

BOWDOIN COLLEGE

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM

To: The Faculty
From: Jen Scanlon, Dean for Academic Affairs
Elizabeth Pritchard, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Steve Perkinson, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Dharni Vasudevan, Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Inclusion
Date: August 25, 2021
Subject: **Start of Fall 2021 Semester Notes and Reminders**

As we prepare for the Fall 2021 semester amid ongoing challenges for the world, for the nation, and for Bowdoin, we write to wish you good health and peace of mind. Whereas we had all hoped we would be returning to a fully “normal” academic year, COVID will be with us for some time to come and thus will continue to heavily impact our decision-making. We want to reassure you that our decision-making will continue to prioritize the health and safety of all the members of our campus, their extended families, and the surrounding communities of midcoast Maine. In addition, we will continue to be responsive to the dynamic situation of this pandemic.

Fall 2021 COVID Guidance (as of today!)

Please refer to the [College’s COVID-19 website](#) and the [Fall 2021 Faculty FAQs](#) regularly for the most up-to-date guidance.

As you know, Bowdoin will return to in-person teaching and engagement this semester, thereby ending the temporary measure of primarily teaching online courses in response to the public health emergency and returning to the standard expectations for credit hours and contact with students, in keeping with Bowdoin’s principles and accreditation guidelines. Nevertheless, we recognize that there may be times when the best way to continue your teaching may be to shift online temporarily, such as if you are mildly symptomatic and awaiting test results and clearance to return to campus. As noted in Clayton’s Aug. 23rd email to the campus community, faculty and staff with *even mild symptoms* are asked to stay home and take a rapid antigen test before being cleared by human resources for returning to campus. You might also shift online temporarily if a family member has tested positive for COVID and you are awaiting test results for yourself or if you must tend to a sick family member at home. Those faculty who find it necessary to be absent 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.

If a student(s) must be absent from class for an extended period of time (for example, if they go into isolation), please work with them as you have done in the past 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.

While the College has required that students, staff, and faculty be vaccinated for COVID-19, that students be tested upon arrival, that everyone wear masks from August 24th through September 3rd, and that faculty, staff, and students be tested at various points throughout the semester, we know that individuals will continue to have different levels of comfort with in-person gatherings, especially those that entail close proximity indoors. Given these differences, Bowdoin will need to be a mask-friendly environment for the foreseeable future. Whoever chooses to wear a mask or face covering beyond the day that we lift the requirement should feel welcome and encouraged to do so. We anticipate that after September 3rd, masks will be discretionary in classrooms, labs, and faculty offices and at events sponsored by academic affairs, including the faculty seminar series, chairs meetings, and workshops. For other meetings of the faculty, including departmental and program meetings, we ask the meeting convener to balance the need to build community, particularly for our first- and second-year faculty who have not yet had in-person meetings, with the need to accommodate those with the lowest tolerance for risk. We urge meeting conveners to do individual outreach to participants to ascertain their needs. Balancing needs may mean meeting in person masked or through a hybrid model (largely in-person with a few members joining remotely).¹ Guidance on committee meetings will be forthcoming from GFA (and subsequently on faculty meetings). *We remind you that the College's COVID-related guidelines may change again at any time, as we continue to receive and evaluate guidance from medical experts.*

Again, please refer to the [College's COVID-19 website](#) and the [Fall 2021 Faculty FAQs](#) regularly for more detailed information about COVID safety and campus and classroom expectations for this semester.

In addition, we remind you of our usual college policies and practices for instruction, found in the [Faculty Handbook](#) Section V., on the [Teaching and Advising page](#), and in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Scheduling Meetings and Events

The [2021-22 time blocks](#) include two Friday blocks when no classes are scheduled: a meeting block (Fridays 2:20-3:20 PM) and a Common Hour (Fridays 3:30-4:50 PM). Currently, there are no campus-wide Common Hour events planned for the fall semester, but such events will be publicized via email and the Digest.

Faculty Meetings will return to the usual Monday late afternoon time, monthly. The schedule of faculty meetings can be found [here](#).

¹ In academic affairs staff meetings, we have had success with having a few members join via Zoom/Teams. Another model is to have all meeting participants on a Zoom/Teams call, including those in person, and using their devices to see the remote members on screen. Experiment with what might work for your needs.

Start of Semester Dates

Please refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) and the [Registrar's Calendar](#) for a comprehensive view of dates and deadlines, but here is a summary of opening events:

August 24	First-Year Student Arrival Day
August 30 8:00 AM	Optional Advisors Meeting on Coe Quad *
August 31, 3:30 PM	Convocation
September 1	First Day of Classes
September 3, 3 PM	Chairs/Directors and Coordinators Meeting
September 13	First Faculty Meeting

*Note to faculty with pre-major advisees: Given that limitations on Campus Dining prevent us from serving food, as well as the complexity of the current situation, we have decided to make some significant changes to this year's iteration of the "Advising Breakfast." First, the event will be entirely optional. Second, the customary advising reminders and information will be provided in an email from Karen Topp, Faculty Liaison for Advising, and Melissa Quinby, Dean of First-Year Students. Third, recognizing that people may have questions about advising or may simply enjoy an opportunity to say hello to each other briefly as we launch the semester, we will offer an optional, informal gathering in a tent on the Quad. This will be attended by staff from the academic affairs, dean of students, and registrar's offices, all of whom look forward to welcoming you back to campus and supporting you in any way they can. Please watch your email for detailed instructions from Karen Topp.

Religious Holidays

As members of a multicultural community, our students come from a variety of religious backgrounds and may wish to observe important religious holidays. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all religious holidays for a class as a whole, requests from individual students to reschedule assignments and to be absent from classes that conflict with observances of major religious holidays should be honored.

No student is required to take an examination or fulfill other scheduled course requirements on recognized religious holidays. Instructors are encouraged to avoid scheduling examinations on recognized major religious holidays. Please remind students to declare their intention to observe religious holidays at the beginning of the semester. Please note that Jewish holidays require the cessation of work for the entire day, not simply during the time when services are held. A list of religious holidays to be aware of and the full Religious Holiday policy can be found [here](#).

Class Attendance

Please specify the attendance rules for your course(s) on the syllabus and verbally and note all required events that will occur outside of regular class time, including exams. When you schedule extra sessions for your courses, please be aware that they may conflict with other student commitments, including other scheduled courses. Your understanding and flexibility may be needed with regard to student schedules and available rooms or facilities.

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 Registrar's office. We strongly recommend placing the day and time of the final exam on the course syllabus. (The date and time of final exams for courses can be found in the "My Classes" window on [Polaris](#) and in a PDF on the Registrar's website.)

No examinations may be given, nor extra classes scheduled, during Reading Period.

A student with three final examinations in two days may reschedule one for a date mutually agreeable to the student and the instructor. To initiate this change during final exams only, students must obtain an Examination Rescheduling Form from the Office of the Registrar at least two weeks in advance of the conflicting exams. Other changes may be made for emergencies or for educational desirability, but only with approval of the Office of the Dean of Students.

All academic work, except for final examinations, final papers, final lab reports, and final projects, is due on or before the last day of classes; although instructors may set earlier deadlines, they may not set later deadlines. No final academic work, including final examinations, final papers, final lab reports, and final projects, may be turned in after 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the final examination period without an approved grade of 'Incomplete' in place.

Collegial Classroom Practice

Please keep in mind the following practices:

- Please start and end your class at the designated times.
- During class, please remain considerate of people working in nearby offices.
- 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.
- 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.

Providing Access to Course Materials

Blackboard: Blackboard is Bowdoin's Learning Management System and is the go-to platform for you and your students. Each course is set up with a Blackboard space where you may upload a wide array of content and use various tools to, for example, provide timed assessments and maintain and report grades. Fall 2021 courses have already been loaded onto Blackboard. Only students registered for the course have access to the materials, which can be viewed, downloaded, and printed, as

needed. Additionally, you can create links in your courses to library-licensed e-books, database articles, and streaming audio and video. Course materials can be re-used by copying them from a previous course to a current course. For assistance, contact [Jennifer Snow](#), 207-725-3707.

Library Reserves: Books requested for course adoption with the designations of Required, Recommended, Optional, or Choice will be pulled by library staff to be added to course reserves. Faculty may also request additional books be placed on reserve at any time over the course of the semester by using the [Reserve](#) submission form. These can include circulating library books, e-books, or your personal copies. The Library also offers [e-reserves](#) for text, audio, and streaming film resources; go directly to [submission forms](#) to submit your requests. DVDs owned by the library can be digitized and made available to students through Blackboard. Information on requesting digitization may be found on the [Reserves](#) page.

E-reserves of articles and book chapters. Information on e-reserves may be found [here](#). Please note that due to copyright restrictions, the library is unable to scan books in their entirety. Faculty should consult with [Carmen Greenlee](#), Humanities and Media Librarian, about copyright-related questions.

DVDs owned by the library can be digitized and made available to students through Blackboard. Information on requesting digitization may be found on the [Reserves](#) page.

Virtual Bookstore: If you have adopted books for your courses, please ensure they are correct by finding your course in [Classfinder](#) and clicking "Order Books". If you have questions about course adoptions, please email [Kate Wing](#). Some materials, such as art supplies and molecule sets, are sold by the [Bowdoin Store](#) through their website. For questions about course supplies sold by the Bowdoin Store, contact [Andrea Sehestedt](#).

Mindful Printing: Students are allocated a quota of up to 1,200 monochrome, double-sided pages. Single-sided or color printing will reduce their quota at a faster rate. Consider specifying those articles that you would like your students to print and making others optional. Students are responsible for costs if they exceed their quota. You might encourage students to read and annotate electronic versions of articles. More information can be found at <https://www.bowdoin.edu/onecard/services/printing.html>.

Annual Professional Activities Forms

Each spring, faculty members are asked to complete a Professional Activity Form. If you are someone who likes to plan ahead or want to add to your form as you go through the year, blank forms are [available to be downloaded from the website here](#).

We in academic affairs – [the dean, the associate deans, and all our staff](#) – are here to support you throughout the coming year. You may e-mail, call, or message any one of us through Teams.

Thank you for all you do for your students and for the College.