for faculty. Register on the [Health & Wellness Services Trainings website](#).

What to do in cases of campus emergency

Find and receive safety information and instructions during emergency situations

Visit the [CU Boulder Alerts website](#) for safety information and instructions during an emergency.

The university has three alert levels. At the top level, CU Emergency Alert, emergency notification is sent to the campus when there is a confirmed immediate threat to the safety of those on campus, or near campus in areas of high student populations, or if there is a change to the university's operating status due to weather, etc. Emergency threats include natural disasters, active harmers, severe weather, time-sensitive life safety concerns, campus closures, delayed starts and other on-campus emergencies. Visit the [CU Boulder Alerts website](#) for more information.

Also visit the [CU Boulder Alerts website](#) to ensure you're receiving alerts. Keep your emergency notification information current to [receive real-time information](#) about campus closures, extreme weather and other emergencies—sent straight to your mobile phone via the text messaging service.

Holding vs. canceling class during emergencies

An emergency that affects one area of campus does not necessarily mean that you should cancel your class in another area of campus. Please follow instructions on the [CU Boulder Alerts website](#) about canceling or dismissing your class.

During a non-weather emergency, the [CU Boulder Alerts website](#) will indicate if any portion of the campus is restricted or closed, whether classes held in that area should be canceled, and whether classes in progress in that area should be dismissed or shelter in place. Campus text alerts will also link to the [CU Boulder Alerts website](#).

If your class is held during an emergency that affects another part of campus or an alert area off campus, please exercise compassion with students who cannot attend your class. Recognize that students may be confused or frightened, or their transportation to campus may be blocked because of emergency closures.

Do's and don'ts for instruction modes and makeup class sessions in cases of emergency

If you cannot hold your in-person class on campus due to a weather or non-weather emergency, you may not simply change your class to remote instruction mode and require your students to attend. Students may not receive notice in time, and/or they may not be able to access the class remotely because they do not have access to the necessary technology.

If your class is canceled due to a weather or non-weather emergency, you may schedule an in-person or remote makeup session, but you may not require that students attend that session if it is not during your regular class time. However, you may also record a makeup session for students to access on their own schedule. If your makeup session covers material that will be on an exam, you should record the lecture and make it very clear to your students (put it in writing) that they are responsible for that material.

Campus closure procedures for weather and other emergencies

CU Boulder's [Campus Closure Policy](#) governs what happens when the campus must be closed due to weather or other emergencies, or when a delayed start or early closure is scheduled.

Delayed start

1. A decision for a delayed start will normally be made by 5:30 a.m. of the emergency day.
2. All campus events, facilities, and venues are open and on schedule after the delay period has ended.
3. All in-person and remote (synchronous) classes with a start time that is during the closure period will be canceled.
4. All online (asynchronous) classes will be held as normal, and no classes or exams will be delayed or canceled due to a delayed start.
5. In the event of a delay during the final examination period, the provost will provide a directive regarding exams according to the [final examination policy](#).

Early closure

1. All campus events, facilities, and venues are open until the early closure time.
2. All in-person and remote (synchronous) classes with a start time after the early closure time will be canceled.
3. All online (asynchronous) classes will be held as normal, and no classes or exams will be delayed or canceled due to an early closure.
4. In the event of an early closure during the final examination period, the provost will provide a directive regarding exams according to the [final examination policy](#).

Classes canceled and administrative closure for the entire day

1. A decision for a class cancellation will normally be made by 5:30 a.m. of the emergency day.
2. All in-person and remote (synchronous) classes will be canceled.
3. All online (asynchronous) classes will be held as normal, and no classes or exams for online (asynchronous) classes will be delayed or canceled due to a decision for class cancellation.
4. In the event of a closure during the final examination period, the provost will provide a directive regarding exams according to the [final examination policy](#).
5. Communications will contain information on how the campus may be impacted. Contact your supervisor or event venue if there are specific concerns. Campus events, facilities, and venues may be closed or canceled; employees, students, and others should contact them directly for questions regarding operating status.

FAQ: Why are remote classes canceled on an emergency/weather day? Many students and faculty depend on campus facilities and internet access to teach or take remote classes. Holding a remote class when some students cannot participate is unfair to those students, and faculty or students should not feel that they must travel to campus to teach or take a class when it is not safe to do so.

Active harmer response training and security assessment available

Review the CU Boulder Police Department's [Run. Hide. Fight active harmer response website](#) and watch the [training video](#) for safety instructions, resources, and basic statistical data. Although the recording contains descriptions and reenactments of disturbing situations, the presentation is sensitive to language and visuals that may be triggering.

As a follow-up to this video training, departments may request an in-person site security assessment from [Emergency Management](#) personnel, who can assist in the creation or update of an all-hazards emergency action plan for shared work spaces, including evacuation plans, shelter in place plans and plans to maintain the continuity of operations. The Emergency Management team can also provide a tabletop exercise to test your plan and ensure it's functional and understandable. To request a site assessment after viewing the training video, [email the EM team](#).

Free speech, academic freedom, and political activity

As a public university, CU Boulder works to educate our students and campus community about the privileges and responsibilities of free speech, academic freedom, and civic engagement.

Instructional personnel may find these resources especially useful:

- [Guidelines for University of Colorado employees](#) regarding political campaign-related activity and expression (prepared in advance of the 2024 election)
- [Tips and resources from the Center for Teaching & Learning](#) on conducting civil discourse in the classroom (prepared in advance of the 2024 election)
- The [CU Boulder Campus Use of University Facilities policy](#) and [procedures](#), which govern the conduct of political events, demonstrations, canvassing, and the like on campus
- CU Boulder's websites on [free expression](#) and [academic freedom](#), including the [definition of academic freedom](#), [academic freedom FAQs](#), and the [CU Boulder guide on scholarship and safety](#)
- CU Boulder's [academic unit guidance for issuing statements on university websites](#)

Buff OneCard required for academic building access on designated dates

In the 2023–24 academic year, the campus conducted a pilot requiring that members of the CU Boulder community use their Buff OneCard to access academic buildings on designated dates, including reading days, final exams, and spring campus commencement. In the fall 2024 semester, the pilot was expanded to include weekday home football games and projected weekday dates of political activity and protest on campus. This practice successfully ensured that academic buildings remained accessible to CU Boulder students, staff, and faculty on days when public access to academic buildings might substantially interfere with the campus core activities of teaching, research, and creative work.

In spring 2025, you will need your Buff OneCard to access academic buildings on the end-of-semester reading day, during the final exam period, and on the day of spring campus commencement. Days may be added in case of other impactful events.

- Friday, May 2 (Reading Day)
- Saturday, May 3–Wednesday, May 7 (final exam period)
- Thursday, May 8 (campus commencement)
- Days may be added in case of other impactful events

Campus communicators will work to make sure that students, faculty, and staff are informed of the need to bring their Buff OneCards to access academic buildings on all these dates. Public buildings such as the UMC and the University Libraries will remain open on these dates, though select Libraries locations may close. Check the [University Libraries website](#) for updates.

Please also be aware that campus buildings are accessible only to those with pre-programmed 24/7 Buff OneCard access:

- if campus is closed due to weather or other emergencies;
- on weekends; and
- on university holidays and administrative leave days (Jan. 15 and March 29).

Other teaching and advising reminders

Changing the instruction mode, meeting time, or location of a class

The university is committed to teaching each course and section in the manner listed when student registration began. Changes in course instruction mode for the entire semester (such as from in-person to remote for the entire semester) and changes in meeting time for the semester must always be approved at the department/program level and by the dean. Changes in class location for the semester only need to be approved at the department/program level. *Instructors may not independently change the semester's instruction mode, meeting time, or location of a course or section they are teaching, and requests for changes based only on the instructor's preference will not be approved.*

For information on changing an in-person class to remote instruction on a short-term basis, see [What to do in cases of instructor or TA illness or absence from campus](#) and [Do's and don'ts for instruction modes in cases of emergency](#).

Requests for remote instruction: students with disabilities and others

Students cannot request that an in-person course be taught to them remotely for reasons other than a documented disability that would require such an accommodation. Remote location, commuting time, scheduling issues, and personal preference are not valid reasons for requesting an accommodation. Students who require an accommodation based on a documented disability must receive approval from the [Office of Disability Services](#). If approval is granted, Disability Services will contact the course instructor to determine if the accommodation will fundamentally alter their course and whether necessary technology support is in place.

In person or remote? Other teaching situations

- *Instructor office hours.* Faculty and graduate students who are instructors of record may hold office hours in person or remotely, at their discretion. Office hour locations/modes for TAs and others who are working under the supervision of an instructor of record should be planned in concert with the instructor of record, so that everyone engaged in teaching the class is aware of office hour plans. Please make the mode/location of office hours clear in the class syllabus.
- *Undergraduate advising.* Academic advising and coaching support for undergraduate students are offered both in person and remotely, offering students flexibility. Advising offices are open and staff are on campus on a rotating basis.

- *Graduate advising.* Academic advising and support for graduate students are by nature decentralized, with most advising provided by faculty and staff in departments or graduate programs. Students should communicate directly with their faculty advisor and graduate program to determine whether advising is available remotely or in person. [Staff in the Graduate School](#) can provide assistance, support, and resources in a hybrid manner.
- *Exams and defenses for graduate or honors students.* Qualifying/preliminary/comprehensive examinations and final exam/thesis defenses for graduate or honors students are typically held in person, but remote or hybrid examinations/defenses are also allowed. Each examination should be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the circumstances affecting both the student and each committee member.

International travel by/with students

All international travel by/with students that is CU Boulder-sponsored, affiliated, funded, or related to a CU Boulder activity/program is subject to the [CU Boulder Policy on Student International Travel and Programs](#). Please contact [Education Abroad](#) if you are taking/sending students abroad.

Senior/community auditors

The former senior and community auditors programs have merged into the [Continuing Education Auditors program](#). The following course instruction modes are available to auditors:

- Boulder Main Campus: All instruction modes are available (in-person, remote [synchronous], online [asynchronous], and hybrid)
- Continuing Education Campus: CE Online Credit term-based classes and CE Evening Credit classes (in-person, hybrid remote/online, hybrid in-person/online-remote)

Auditing always requires instructor permission. Certain courses and types of courses are not available for auditing; see the [Restrictions page](#) for the Auditors program for more details.

Teaching resources updates from the Center for Teaching & Learning

The [Center for Teaching & Learning website](#) is continually updated with resources addressing a range of pedagogical topics, such as [assessment](#), [classroom management](#), and [inclusivity](#). Our [Course-in-a-box](#) provides educators new to CU with guidance on designing, developing, and delivering effective courses from start to finish.

In addition to our [events and workshops](#) offered throughout the year, we offer [individual and group consultations](#) on any aspect of teaching. Contact us at ctl@colorado.edu, and [subscribe here to receive CTL's monthly newsletter](#), with teaching strategies and resources.

Teaching resources updates from the Office of Information Technology

Academic technology training and consulting resources

The [Office of Information Technology \(OIT\)](#) offers a number of [real-time or on-demand technology training sessions](#) to help instructors make the most of campus-supported teaching technologies. This semester's training offerings include regular Canvas office hours and training on integrating the new CU Canvas template into your courses!

Set up an [individual session](#) with [OIT's Academic Technology Consultants](#) to dive into a specific problem

or question with academic technology tools such as Canvas, Zoom, CUClickers, and much more.

Use the [Classroom Technology Reporting Form](#) to request a training session to get familiar with the technology in the classroom. You may also use this form to report an urgent problem when teaching in the space. If you need ongoing assistance with your hybrid or synchronous courses this semester, [request a Technology Copilot](#) to assist with audio/visual setup as well as Zoom management during your classes.

Check out the new campus Canvas template

[Log in to Canvas](#) to see your Spring 2025 course shells, which are now [created automatically](#), and consider using the [new Canvas Template](#) to get a headstart on building your course. OIT is also offering [training sessions](#) on integrating the new template into your Canvas courses.

AI Resources at CU Boulder

Visit the [AI Resources at CU Boulder](#) page on the OIT website to access guidance on the responsible use of AI, explore a list of approved enterprise-level AI tools, and learn how you can get involved in AI initiatives across campus.

Resources for lecture recordings and hybrid synchronous classes

Consider giving students flexibility to review course content by using OIT-supported recording tools such as Classroom Capture and Zoom:

- [Classroom Capture](#) is a fully automated recording service [available in a number of CU classrooms](#). [Once requested](#), Classroom Capture automatically records your class and publishes to online video channels, where faculty can make the recordings available to students. A recent [CU Boulder survey](#) revealed that both instructors and students benefit from lecture recordings.
- [Zoom](#) can also be used to record class sessions or host hybrid synchronous classes. Watch a short video on how to [connect your computer to classroom technology](#) and visit OIT's [Hybrid-Capable Classrooms page](#) for more information and a list of spaces.

Canvas Studio replaced Kaltura video platform in 2024

[Canvas Studio](#), our existing video platform available within Canvas, has replaced the Kaltura platform, which was retired in December of 2024.

Video content from Kaltura has been copied to Canvas Studio, and content that was linked to Kaltura media within a Canvas course has been automatically relinked to the corresponding media files within Canvas Studio. Older Kaltura content that did not meet the [two-year retention policy](#) has not been migrated to Studio. Further details on the transition to Canvas Studio are available on OIT's [Kaltura Retirement page](#).

VoiceThread will be retired by the end of May 2025

VoiceThread will be retired at the end of May 2025. Less than one percent of CU instructors and courses utilize VoiceThread on campus, impacting about four percent of students annually. While there is no exact replacement for its functionality, current VoiceThread users can find similar features in [Canvas Studio](#) and [PlayPosit](#). CU educators can schedule a consultation with one of the [Academic Technology Consultants](#) who will be happy to assist in the transition from VoiceThread to these alternatives.

File backups, storage and data security for instructors

Given that Google Drive has a 5 gigabyte storage limit, it is strongly suggested that you back up your personal work files to [Microsoft OneDrive](#) where you are given 5 terabytes of storage.

The [Guidelines for Storing Documents in the Cloud](#) can help you select which storage location is appropriate for the data in your care such as shared departmental or research data. OIT recommends saving course materials and other files that need to be accessed by others to a shared repository such as a [Microsoft Sharepoint site](#) or [Microsoft Team](#). Please check with your department to determine if it has a preferred shared resource to store these types of files. Identifying a common place to store departmental shared files is especially important if you are a part-time or short-term instructor.

It is also important to understand the sensitivity of the data you work with so you can ensure adequate protections are in place. The [Data Classification guide](#) helps inform relevant handling requirements.

OIT help and support

For questions about OIT services and supported technology tools, please contact the IT Service Center at oithelp@colorado.edu or 303-735-4357 or [submit a Help Request](#) form.

Teaching resources updates from the University Libraries

Opening hours

Library hours for all five locations including Norlin are published on the [website](#) and updated regularly. Libraries will be closed on Jan. 18–20 for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday; March 22, 23, and 28–30 (during spring break); for any spring Saturday football games (TBD); and May 9–11. *Special hours for spring break (March 22 – 30) and Reading Day/ finals/commencement (May 2 – 8) to be announced.*

Library instruction

Faculty librarians are available to provide [library instruction](#) to all faculty and students.

Research consultations

Students can [schedule a research consultation](#) with a librarian to help them refine and focus research topics, develop successful search strategies and identify appropriate sources for academic research projects and assignments. Faculty can also make use of this resource for their research.

Bufs One Read

This year's [Bufs One Read](#) title is *Solito: A Memoir*, by Javier Zamora. Check the Bufs One Read web page for a [guide and other resources](#), for upcoming events, and for a [Canvas module](#) that can be used to incorporate the title into your classes. All first year and transfer students can [get a complimentary copy](#) of the book at the CU Bookstore and the CU Museum of Natural History, and other members of the CU Boulder community can [access the book in print or online](#) through the University Libraries. The culminating event for this year's Bufs One Read is a [Conversation with Javier Zamora](#) on March 4, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the CASE Auditorium.

Course reserves

By using [course reserves](#), you can help provide your students with access to materials that are hard to find or beyond their financial means.

Technology lending to students

- If you discover a student who does not have reliable access to the internet off campus, you can assist them in [requesting a wifi hotspot](#).
- University Libraries maintains a [Multimedia Equipment Lending Library \(MELL\)](#), and students, staff and faculty may borrow multimedia equipment, including cameras, a variety of audio equipment, tripods, and smartphone accessories. Students can also check out [iClickers as well as Colorado State Park Passes](#). If you would like the libraries to buy equipment to support your class, please send details to libraries@colorado.edu.

Video creation station (Norlin Library)

A [video creation station](#) is available in Norlin for faculty and staff to create instructional content including video recorded lectures, MOOC content, and podcasts.

Teaching resources updates from the CU Art Museum

The CU Art Museum offers [support for teaching](#) using original works of art and digital resources and can design customized teaching resources.

Teaching resources updates from the CU Museum of Natural History

The CU Museum of Natural History is open daily except for campus holidays. Hours are posted on the [website](#). [Email the museum staff](#) to schedule a tour for your class or group or have them attend a [public program](#) or research one of the many [exhibits](#). Contact the [visitor services coordinator](#) to rent space for an event.

Teaching resources updates from Fiske Planetarium

[Fiske Planetarium](#) is a teaching resource for the full campus community, with an 8K-x-8K digital theater system housed within a 65-foot dome that seats 206 students. Graduate students may learn about science communication through preparation and delivery of public talks at Fiske. Contact [Director John Keller](#) for more information.

Curriculum planning and teaching assignments for summer 2025 and beyond

Faculty, GPTI, and TA work modes: standards of practice related to teaching

The campus has established [standards for faculty in-person and remote work](#) that are reflected in this edition of academic instruction guidance. *The baseline assumption is that any faculty member who is teaching, along with everyone holding a GPTI or TA appointment, is available to teach in person, unless their position is explicitly devoted in full or in part to remote teaching.* A faculty member who is working fully remotely (including research and creative work, teaching, and service) must have written approval from their chair/director and their dean. Approvals are to be archived in the dean's office and a copy maintained in the department/program (if applicable). A copy of the approval will also be sent to the Office of Faculty Affairs to be included in the faculty member's personnel file.

Faculty, staff, researchers, graduate student teachers, and student employees who need work-related accommodations or leave due to disability or health issues should consult the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance webpage](#) (for work-related accommodations) or the [Human Resources webpage](#) (for leave) and follow up with OIEC or Human Resources as needed.

Proportions of in-person vs. remote/online classes

The campus does not set desired ratios of in-person vs. remote/online classes. It is the responsibility of each school and college dean, working with department/program chairs and directors, to determine the instruction mode patterns for each semester. *The dean of each college or school is responsible for the curriculum, and thus has final approval authority for the proportion of in-person vs. remote/online classes within each department/program and for the college/school as a whole.*

Instruction modes and class assignments

Please use the following principles in planning instruction modes and class assignments:

- Departments and programs should weigh demand for remote and online classes and may propose to offer a selection of sections remotely or online. The campus will not set any target percentages of in-person courses for each department, program, college or school, and it is not required that a program offer remote or online classes.
- Departments and deans will define appropriate course instruction modes in concert with faculty and other instructional personnel. *Instructor preference should not determine a class's instruction mode. Each class's instruction mode should be determined according to college/school and department/program priorities, based on pedagogical reasons and on student needs.* For example, priorities for remote/online instruction might include one or a few sections of a course that has multiple sections, where there is student demand, where the course is crucial for students to make progress toward their degrees, and where the course can be taught effectively remotely or online.
- Keep in mind that international students must enroll in a minimum number of in-person credit hours to maintain their visa status. Offering only a limited selection of in-person classes may be detrimental to international students, resulting in delays or complications for these students.
 - From an immigration compliance perspective, it is imperative for international students that those courses designated as in-person, do in fact meet regularly in person. Professors may need to assist international students in documenting their in-class attendance.
 - International students enrolled in an in-person section cannot attend a remote/online section of the class instead.
 - Changing an in-person class to remote/online after students register can be detrimental to international students who have enrolled with the assumption that the class will be in person.
- All instructional personnel should be treated equitably in assigning them to classes/sections in various instruction modes. Please work with your graduate student teachers (TAs, GPTIs) the same way you do with your tenure-track faculty, teaching faculty, and lecturers. No one should be presumed to have “dibs” on remote teaching due to seniority, personal circumstances, or any other factor not related to pedagogical reasons or student needs.
- It is reasonable to assess evidence of an instructor's effectiveness at remote/online teaching (or willingness to participate in training in effective remote/online pedagogy) before assigning someone remote/online teaching. If you're a department or program chair/director and need help with this task, please consult your dean and/or work with the [Center for Teaching & Learning](#) for resources to assess effectiveness with teaching remotely/online.
- Some students may want to sign up for solely remote or online courses. However, students (except for those in online programs) cannot expect that every course they might want to take

will be offered in an online or remote mode, and departments and programs are not obliged to make that possible.

Classroom assignments, space utilization, and class scheduling

In accordance with the [campus space utilization policy](#), the Office of the Registrar provides updated [classroom assignment and utilization procedures](#) on its site. These procedures incorporate lessons learned during the pandemic about using classroom space efficiently and distributing the class schedule across “non-prime” teaching hours as well as “prime” hours. The distribution of the class schedule across all teaching hours applies to remote classes as well as in-person classes, to maximize students’ opportunities to enroll in the classes they need to make progress toward their degree.

New academic calendar will take effect in fall 2025

In fall 2025, the campus will move to the new academic calendar that was [approved by Chancellor DiStefano in December 2023](#). The Registrar has already published [key dates for the academic calendar through the 2026–27 academic year](#). Note: the Colorado Law academic calendar will continue to vary from that of the rest of the university, and faculty and staff in Colorado Law should continue to consult the [Colorado Law academic calendar website](#) for pertinent calendar information.

Highlights of changes in the new campus academic calendar include:

- The number of instructional days per semester will be reduced from 73 to 70 per semester (14 weeks of classes), not including reading days and the final exam period.
- The number of instructional days per semester will be equalized for MTWRF (14 instances of each weekday). The Friday of the last week of classes will operate as a Monday in order to equalize MTWRF instructional days.
- The first day of classes will be earlier each semester: classes will begin on Thursday rather than the following Monday.
- There will be a midsemester reading day on the Thursday of Week 7. Thursday is chosen to facilitate equal MTWRF instructional days.
- The number of reading days between the end of classes and the beginning of the final exam period will increase from 1 to 2 per semester.
- The last day of classes will fall on a Friday; final exam reading days will be on Saturday–Sunday; and the final exam period will be Monday–Friday, ending at 4:00 p.m. on Friday.
- In the spring semester, spring break will fall a week earlier (after Week 9, rather than Week 10) and will align with the spring break schedules of both Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley School Districts.
- The spring campus commencement ceremony will take place on the Saturday immediately following the end of the final exam period.
- Scheduling for departmental commencement ceremonies for the fall and spring semesters is TBD.

More information and FAQs regarding the Revised Academic Calendar are available on the [Office of the Registrar site](#).

Past guidance editions, questions, and requests

Past and current editions of Academic Instruction Guidance and their supporting materials are available [on the Academic Affairs website](#). Please send all requests for clarification and requests for future guidance editions to Katherine Eggert, vice chancellor for academic planning and assessment

(katherine.eggert@colorado.edu). Your communications are welcome and help shape decisions by academic leadership about instructional policies and procedures and support for teaching and learning.

Other issues? Contact Buff Info

[Buff Info](#) is a team of dedicated professionals who are available to answer questions on a wide variety of topics related to CU Boulder and to help faculty, staff, students, and parents connect with the appropriate campus office for additional information or assistance as needed. Buff Info liaisons may be reached at 303-492-INFO (4636), via email at buffinfo@colorado.edu, or via [live chat](#) 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. The university will extend these hours when needed.