



Academic Affairs Update

March 25, 2021

Dear AVC Faculty,

Tomorrow morning, you will receive a draft document labeled “Instructional Continuity Grid,” developed in recent weeks by a group of 21 participants (with representation from faculty leadership, administrators, and AVC's student trustee) to address the various needs and unique challenges of each instructional unit.

The document was shared last week with department chairs and has at its focal point the welfare of faculty, staff, and students. We are now widely distributing the draft document -which continues to be a work in progress- to highlight the work that has been accomplished so far and unveil additional steps that will be undertaken in coming weeks. The management team at AVC is deeply invested in the safety of all employees and students and working diligently to implement safeguards for a mindful, orderly, and gradual return to campus.

We are soliciting your questions and input on the document by **5 pm on Wednesday, March 31**, ahead of a panel discussion that will take place on **Friday, April 2 at 9 am**. A Zoom invite will be forwarded to all faculty early next week.

Seven department chairs have graciously volunteered to serve as faculty liaisons and work with the Instructional Continuity workgroup to research all safety measures for Summer 2021. They will also collate your questions by theme and submit them to five panelists (two deans, AVCFT and Academic Senate presidents, and myself) who will respond to questions during next week's panel discussion. In addition, President Knudson will be in attendance as well. Given the large number of faculty and limitations of Zoom, we are only able to entertain previously submitted questions.

PLEASE FORWARD YOUR INQUIRIES TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENT CHAIRS (not me):

Nathan Dillon

Carina Giorgi

Lisa Karlstein

Cole McCandless

Kathy Osbourn

Alexandra Schroer

Heidi Williams

Background:

As we gear up for summer session, we continue to receive encouraging news regarding the status of the pandemic. LA County recently transitioned from the highest risk level of purple to red and is on the verge of being downgraded to a less restrictive tier in early April.

The decision to offer summer courses in a HyFlex model (75 percent of student enrollment remote, and the remaining 25 percent in-person for each course) was based on the massive number of students who paused their education while the institution transitioned to remote instruction. In fact, we lost 3,500 students in Spring 2021.

As equity-minded practitioners, we realized that the population left behind is precisely the most vulnerable and in greatest need of our support. As the County becomes safer with the distribution of vaccines and experiences a sharp decrease in positive COVID cases, many businesses have reopened, and K-12 institutions are beginning to welcome back students as well. As for us, we are following strict safety and maximum occupancy guidelines while planning for our own partial reopening.

Summer will give us the opportunity to re-open the campus mindfully with a small number of students on campus. We will be able to address various situations in a small microcosm and be ready to receive a larger population on campus in the Fall.

What is in the Works:

- Strict safety protocols (25 percent occupancy, social distancing, cleaning schedules aligned with specific classroom assignments, plexiglass screens, signage)
- Technology (installation of equipment and training for HyFlex - some of our faculty have used this model in the last year with great results; we are in the process of creating a video demonstration with one of them in the starring role)
- Student conduct enforcement on proper mask wearing (Student Services disciplinary measures)
- Follow up on latest research pertaining to COVID transmission and prevention
- Weekly COVID-related all-campus updates

I look forward to “seeing” you next week and working with you to welcome back our students.

Respectfully,
-Isabelle Saber
VPAA