

AY 2020–21 ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION: GUIDANCE FOR COLLEGES, SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENTS, AND PROGRAMS FROM THE ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Edition 8: December 7, 2020

Topics: Finishing the Fall Semester; Planning for Spring 2021; Pedagogy and Instructional Technology for Spring 2021; Preliminary Planning for Summer and Fall 2021

Relevant Due Dates for Chairs and Directors: None in This Edition

Update from the Academic Instruction implementation team

Thanks to all for reading these Academic Instruction Implementation guidance editions so far in 2020. This edition is the last planned for the fall semester.

Please email this entire edition of guidance to your faculty, your graduate students with teaching appointments, and your academic support staff.

Past and current editions of Academic Instruction guidance and their supporting materials are available [on the Academic Affairs website](#)

What's in this edition of guidance, and what's coming next

This edition of guidance focuses on finishing the fall semester, planning for spring 2021, and resources available for pedagogy and instructional technology for spring 2021. It also addresses preliminary planning for summer and fall 2021.

New editions of guidance will be published in spring 2021 as needed to guide faculty, staff, and students in any necessary changes to spring 2021 instruction and in planning for future academic terms.

Please continue to send questions, requests for clarification, and requests for further guidance. Your communications are welcome and help shape our decisions about instruction and instructional support and our recommendations to campus leadership. Individual faculty and other instructional personnel should direct questions to their chairs and directors. Chairs, directors and school/college administrators should send all queries and requests regarding Academic Instruction implementation to [Katherine Egger](#), Senior Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Assessment.

Update: COVID-19 conditions and the start of the spring 2021 semester

Campus leadership is closely monitoring the course of the pandemic. The epidemiological models are showing that the current nationwide ~~sp~~ving in COVID-19 cases will likely continue into early January. In addition, Colorado's recently instituted [COVID dial](#) represents more stages and metrics of COVID spread and specifies ~~no~~narrowly what activities can and can't take place in a county at each stage.

We know that faculty, ~~al~~ong with staff, students, and families, need as much advance notice as possible so they can make plans. While certainty is never achievable during a pandemic, one of the lessons we have learned in 2020 is the importance of providing as much clarity and ~~st~~eps as possible. We must avoid the whiplash we have all been feeling this fall semester. To that end, any decision regarding instruction mode for the start of the ~~sp~~ring 2021 semester will be made well in advance ~~of~~ that start

At this time, no changes in the [spring 2021 academic calendar](#) are anticipated, regardless of whether the campus begins in ~~a~~ remote mode.

Tell your faculty, staff and students: finishing the fall semester

Conducting exams

Please refer to [Academic Instruction Guidance Edition 167](#) for guidance on conducting fall 2021 final exams. Note that different guidance on the time frame for a final exam applies, depending

remote/online teaching and learning regardless of the situation in Boulder and along the Front Range.

Staff guidelines for snow days are unchanged. For more information, see the [Inclement Weather Guidance](#) page.

Building access, study spaces, and tents

With the shift to remote teaching and learning, the campus has begun operating under enhanced building access protocols, [as detailed in CU Boulder Today](#)

Instruction modes:

Unless public health conditions require the entire campus to go remote, all classes must be taught in the instruction mode advertised, whether in person, remote, online, or hybrid.

Hybrid courses are defined more narrowly as either (a) simultaneously offered in person and remotely; or (b) following a consistent meeting pattern with frequent and regular in-person class sessions.

Academic calendar:

Classes begin Thursday, Jan. 14. The next day, Friday, Jan. 15, uses Wednesday meeting pattern. The Registrar is planning a series of communication and reminders.

First-year cohorts

We will continue to develop the cohort experience through the spring semester. Students will continue to live in residential clusters; however, not all students will be taking courses together as part of that cluster. But all of our colleges, schools, and programs are partnering with Residence Life to offer co-curricular opportunities for students throughout the spring semester.

Student events, student organizations, and academic organizations

Student Affairs is working on increasing opportunities for students and student organizations to gather safely in person in the spring semester, COVID conditions permitting. Academic Affairs is working on parallel guidance to academic units for in-person meetings of academic organizations.

Student mental health and wellness support

The university has [increased its investment in mental health and wellness support](#) for students by \$1.8 million since the beginning of the pandemic, and resources will continue to grow in spring 2021 and beyond. Additional clinical services will be embedded in colleges and schools, and Health and Wellness Services plans to put a great focus on providing students of color and other historically underrepresented groups with access to specially trained counselors who are more aware of unique challenges.

Updates: pedagogy support for spring 2021

The [Center for Teaching & Learning](#) provides confidential [consultations](#) on a range of topics, such as creating inclusive syllabi, fostering [community](#) on Zoom, and effective practices for creating remote and online assessments. CTL staff are always happy to meet with individual instructors or to create workshops tailored to a department's needs.

The CTL website features an ever-growing body of [teaching resources](#) to support campus educators.

A calendar of spring [events](#) including seminars and workshops, will be published on the CTL website in December. Themes for spring 2021 will be: Assessment, Inclusivity, Innovative Teaching, Teaching Well with Technology, and Wellness.

Updates: classroom technology support for spring 2021

Request a Technology Copilot to facilitate remote student participation in hybrid classes

OIT is happy to announce that The Technology Pilots program has been funded again for the spring 2021 semester. Technology Pilots help instructors set up Zoom before class begins and assist with Zoom during class. They engage with, and represent, remote students in class activities like discussions, questions and breakout sessions. They also help the instructor notice and report technical difficulties, and they advise the instructor on how to share types of content (music, video, equations, etc.)-with in person and remote students simultaneously. This partnership allows the instructor to focus on teaching. Consult the OIT website to [learn more about the program or request a Technology Copilot or Technology Copilot training for your teaching assistant or learning assistant.](#)

Canvas and Zoom integration will offer convenience for remote teaching

Starting Dec22, both instructors and students will be able to access Zoom directly from Canvas's navigation bar. Students will be able to easily find Zoom meeting links created by their instructors from within Canvas by clicking Zoom in the navbar or from their Canvas calendars. Instructors will be able to efficiently perform most Zoom functions from inside Canvas including scheduling meetings, viewing upcoming meetings, accessing cloud recordings and other Zoom functions. ~~class~~ will also be able to access an attendance report for any Zoom meeting scheduled within the course. Watch for more