

Bowdoin

TO: The Faculty
FROM: Jen Scanlon, Senior Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs
Rachel Beane, Associate Dean for Faculty Recruitment and Pre-major Advising
Dallas Denery, Associate Dean for Curriculum
Dharni Vasudevan, Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Inclusion
DATE: January 16, 2025
RE: **Start of Spring 2025 Semester Notes and Reminders**

With the second semester about to begin, we want to remind you that [all of us in the Office of the Dean for Academic Affairs](#) are here to support you in your work. We also offer a few reminders. But first a few new items:

First, please be aware that you may encounter students who are impacted by the **Los Angeles fires**, whether indirectly or quite devastatingly. Thank you for working with them, as needed, in coordination with their student deans.

Second, we'll be asking you to fill out your annual **Professional Activities Form (PAF)** in Canvas soon. Last year, our office designed a shortened PAF in an online format (Microsoft Forms) and provided some data to save you time. This year's PAF will follow the same model but will be in Canvas, for enhanced features such as saving responses if you complete your form in more than one sitting (really this time!) and easier access to your responses after submission. You will receive an email in early February with a link to the form and your registration, advising, and committee service data. The PAF will be due March 31st.

Third, if you would like to present your work-in-progress at a **faculty seminar** this semester, please contact Dharni Vasudevan. We have a few slots open still.

Upcoming Campus Talk

The Office of Inclusion and Diversity is bringing journalist and author [Michele Norris](#) to campus on Saturday, January 25, to give the [2025 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Lecture](#). Some of you may have already signed up for a discussion of her book on The Race Card Project, [Our Hidden Conversations: What Americans Really Think About Race and Identity](#). You may want to incorporate this into your course syllabus.

Other Items you Might Want to Include in Your Course Syllabi

- As noted by the Committee on Teaching and Classroom Practice (CoTCP), faculty are advised to state on their course syllabi their expectations relative to use of generative

artificial intelligence (AI) for assignments. See [the Canvas course “Resources for Faculty and Instructors”](#) for resources collected by CoTCP and Academic Technology & Consulting (ATC). Additionally, we are providing a link to some [Sample Syllabus Language](#) that can easily be integrated into your syllabus to describe your policies and expectations for student use of generative AI. This sample language will continue to be revised to reflect the rapidly evolving AI landscape, so be sure to check back frequently for updates. You may also be interested to read [this article in The Chronicle for Higher Education by Beth McMurtrie](#).

- As we often say at the end of the semester when students are filling out their Bowdoin Course Questionnaires (BCQs), the single most effective method for ensuring strong response rates on BCQs is to designate in-class time for students to fill out their BCQs. Although students may access their BCQs at any time during the fill-out period, we recommend that you reserve time during one of the last class sessions when you leave the room and ask students to complete their BCQs for the course. Adding this to the syllabus could help set this expectation.

Workday Student Update

Bowdoin College goes live with Workday Student on March 7, 2025. Throughout the semester there will be a number of opportunities to learn how to use the system and learn processes related to teaching and advising. It is important that all faculty take advantage of these training sessions and make use of available job aids (procedural guides) in order to make our first registration in Workday Student as smooth and stress-free as possible. Announcements about times and dates for training sessions will be forthcoming. Finally, the entire Workday implementation team wants to thank everyone for their willingness to limit new course proposals and major/minor revisions for the current academic year. Your cooperation has made a huge difference in the team’s ability to focus on the implementation. Beginning with the Fall 2025 semester, CIC will return to its regular practices regarding the acceptance, review, and approval of submissions. Here is a [link](#) to the memo sent to all faculty explaining CIC policies in effect for the remainder of the current academic year.

Standard Policies and Practices

College policies and practices for instruction, can be found in the [Faculty Handbook](#) Section V, on the [Teaching and Advising webpage](#), in the [Academic Calendar](#), the [Registrar’s Calendar](#), and in the [Bowdoin College Catalogue and Academic Handbook](#).

Note: All classes at Bowdoin meet in person. Please do not honor student requests to Zoom into class, except in rare circumstances with guidance from, or in consultation with, [Dallas Denery](#), associate dean for curriculum.

Scheduling Meetings and Events

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

Monthly Faculty Meetings will take place on select Fridays 2:20-3:50 p.m., with the first taking place on Friday, September 6, 2024, in Mills Hall Room 220. Agendas and materials for faculty meetings will be available on Canvas and announced via email on the Wednesday before each meeting. Additional faculty forums may be announced by the Governance and Faculty Affairs Committee (GFA). The schedule of faculty meetings and reserved forum dates can be found [on the Academic Affairs website](#).

Key Semester Dates

January 21	First Day of Classes
March 8-23	Spring Break
May 7	Last Day of Classes
May 12-17	Final Exam Period

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, faculty members should honor requests from individual students to reschedule assignments and to be absent from classes that conflict with their observance of major religious holidays. 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 note that Jewish holidays require the cessation of work for the entire day, not simply during the time when services are held. *Please remind students to declare their intention to observe religious holidays at the beginning of the semester.* The Religious Holiday Policy and a list of major religious holidays and policies can be found on the [Academic Calendar](#). Questions about religious accommodations can be directed to the [Rachel Lord Center for Religious and Spiritual Life](#).

Course Work Outside of Class Time

Please avoid scheduling mandatory events and exams outside of scheduled class time, because these may conflict with other student commitments, including their other scheduled courses or employment. If you do schedule such events outside of regular class time, highlight them on your syllabus and during the first week of classes, offer alternative options, and know that

flexibility may be needed with regard to student schedules and availability of rooms or facilities. Similarly, please be mindful of breaks during the semester (Spring Break). Don't expect that students will be able to focus on their coursework during breaks.

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, course materials picked up. Please remind students to discard their trash.
- For those using the classroom computer:
 - If you need last minute adjustments to the audio-video, computer or projection system, or are experiencing technical issues while in class, call 207-725-3030 and press 2.
 - Before departing, “Log out” of the computer but do not turn off the computer.
 - Please do not unplug or relocate cables, as this affects other faculty users and can compromise the integrity of the system.

Working with Course Materials

Canvas Learning Management System

[Canvas](#) is Bowdoin's Learning Management System and is the go-to platform for you and your students. Only students registered for a course have access to the course materials, which can be viewed, downloaded, and printed, as needed. You may also create links in Canvas to library-licensed e-books, database articles, and streaming audio and video. Fall 2024 courses will appear in the **Unpublished Courses** section of the Dashboard, where you may build and organize them before sharing them with your students. Once you publish a course, it will appear in the **Published Courses** section and will be available to your students. For assistance with Canvas, contact [Jennifer Snow](#). For assistance with Panopto, the platform for videos linked to courses on Canvas, contact [Paul Benham](#). A series of trainings and open labs are listed in [CampusGroups](#).

Student Laptops and iPads

Bowdoin's [Digital Excellence Commitment](#) provides a standard set of technologies to all students and provides training and other resources to faculty in order to incorporate the technology into their classes, if they choose to. Each incoming student will be given an Apple iPad Mini, an Apple Pencil 2, and a 13" MacBook Pro, and most returning students will have a 13" MacBook Pro and an iPad. As you consider using these technologies in your classes, don't hesitate to contact the IT Service Desk for assistance (207-725-3030,

servicedesk@bowdoin.edu). You might want to include related expectations in your syllabus, e.g., that students should bring charged devices to class or have specific software installed.

Library Resources

The [College Library's website](#) is the gateway to the Library's print and electronic collections, our extensive database and e-journal holdings, and the shared catalog of the Colby, Bates and Bowdoin (CBB) libraries, Compass. Course adoptions (both Required and Optional) will be pulled by library staff and added to course reserves. Faculty may request that additional books, audio, and film be placed on reserve at any time during the semester. Please use the [Reserve forms](#) to submit requests, including requests for the [digitization of DVDs](#) currently owned by the Library or requested for purchase. To request digital copies of print articles and book chapters owned by the library, please submit a [Bowdoin Digital Delivery](#) request. Due to copyright restrictions, the library is unable to scan books in their entirety. For reserve guidelines, library contacts, and more, see the [Reserve-Guidelines](#) page.

Faculty are encouraged to make use of the library's extensive collection of e-books to support their courses. At the same time, it is important to be aware of potential license limitations before depending on a particular title as the primary access point for your students. Please contact [Kate Wing](#) or your [Research Librarian](#) to inquire about licenses for items you are interested in assigning as readings.

Virtual Bookstore

If you have adopted books for your courses, please ensure they are listed correctly in [Classfinder](#) by finding your course and clicking "Order Books." If you have questions about course adoptions, please email [Kate Wing](#). Some materials, such as art supplies and laboratory supplies, are sold by the [Bowdoin Store](#). For questions about course supplies sold by the Bowdoin Store, contact [Andrea Sehestedt](#). *Note: First-year students will not have their books until at least the second week of classes; please scan and post the first two weeks of reading assignments to Canvas.*

Mindful Printing

Students are allocated a quota of up to 2,000 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 may be 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 on the [OneCard office's printing and copying page](#).

Accessible Course Materials and Classroom Technology

[Making curricular materials accessible](#) can benefit many people. Implementing even a single change while updating course material and documents can go a long way. A few quick things you can do: make sure scanned documents are not blurry, contain highlights, notes, or cut-off text; include information in your syllabus about using [Canvas Ally](#) or [Sensus Access](#) to download alternative file formats of readings; use the accessibility checker in the Canvas text editor to identify easy to fix accessibility issues. In the classroom, use the lavalier microphones if available (even if you think you do not need to!) and check font size on presentation slides (size 24+ is best). Contact [Juli Haugen](#), digital accessibility consultant in academic technology, for help with creating accessible materials or for any other questions about [creating an accessible course in Canvas](#) or [available assistive technology](#). Join a [digital accessibility workshop on Zoom](#).

Comment Cards

Comment Cards are a critical means by which we support our students. Please use a Comment Card early and often when you have concerns about, for example, a student's repeated absence or difficulty completing course requirements, as this will alert their advisor and student dean. Often, a student who is having trouble meeting expectations in one course may be having trouble in other courses and other areas of their life. If a student performs poorly or fails a course, it is difficult to have a productive conversation with the student if no Comment Cards were submitted over the course of the semester. The Comment Card system is an effective way to make sure that students who need additional assistance receive it. We also encourage the use of Comment Cards to celebrate a student's success. Find information and instructions on using Comment Cards on the [Comment Card webpage](#).

Final Exams and Projects

As outlined in the [Catalogue](#), 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. The date and time of final exams for courses can be found after Add/Drop II in the "My Classes" window on [Polaris](#) and [in the Final Exam Assignments link on the Registrar's website](#).

We in academic affairs – [the dean, the associate deans, and all our staff](#) – are here to support you throughout the coming semester. 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.