MEMORANDUM

To: The Faculty
From: Jen Scanlon, Senior Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs
Date: January 14, 2022
Subject: Spring 2022 Semester

I write to follow up on the Jan. 10th email from Mike Ranen about plans for the start of the spring semester and the subsequent email from Clayton Rose about the College’s current approach to the challenges of COVID-19 going forward. As Clayton wrote, the goals remain the same: to protect the health and safety of the Bowdoin and Brunswick communities and provide an excellent education. He also introduced “a different approach, one that acknowledges that the virus will be with us for the foreseeable future, that recognizes the significantly reduced health risks for a fully vaccinated campus, and that will allow us to begin to move back to a campus and college experience that is more normal.”

As we move toward “more normal,” we will of course continue to face challenges. A successful spring semester will result from our taking care of ourselves, our families, and each other – in other words, by working together as a community. I look forward to supporting you in that.

What is New This Semester?

As detailed in Mike’s email and the current campus guidelines and restrictions:

- **The first week of classes (Jan. 24-28) will be remote but synchronous**, to equalize students’ experience during a time when travel and pre-arrival testing will likely produce high positivity rates.
- **Students, with the exception of some student employees, will not have access to academic buildings** (including the Library) during the first week of classes. Faculty, however, will be able to access all academic buildings throughout the semester.
- **Masks must be worn while indoors**, except when alone in a private office or eating.
- **Only surgical or KN95 masks are acceptable.** Cloth masks are no longer approved.
- **All faculty, students, and staff must have documented their vaccine booster by January 21st.**
- **Faculty and staff must test once per week this semester, normally on either Monday or Thursday.** Students must test twice per week. Please note a change of test dates for the week of Jan. 17th (Wed. and Sat.).
- **Dining halls are limited to students only until further notice.**
- **If you test positive for COVID-19, you will need to isolate for a minimum of five days.** Please see campus guidelines for details.
- **The College’s COVID updates and protocols** are now linked from the bottom of the website’s home page, rather than a top banner.
What is Unchanged from Last Semester?

We will continue to provide in-person teaching and engagement this semester. That said, there may be times when the best way to continue your teaching will be to shift online temporarily, such as if:

- You have tested positive but feel well enough to teach;
- You are caring for a family member who has tested positive;
- You are caring for a young child whose classroom, school, or day care is closed.

Of course, if you are not well enough to teach, you should tend to your health. You can cancel your classes or ask a colleague to step in for a class session. As is our normal practice (see p. 2 of the Faculty Handbook), those faculty who find it necessary to be absent from the classroom for more than an equivalent of one week of any one course during a semester should consult with their chair for guidance and support and receive approval from the Dean for Academic Affairs.

Similarly, students are expected to attend all classes in person, unless they are sick or are in a five-day “recover in place” period. Students are asked to inform their instructors if they are sick or test positive and ask how they can make up missed work. As usual, please work with students who must be absent, to find ways for them to catch up on course content they have missed. Those ways can include all of those we have relied on previously—self-guided work, additional assignments, a meeting with you to go over material individually when they are able to meet, and so on. You also are welcome to rely on any of the approaches you developed during our period of online teaching. The particulars of your arrangement with a student in this situation are up to you, with the goal of helping the student make up, to the extent possible, the lost class time. A few methods that worked well in the past include:

- Low tech solutions—e.g., simply suggesting that students obtain notes from classmates and meet with you during office hours;
- Sharing already-recorded videos of your lectures;
- Using simplified hybrid methods such as “laptop buddies” (enlisting a student to help an absent student connect to class via a laptop, so this burden doesn’t fall repeatedly on the instructor);

Attached is a more detailed list of tips and resources.

Ultimately, instructors have authority to determine the best method for accommodating students making up missed classes. We want to be clear: duplicative instruction is not required. Indeed, we recognize that the in-person class experience that is the core of our educational model cannot simply be replaced by other methods, and students are expected to return to the classroom as soon as they are healthy enough to do so. If a student expresses a need to be absent from class for a period of time extending beyond the “recovery in place” protocols, please contact that student’s dean and advisor to discuss the situation.

Thank you in advance for supporting each other and continuing to provide an excellent education for our students. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Attachment: Spring 2022--Tips and Resources for Online Start