

**AY 2020–21 ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION:
GUIDANCE FOR COLLEGES, SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENTS, AND PROGRAMS
FROM THE ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

Edition 1: June 1, 2020

Topic: Fall 2020 Curricular Planning

Relevant Due Date for Colleges and Schools: June 12, 2020

Introduction: What you can expect from the Academic Instruction Implementation Team

Campus leadership has charged the [Academic Instruction Implementation Team](#) with creating guidelines and parameters for departments, programs, colleges and schools to adapt their class offerings and schedules to the goals of the [Road Map to Fall 2020](#) plan adopted by CU Boulder on May 26, 2020.

This document is the first in a series of guidance editions from the Academic Instruction Implementation Team as we move as a campus to a responsible, safe mode of offering a high-quality education to our students in AY 2020–21. Just as the Road Map to Fall 2020 was built on and incorporated input from faculty, department and program chairs, college and school administrators, and academic staff, so too will guidance from the Academic Instruction Implementation Team develop, adapt, and change based on the needs of and inputs from these same groups and individuals. We expect this process to be iterative and devoted to continuous improvement. Subsequent guidance editions will be linked to each other as appropriate, and will make clear when previous guidance has been superseded or revised.

Guidance editions and supporting documents will be sent by email to deans, chairs and directors and will also be archived on a web site to be announced soon. Chairs, directors and college administrators should send all questions, requests for information, or other issues having to do with Academic Instruction Implementation to Katherine Eggert, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Assessment, at Katherine.eggert@colorado.edu. ***Individual faculty should direct questions to their chairs and directors.***

What's in this edition of guidance, and what's coming next

This edition of guidance focuses on actions and considerations for department and program chairs and directors as they adjust their curricular offerings to achieve the calendrical, curricular, and physical-distancing requirements of the Road Map to Fall 2020. Curricular adjustments must be approved by the colleges and schools before being submitted by the colleges and schools to the Office of the Registrar by

June 12, 2020. Colleges and schools will set internal deadlines for departments and programs to submit curricular information for approval so that this deadline can be met.

Guidance is forthcoming soon on topics including academic cohorting of first-year students; and resources for classroom technology for remote and online learning. Forthcoming guidance editions will also answer FAQs raised by previous editions.

What chairs and directors should do between now and June 12, 2020

1. Inform your faculty: Fall 2020 Academic Calendar

a. Tell your faculty that fall break is shortened; all in-person teaching will shift to remote after fall break.

The academic calendar has been revised in two ways, designed to reduce post-travel mixing between students and faculty after fall break while still maximizing time for in-person teaching. (1) Fall break has been shortened. ***The last day of classes and final exam dates have been adjusted accordingly.*** (2) All in-person teaching and assessment will shift to remote mode after fall break. ***The semester does not end at fall break. Teaching and assessment continue remotely after fall break.***

The new academic calendar for schools and colleges (except Law) is as follows. Law School academic calendar dates will be adjusted to accord with the Law School's typical term length.

- Monday, August 24: first day of classes (unchanged)
- Monday, September 7: Labor Day holiday (unchanged)
- Wednesday, November 25: last day of in-person instruction
- Thursday–Friday, November 26–27: Fall break (shortened)
- Monday, November 30–Monday, December 7: remote teaching
- Monday, December 7: last day of classes (adjusted earlier)
- Tuesday, December 8: Reading Day (adjusted earlier)
- Wednesday–Sunday, December 9–13: final exam period (adjusted earlier)

b. Tell your faculty about exam planning considerations.

Common midterm exams: due to physical distancing protocols, common in-person midterm exams will not be permitted unless fewer than 50 students are involved and space is available. Departments that hold large in-person common midterm exams should plan to move those exams online.

Final exams: the final exam schedule will be adjusted to the new academic calendar and meeting time periods. The [campus final examination policy](#) applies as usual for the final examination period. All exams and assessments given during the final exam period must be given remotely. Faculty who wish to give only in-person exams may use their usual class periods before fall break to give exams that substitute for final exams, if necessary. But faculty are urged not to pile all exams into the last teaching day before fall break, so that students are not faced with multiple final-type exams over two days. Colleges and schools or individual departments and programs may wish to organize guidance for administering such exams to prevent exam pile-ups on student calendars. Regardless of exam scheduling, the instruction

period after fall break must be used for instruction and may be used for scheduling other assessed work such as projects and papers.

c. Tell your faculty that two shorter sessions are available for appropriate courses.

Every fall and spring semester already has the option to teach a full course within a shorter, half-semester session (referred to as 8-week sessions in the schedule). For fall 2020, these sessions are:

8-Week Session 1	August 24–October 14
8-Week Session 2	October 15–December 8

All class activities, including final exams, must be completed within these session dates; there is no separate final exam period. Possible course options for these short sessions are discussed below.

2. Inform your faculty: Extended passing periods

Standard class meeting patterns (start/end times) have been modified to accommodate a 20-minute passing time between classes. (See “New Fall 2020 Standard Meeting Patterns” document.) The Office of the Registrar will update the start/end times of currently scheduled classes according to the new meeting pattern schema. Implications for class scheduling are discussed further below.

3. Inform your faculty: Realistic OIT expectations

The Office of Information Technology (OIT), in cooperation with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), continues its intensive work to expand campus technology to support in-person, remote (synchronous), online (asynchronous), hybrid in-person/online-remote, and hybrid remote/online teaching and learning. As you work your way through the guidance in this document, you will see references to those five modes of teaching and learning. OIT is creating a web site (coming soon) that will offer definitions of these modes of teaching and learning, give an overview of what technologies are available now and are planned to be available by this fall, and describe what support is available. OIT will also work with departments and programs on providing the IT resources their faculty may need to offer their classes this fall. However, faculty should be aware that high-tech resources for online and remote teaching are not unlimited. Departments and programs will need to prioritize classes for which the use of this teaching technology is most important.

4. Revise your curricular offerings: Follow these principles and this decision tree.

Foundational principles.

Each department’s/program’s curriculum must adhere to four foundational principles:

1. The curriculum must offer enough fully remote and/or online options that students who cannot learn in person (international students, immunocompromised students, etc.) can make progress toward their degrees.
2. At the same time, ***fully remote and/or online classes should not be the default.*** Most of our classes should include in-person components, whether they are taught fully in-person or are

offered in hybrid in-person/online-remote modalities. All in-person learning must be calibrated so that our classrooms meet physical-distancing requirements.

3. The existing class schedule is the starting point for classes taken mainly by continuing students who have already enrolled. The goal is to not significantly disrupt current student enrollments by changing the original meeting pattern assignments. (Meeting times for classes will be automatically adjusted for increased passing periods, so continuing students will see those changes in their class schedules.) Newly created sections and classes that have not already enrolled (such as for first-year students), however, should make full use of the extended class day, with start times M–F 8am–9pm, as discussed below, to facilitate physical distancing.
4. The principal consideration for adjustments to curriculum is ***student need and student demand***. It is always important that our curricula meet the needs of our students to advance and succeed in their education; in a turbulent time, students need this anchor even more.

Decision tree.

Follow this decision tree in order to make curricular revisions work. All of these steps will require interactive discussion with your faculty. However, ***complete Parts One and Two before completing Part Three***: determine the curriculum and class size before adjusting instructional assignments.

Part One. Identify essential teaching modalities and possible short-session classes.

- a. Identify classes that should be taught entirely or almost entirely in-person to ensure student success. These will likely include: (1) studio courses; (2) labs; (3) first-year seminars; (4) capstone seminars; (5) recitation sections (see below); (6) other small-section classes where in-person teaching is crucial to student success (e.g., WRTG 1150).
- b. Designate sufficient courses as remote, online, or hybrid remote-online so that students who cannot be present on campus may make progress in your program's majors, minors and certificates. Criterion: each major requirement, or each category of major requirement, must be represented by at least one class that is 100% remote and/or online.
- c. Identify classes that may be taught in 8-week sessions, focusing on those that are not currently enrolled highly and those that can efficiently be scheduled within the extended teaching day, with start times M–F 8am–9pm. Graduate classes and some first-year classes may be good possibilities. Hybrid models of in-person/remote-online teaching are permissible for short-session classes (see below).

Part Two. Assess and adjust classes in order to facilitate proper physical distancing.

Facilities Management and others are completing an assessment of all classrooms and alternative spaces that may be converted into classrooms. Results indicate a drastic reduction in capacities, with few rooms able to accommodate more than 20 students. Classes of over 50 students will not be able to meet in-person if all students are present in the classroom on the same day/time. For classes greater than 20 students, plan to reduce classroom density by taking the following steps:

- a. Identify classes already set up as lectures and recitation sections, or as lectures and lab sections. In these classes, plan for the lecture to be delivered remotely or online, and most of the recitation/lab sections to be delivered in person. Exceptions: if lectures are small, they may be

offered in person or as a hybrid (see below). One or more recitation sections should offer remote/online teaching to accommodate students who cannot take in-person classes.

- b. Identify classes to be taught as remote (synchronous), online (asynchronous), hybrid in-person/online-remote, and hybrid remote/online. Also start to identify the technology that may be needed. The university will do its best to make needed technology available, but a limited number of classrooms are set up for simultaneous in-person and on-camera delivery, and these classrooms may require a class to have a TA or other assistant to manage the technology while the instructor focuses on teaching. Departments, programs, colleges and schools will need to prioritize which classes will use the highest-tech options. With small classes, it can be possible simply to teach with a laptop set in the in-person classroom for Zoom access by remote students. Further guidance on classroom technology is forthcoming from OIT. In the meantime, you may start by consulting the [Center for Teaching and Learning's web page on remote and online learning](#).
- c. If a class is a candidate for simultaneous in-person and remote delivery, identify which pattern it will follow:
 - A subset of students always participates remotely. In this case, two sections of the same class may be created—one for in-person instruction and the other for online or remote instruction—and students can enroll in the section that matches their preference. Communication to students about the options will need to be handled by the department. Further guidance on setting up sections will be forthcoming from the Office of the Registrar.
 - Students participate remotely on a “rolling” basis, with a subset present on a given day and the others remote. Students would need to be assigned to or asked to enroll in a specific meeting day; further guidance on how this will work is forthcoming from the Office of the Registrar.
- d. Identify classes to be taught in modules each lasting a week or more, with some modules in person, some remote/online. Typically, all students will be present on in-person days, and on remote/online days all students will typically use Zoom and Canvas as the campus standards for remote/online learning. Keep in mind that many students feel they do not learn well during sustained remote/online periods; it will be the rare class that can be taught, e.g., in-person for the first half of the semester and remotely/online for the second half. It may be possible for two classes with in-person and remote/online modules scheduled in opposite patterns to share the same assigned classroom, and the Office of the Registrar will be working on options for this.
- e. Identify classes where the best solution is to split the class into more than one section, to be taught either at the same scheduled time or at a different time. Keep in mind that scheduling a new section at a different time may snarl schedules of students who are already enrolled in the class.
- f. Identify classes that need additional sections to meet student demand. Classes with long wait lists, for example, may call for another section to be offered. Alternatively, consider creating online sections for courses that commonly have long wait lists and increasing enrollment in those sections to accommodate student demand.

- g. Identify which classes can be moved to later or early hours in the day in order to use the entire teaching day, with start times M–F 8 am–9pm. Classes not currently enrolled or newly created classes are prime candidates. In addition, many departments offer most or all their graduate classes in the evening.
- h. Identify classes that might benefit from occasional or regular use of outdoor teaching spaces, keeping in mind that physical distancing principles will still need to be applied outdoors. Options will be made available soon for reserving such spaces. Consider if these classes could be taught in an 8-week session to take advantage of good weather in the early part of the semester.

Part Three. Adjust teaching assignments as needed.

Assign and/or reassign teaching personnel in order to make the considerations In Parts One and Two work. Take the following into account:

- a. What classes are most needed for major, minor and certificate requirements (both undergraduate and graduate)? What classes, including popular electives or non-majors classes, are most in demand? Make sure those are being taught across a range of modalities that will make them accessible to students. Classes that are listed in degree audits or that fulfill general education requirements are denoted in the fall schedule and enrollment report (see supplemental document).
- b. Are teaching assignments equitable? Refer to the supplemental document on “Academic Instruction Parameters: Equity and Mission” to understand equitable practices.
- c. What are the needs of teaching personnel in higher-risk populations? Use the Faculty Reentry Decision Tree flowchart to determine options for teaching personnel. Accommodate those who must teach remotely for health reasons. Work with the rest of the unit’s teaching personnel community to accommodate preferences if possible, while also maintaining equity and meeting the goal of offering appropriate levels of in-person teaching.
- d. What are your personnel resources? While colleges and schools may have some resources for hiring additional lecturers, TAs etc., your main goal should be distributing existing teaching personnel where they are most needed. If you employ Learning Assistants, keep in mind that they, too, should be deployed where most needed.

Part Four: Assess overall goals and submit your class information.

- a. As detailed in the [Road Map to Fall 2020](#), a key public health requirement for reducing the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission involves significantly ($\sim \geq 55\%$) reducing the number of close “people-to-people” and “people-to-infected surface” encounters. Once the above decision tree is followed, and once classes are assigned to large-enough rooms to facilitate social distancing, your department or program will probably have met this requirement. However, in order to make sure, do a rough estimate of student credit hours that are being offered in person vs. remotely by your department or program (including calculating for presence of students in hybrid in-person/remote-online courses, amount of a class distributed between in-person/remote modules, etc.), and aim for a 50–50 split.

- b. On **Monday, June 1**, the Office of the Registrar will send to each Dean's Office a complete and up-to-date schedule of fall 2020 classes, which includes class section details, current enrollments, and current meeting patterns as well as adjusted meeting patterns for the 20-minute passing times. It also includes indicators of whether classes are listed in any degree audits and/or have general education attributes.
- Sections of classes with no meeting patterns, including graduate thesis and dissertation, research, independent study, practicum/field experience etc., will not show any adjusted meeting patterns.
 - Classes that meet at non-standard times will not show any adjusted meeting patterns. Departments are responsible for reviewing classes that are scheduled during non-standard meeting patterns and providing those meeting pattern updates in their schedule updates. The 20-minute passing time is university policy for AY 2020–21 and must be adhered to even with non-standard meeting times.
 - A document with adjusted capacities of centrally scheduled classrooms is still in progress; it will be sent as soon as possible. Classes scheduled in department-controlled spaces must also adhere to their adjusted capacities for social distancing, as well as the 20 minute passing rule. If any department-controlled space is not listed on the adjusted capacities document, contact the [Office of Space Optimization](#).
- c. The Dean's Office will distribute the schedule of fall 2020 classes to departments and programs. Departments and programs will supply information in highlighted columns to update their class schedules, including instruction mode and revised start/end times for non-standard meeting patterns. *Full instructions for updates will be supplied as part of the schedule.*
- d. All departmental-level schedule changes must be submitted to their Dean's Office for final review. Colleges and schools will set deadlines for this submission. The deadline for colleges and schools to return schedule changes to the Office of the Registrar is **Friday, June 12**.
- e. Scheduling of new sections, reassignments of centrally scheduled classrooms, and assignment of spaces being repurposed by the campus as classrooms for fall 2020 will be done by the Office of the Registrar after receiving spreadsheets from the schools and colleges.