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To: TCU Faculty
Subject: course delivery modalities

On Behalf of Dr. Teresa Abi-Nader Dahlberg

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you. As of Tuesday morning, 91% of fall 2020 instructors-of-record (988) took the Provost's COVID-19 "Semester of Transition" Course Survey. I appreciate your timely response.

Survey Results

Thus far, our method of delivery for typical courses (i.e., excluding directed or independent studies, dissertations, individual music performance courses and those courses already online prior to the pandemic) has been requested as follows:

- Lower undergraduate - # 1,228 courses total, 57% online, 43% on-campus
- Upper undergraduate - # 1,082 courses total, 51% online, 49% on-campus
- Total undergraduate - #2,310 courses total, 54% online, 46% on-campus
- Graduate - # 327 courses total, 51% online, 49% on-campus

While the remaining 9% of responses are being received, deans are going through survey results to answer your questions and to confirm the course delivery modality. On Tuesday, the Chancellor [informed Horned Frogs](#) of their option to take courses online or on-campus. We've committed to update the online course schedule by mid-July to inform students in their own decision-making process.

Two Delivery Modalities

Let's walk through our delivery modalities to clarify. When we kicked off the TCU Connected Campus plan in [April](#), we articulated preparing for four delivery modalities. In [May](#), we consolidated those four modes into two. We now simplify these two modes and provide instructor choice, as follows:

1. Courses designated as an "**Online**" course: this means that the instructor and all of the students in the class will take the course remotely, even though some students will reside on campus and some instructors will be on campus. If the pandemic forces TCU to vacate campus, online courses will continue to be delivered in the same way.
2. Courses designated as an "**On Campus**" course: this means that the course will be delivered in "Modified On Campus and Dual modes" combined. The instructor will be delivering the primary components of the course in a physically distanced classroom, and will also deliver to online students, who may have declared themselves to be online or who may be ill or self-isolating. The instructor may deliver some course components online (e.g., some lectures, labs, small group

meetings, experiential learning). If the pandemic forces TCU to move all instruction online, On Campus courses will be expected to transition to Online mode seamlessly, as per the TCU Connected Campus plan.

To answer common questions that arose from the survey...

- Once we have given students information about online courses and they have made their selections, your class rosters will be updated to identify online students in your course.
- You can request to change your delivery modality prior to August 7 through your dean's office. Before August, you should be able to see the ratio of online to on campus students in your class, and that may influence your decision.
- If you are teaching an on-campus course with enrollment over 30, please split your students into groups that take turns attending class live and virtually.
- Offering on-campus engagement for online courses is encouraged. However, please don't offer curricular components (e.g., exams) on campus for online courses.
- Please continue to rely on your eTrainers, College Connect Teams and Deans to have your questions answered. When needed, please continue to send questions to Sandy Callaghan.

What happens between November 24 and December 10?

This is another question that has been arising. In short, nothing has to happen. The extra time allows finalizing grade submission. It can also be used by instructors to offer online make-upexams (not regular exams); to allow additional time for project work submission by students; and to hold graduate student thesis and dissertation defenses.

SACSCOC Accreditation

With the exception of a few online programs at TCU, the vast majority of our courses and degree programs are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools Commission on Higher Education (SACSCOC) to be delivered as on campus courses. Normally, changing our instructional delivery model requires approval from SACSCOC and adherence to regulations, guidelines and constraints from the US Department of Education, SACSCOC, program accreditation, Title IV and NC-SARA. Because of the pandemic, we have been permitted to seek temporary approval to offer courses online, without full review, until December. Should we wish to continue online course delivery beyond this temporary period, we would need to seek approvals through the normal, more lengthy process.

So, while our mission as a residential campus offering face-to-face instruction remains, during this semester of transition, we will continue to designate classes as Online based on instructor request (with a few exceptions due to program accreditation), and will continue to emphasize maintaining virtual face-to-face instruction, via synchronous content delivery, *as much as possible*.

The Roles of College eTrainers and the Koehler Center

I continue to hear some confusion related to who is “in charge” of course redesign. The short answer is: the instructor.

A longer answer: One of the roles of the college eTrainers is to assist instructors with designing course elements (e.g., lecture, discussion, lab) relevant to disciplines within the college – so that every instructor is not “reinventing the wheel” with their course designs. Many eTrainers participate in weekly calls with Sandy Callaghan to receive the latest updates and to share best practices. I encourage you to connect with your eTrainer. It could save you time and frustration.

The Koehler Center provides excellent training in Online course delivery and evidence-based practices in Hybrid Course design. Their role is training and advising – not mandating your course design, nor monitoring your course activity. If in doubt, please consult your eTrainer or Sandy Callaghan.

Information and Resources

We are each inundated with so much information it can be difficult to process all at once. There are comprehensive resources available, but in the next few days, we will be making changes to the [COVID-19](#) and [TCU Connected Campus](#) microsites that should make accessing those resources much easier. For example, the current [Faculty/Staff](#) navigation will be moved into a top navigation bar, previous communications will be listed by topic, and we will reorganize page content. If you scroll the faculty/staff page, we have employee decision tress, FAQs and health and safety guidance details. The sheer amount of content requires constant grooming, given the daily updates, so we appreciate your patience.

I also encourage you to read the [TCU Today](#) employee news source on Mondays and Thursdays, which is delivered to your email inbox. The newest information is highlighted in news stories and I find it helps remind me of deadlines and actions, or I might even learn something about [one of our colleagues](#).

Lastly. Thank you for your expressions of gratitude for the decision of “instructor choice” for course delivery. I am pleased with this decision and the relief that it has brought. I acknowledge the greater challenge this presents us to offer the “Horned Frog Experience, anytime, anywhere.” That said, I am highly confident in your ability to provide this experience for our students, *as much as possible*. I am committed to continuing to support your efforts to do so.

Best,

Teresa

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