MEMORANDUM

To: The Faculty

From: Jennifer Scanlon, Interim Dean for Academic Affairs
Barry Logan, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Jim Higginbotham, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Date: August 6, 2015

Subject: Start of Fall Semester Reminders

As we welcome the Class of 2019, we write to remind you that the Faculty Advising Breakfast will take place in Main Lounge (Moulton Union) from 7:45 – 9:00 a.m. on Monday, August 31 (a light breakfast and portable box lunches will be provided). All pre-major advisors are expected to attend. Important updates regarding Polaris will be presented, the pre-major advising schedule will be discussed, and any changes to the pre-major advising process will be highlighted, along with critical information pertaining to course placements, the results of quantitative skills tests, and updates to the roster of first-year seminars. This is ‘one-stop shopping’ for the information you will need to effectively advise the Class of 2019. The presentation will begin promptly at 8 a.m., so please arrive early enough to go collect your breakfast before then.

We also write to remind you of college policies and practices for instruction, in preparation for the coming semester.

The academic calendar may be viewed at: http://www.bowdoin.edu/academic-affairs/calendar/.

Religious Holidays

No student is required to take an examination or fulfill any other scheduled course requirements on recognized major religious holidays or Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Please note that Jewish holidays require the cessation of work for the entire day, not simply during the time when services are held.

The academic calendar lists some religious holidays which fall during the academic year. The College encourages instructors to avoid scheduling examinations on these days:

Rosh Hashanah: begins at sunset on Sept. 13 and concludes at sunset on Sept. 15.
Yom Kippur: begins at sunset on Sept. 22 and concludes at sunset on Sept. 23.
As our student body becomes more diverse, it is increasingly important that we, as a multicultural community, accommodate students from a variety of religious backgrounds who wish to observe religious holidays. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all religious holidays for a class as a whole, please honor requests from individual students to reschedule assignments and to be absent from classes that conflict with observances of major religious holidays, and to inform students that this is an option.

The full policy on religious holidays is here: http://www.bowdoin.edu/academic-affairs/curriculum-teaching/religious-holiday-policy.shtml.

Planning Faculty Absences

Faculty members are expected to meet all classes as scheduled by the Registrar’s office. In the case of a conflict between a scheduled class and some other professional activity, such as attendance at a conference, it is the faculty member’s responsibility to inform students and his or her department chair well in advance and to arrange either appropriate alternative activities or make-up sessions for missed classes. Those who find it necessary, under extraordinary circumstances, to be absent from more than two classes in any one course during a semester should contact the office of the Dean for Academic Affairs for prior approval.

Thanksgiving Week Classes

You may find that students ask you to accommodate their needs, travel and otherwise, by rescheduling exams during the Thanksgiving week or at the end of the semester. Please note that we are fully “in session” during Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week and you should feel free to maintain normal expectations of students on those days. That includes scheduling exams, if appropriate to your course. We do not hold classes on the Wednesday preceding Thanksgiving; faculty may schedule a make-up class at their discretion. Reading period may be used to make up this regular class period.

Final Exams and Projects

Final exams (or cumulative exams bearing the signature qualities of a final exam, by any other name) are to be given according to the schedule published each semester by the Office of the Registrar. We recommend placing the day and time of the final exam on the course syllabus. [The date and time of the final exam can be found in the "My Classes" window on Polaris https://polaris.bowdoin.edu/lum.] No examinations may be given nor extra classes scheduled during Reading Period, with the exception of make-up days for Thanksgiving. All academic work, except for final examinations, final papers, final lab reports, and final projects, must be due on or before the last day of classes. (Please note: Faculty assigning final projects in lieu of final examinations should align the due date for projects with the published date/time for their final exam.) These policies were put into place to allow students to balance the end-of-semester demands of their multiple courses. A student with three final examinations in two days may reschedule one for a date mutually agreeable to the student and the instructor. Other changes to the timing of final exams may be made in instances of emergency, in consultation with the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs.
Reminder regarding Courses that Fulfill Distribution Requirements

As you finalize your syllabi, please remember that during the recent review of the distribution requirements the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee approved a policy directing that all courses which are designated as satisfying a distribution requirement should include a brief statement on the syllabus articulating the ways in which the course content addresses the requirement.

Course-related Printing/Copying

Faculty expecting students to use hard copies of course materials should consider creating physical coursepacks in addition to sharing electronic versions or posting them on Blackboard. Expecting students to print lengthy documents over the course of the semester distributes the costs of printing inefficiently and imposes an undue burden on our students with financial need. All students are provided with generous printing allowances; however, those allowances have in the past been overburdened by courses requiring the individual printing of multiple or lengthy documents. Michael Tucker, Course Materials and General Book Manager at the Bowdoin Bookstore (mtucker2@bowdoin.edu) can talk with you about the creation of coursepacks and also advise on the copyright implications of requiring printed copies of electronic course materials.

Collegial Classroom Etiquette

Please keep in mind the following elements of collegial classroom etiquette:

- Please end your class at least five minutes before the hour or half hour so that students can make it to their next class on time.
- Leave your classroom in its original seating configuration and in good condition – boards erased, seating straightened, and course materials picked up. Please remind students to discard their trash.
- Close your classroom door (in consideration of people working in nearby offices).
- For those faculty using the classroom computer, when departing, Windows users should “Restart” the machine and Mac users should “Log out.” This saves the incoming professor precious minutes in advance of class and allows efficient access to either operating system. Please do not unplug or relocate cables, as this affects other faculty users and can compromise the integrity of the system. Call x3030 if you need last minute adjustments to the audio-video, computer or projection system.
- Lastly, when you schedule extra sessions for course-related events, please be aware that they may conflict with events other faculty have scheduled, or even other courses. Understanding and flexibility may be needed with regard to student schedules and available rooms or facilities.

Thank you for upholding these policies and practices.

Best wishes as you prepare for a good start to the semester!