

# BOWDOIN COLLEGE

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## MEMORANDUM

To: The Faculty  
From: Jen Scanlon, Senior Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs  
Date: February 4, 2022  
Subject: **Clarifying the Principle of In-Person Class Attendance**

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This document is intended to help faculty navigate student requests for alternative methods of participating in class and is a supplement to my [January 14th memo on the Spring 2022 Semester](#), based on input from the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee.

Bowdoin's [current COVID-19 guidelines](#) require students who test positive for COVID-19 to submit an Isolation Intake Form and isolate for at least five days. Students in isolation are not able to attend class during their isolation period and may ask faculty how they can join class remotely and make up missed work. Faculty members may also be asked this by students who are not in isolation for COVID.

In order to provide the highest quality educational experience for all students, **Bowdoin is dedicated to in-person teaching and learning**. Zooming in is not equivalent to participating in person. Bowdoin does not condone the hybrid teaching model as the classroom experience is not the same for anyone (the faculty member, the student zooming in, or the rest of the students in the class). **We expect students to be present physically in class to be considered "in class."** If the student is not in class due to anything other than being COVID-positive, the instructor should consider them absent from class.

### *Accommodating COVID-Isolating Students*

We are asking all faculty to make accommodations for students who are in isolation because of COVID. The instructor may take a low-tech approach: ask the student to get notes from a classmate, meet with them (remotely) outside of class time, send them materials. The instructor may decide to employ some of the methods learned during our period of fully remote teaching: share prerecorded lectures, have them Zoom in to the class. We are not mandating one approach, only asking that the instructor assist them.

### *Accommodating Short-term Student Absences for Reasons Other than COVID*

For short-term absences (up to one week), students may not Zoom into class for reasons other than COVID. It is the student's responsibility to consult with the instructor about work missed and ways to make it up.

### *Short-Term vs. Extended Student Absences*

Faculty members have autonomy in establishing the particulars of their attendance policy, as described in the [Faculty Handbook \(p. 47\)](#). At the same time, our [Academic Standards and](#)

[Regulations](#) note that “regular attendance is expected.” In the case of extended absences (beyond one week), if faculty do not hear from student affairs directly, they should send a Comment Card and contact associate dean Steve Perkinson, so that the staff who are responsible for determining the best solution for each student’s circumstances may do so.

*When is Remote Teaching Acceptable?*

No faculty member is required to teach remotely, but they may choose to do so on limited occasions as an alternative to cancelling the class. A faculty member may consider teaching a class session remotely, for example, in cases of COVID-isolation (for oneself or a family member for whom one is a caregiver), a College-declared weather emergency, or a conference that conflicts with class time.

*What about Online Office Hours?*

We expect that faculty will hold office hours in person. If they wish to supplement with online office hours (outside of regular working hours, for example), they may do so, but some regular office hours must be held in person.

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