

December 7, 2020

To: Brooklyn College Faculty

From: Tammy L. Lewis
Associate Provost for Faculty and Administration

Re: Spring 2021 Obligations of the Faculty and Guidance for Syllabus Preparation

As you plan for the upcoming semester, please note the following information regarding your teaching assignments. In addition to what is included in this memo, the [Faculty Handbook](#) is a key reference for policies and practices related to faculty life.

Resources and Support for Distance Learning

The Center for Teaching and Learning website (www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/CTL) has many resources and support mechanisms including the following:

- Digital Toolbox – Information about the various tools available at the college
- Adapting your Course for Remote Learning
- Netiquette in an Online Academic Setting: A Guide for Brooklyn College Students
- Accessibility for Students with Disabilities
- [Brooklyn College Self-paced Blackboard Basics course](#)
- [Brooklyn College Self-paced Guide to Online Pedagogy \(BCGO\)](#)

Faculty in need of one-on-one pedagogical support can contact the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at ctl@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

Zoom Licensing Expiration/Transition

Existing Brooklyn College Zoom accounts will expire on December 31, 2020. However, CUNY Zoom Pro accounts (<https://cuny.zoom.us>) are now available to all active faculty, staff and students using your CUNY login. Learn how to log in and more about [transitioning to your CUNY Zoom account](#).

CUNY Guidelines: Requiring the Use of Cameras during Online Classes

Faculty utilizing Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate and other digital technology to deliver course curriculum and materials must be sensitive to issues of privacy. Faculty offering classes through web conferencing like Zoom cannot require that students turn on their cameras during live classes, unless there is a pedagogical need to do so.

In the case of classes in which an instructor has determined that there is a pedagogical need to require the use of cameras: (1) the requirement for students to be visible on the video must be communicated to

students in advance of registration and enrollment, and (2) students who do not have access to cameras and therefore are unable to comply with the requirement must be accommodated. These rules must also be followed if an instructor plans to use a technology that requires students to turn on their cameras during test-taking.

Faculty Attendance and Conformance to Class Schedules

Faculty must meet all classes at the time and place scheduled, for the prescribed number of hours. The following regulations govern classroom teaching responsibilities:

1. In accordance with New York State Education Law (Title VIII, Chapter II, Section 145-2.1), all undergraduate and graduate classes must meet for the full term (a period equivalent to 15 weeks) as indicated in the college calendar.
 - Final examinations for undergraduate classes must be held in the 15th week of the semester at the specified time and place during the scheduled examination period.
 - Final examinations for graduate courses, if conducted, will be held in their regular assigned time and place at their last class meeting during the 15th week unless instructed otherwise.
 - Final examinations for weekend courses will remain in their regular assigned place and will be administered at the regular class time on either May 22 or May 23.
 - Additional information will be posted on the Office of the Registrar's [website](#).
2. Classes must meet on the days and at the times assigned in the college course schedule. As with in-person classes, synchronous distance learning sessions must begin promptly at designated start times.
 - Deviations from this schedule for any reason must receive prior approval of the department chairperson and dean.
 - Repeated delays constitute a *de facto* deviation from the college course schedule and, therefore, are not permissible without prior approval.
 - Classes may not be scheduled during Common Hours on Tuesdays from 12:15 to 2:15 p.m. Only classes scheduled by the department for Flexible Common Hours on Thursdays from 12:15 to 2:15 p.m. may meet during that time period.
3. All classes must have an established mode of delivery—in-person, online, or hybrid. Any class not delivered in-person must clearly identify the delivery method, such as Blackboard, Zoom video conferencing, Microsoft Teams, and so on. In addition to sharing this information clearly with your students prior to the start of the course, you must ensure your department chair is also informed. *At this time, all courses are being scheduled for remote delivery unless they have been approved by the college's Reentry Review Board for hybrid delivery.*
4. Independent library assignments or written assignments are not acceptable substitutes for a class meeting. Furthermore, the mode of instruction (in-person, hybrid, fully online, etc.) cannot be modified to differ from what is noted in the schedule of classes. *For the spring semester, any such change must be submitted to the Provost for review by the department chair and approved by the college's Reentry Review Board.*

5. Office Hours: Adjunct paid office hours must be formally established, held at regularly scheduled times, clearly communicated to your students on the course syllabus and elsewhere as appropriate, and occur at a set location corresponding to the delivery mode of the course. The meeting method should be explicitly stated and may be different from how you conduct your classes (*e.g.*, you use Blackboard for your course, but schedule Zoom meetings for your office hours). *There are no in-person office hours permitted at this time.*

“Office hours by appointment” are not an acceptable substitute for regularly scheduled office hours. If you need to cancel office hours due to an emergency, you must inform your students about when your make-up hours will be held.

As noted in the *Faculty Handbook*, full-time faculty are asked to set aside two or three regular office hours each week throughout the academic year—following the same meeting guidelines as described above.

Similarly, graduate assistants and graduate fellows should establish at least one regular office hour each week per class section during the semester—following the same guidelines described above.

6. A faculty member who plans to miss an in-person class or synchronous online session for a professional reason, such as attending a professional meeting, must obtain prior approval from the chairperson. Provisions must be made to have the class taught by another faculty member. Brooklyn College has a tradition of collegiality in which faculty cover each other's classes on a basis of mutual accommodation. Such reciprocity is encouraged and **must be cleared with your department chairperson in advance**. In the case that this cannot be arranged informally, the faculty member should meet with the chair to find a substitute.
7. In cases of personal emergency or illness, the chairperson (or a deputy chairperson, if appropriate) must be notified. Faculty members should be given the mobile and/or home telephone numbers of the department chairperson and the deputy chairperson(s) to facilitate prompt reporting of unexpected absences. In cases of anticipated or actual absences of more than five consecutive calendar days (exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, authorized holidays and recesses) due to illness, faculty must file a Temporary Disability Leave form accompanied by a physician's report.

Posting Course Material Information

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 mandates that all course materials assigned at Brooklyn College must be posted online in advance of the start of the term. Having this information in advance makes it possible for our students to acquire materials at lower cost.

All course material information must be posted no later than Friday, **January 8** through our online bookstore, administrated by *Akados*. Go to www.brooklyn.textbookx.com and use your CUNYfirst credentials to log in. All information submitted to the online bookstore will be transferred to CUNYfirst within 48 hours.

Please complete this task on time. Failure to do so harms our students and puts the college out of compliance with Federal law. ***If your course does not require the purchase of textbooks or other materials, this must be indicated online.***

Syllabus Preparation and Vital Information for Students

Please post your current syllabi on [BC WebCentral](#) (“Post My Syllabus” under the My Info tab) at least one week prior to the start of class and tell your students where to find the syllabus at the first class meeting.

The syllabus should include the following:

1. A statement of course goals and learning objectives (that is, what do you want your students to know and be able to do by the end of the course?);
2. A statement and timetable of all required learning activities that will enable students to achieve, and to demonstrate their achievement of, the course’s objectives (for example, research projects, essays, exams, lab reports, presentations, portfolios);
3. An explanation of how the final grade for the course will be determined with specific weights indicated for each of the components of the course, including the mandatory final examination (except for those courses exempt from this requirement);
4. An indication of whether the final grade will be based on a curve or scale;
5. An indication of whether students will be given the opportunity to revise and resubmit essays or other assignments;
6. Information about your office hours, including times, location (on-campus or online method), your office telephone number and/or department telephone number where messages can be left, and your e-mail and web addresses. (See above for more guidance on office hours);
7. The following statement on the University’s policy on Academic Integrity:

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation. Students should be aware that faculty may use plagiarism detection software.

8. The following statement in reference to the Center for Student Disability Services:

The Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS) is currently working remotely. In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with CSDS. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to schedule an interview by calling (718) 951-5538 or emailing testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu. If you have already registered with CSDS, email Josephine.Patterson@brooklyn.cuny.edu or testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu to ensure the accommodation email is sent to your professor.

9. Reference to the [Student Bereavement Policy](#).
10. Reference to the state law regarding non-attendance because of religious beliefs, noted in the front matter of the *Undergraduate Bulletin* and *Graduate Bulletin*. These may be found on the [Academic Calendars, Course Schedules, and Bulletins](#) page of the Registrar’s website.

11. Your class policies (attendance, participation, etc.) and required class readings. Faculty may establish classroom behavioral guidelines. Refer to the [Faculty Handbook](#) (pg. 62) or the [Adjunct Faculty Handbook](#) (pg. 12) for additional guidance.

Important Dates to Include in Syllabi

Friday, January 29	First day of Spring 2021 classes
Thursday, February 4	Last day to add a course
Monday, May 17	Last day to withdraw from a course with a “W” grade
Tuesday, May 18	Reading Day
Wednesday, May 19	Final Examinations Begin
Tuesday, May 25	Final Examinations End / End of Spring Semester

The full academic calendar, including many other important dates, is available on the [Office of the Registrar](#)'s website.

Sexual and Gender-based Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX

Brooklyn College is committed to fostering a safe, equitable and productive learning environment. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment on or off campus can find information about the reporting process, their rights, specific details about confidentiality, and reporting obligations of Brooklyn College employees on the [Office of Diversity and Equity Programs](#) website.

All reports of sexual misconduct or discrimination should be made to Ivana Bologna, Title IX Coordinator (718.951.5000, ext. 3689), and may also be made to Public Safety (719.951.5511), the New York City Police Department (911 or a local NYPD precinct), or Michelle Vargas, Assistant Director of Judicial Affairs, Division of Student Affairs (718.951.5352) as appropriate.

Consideration of Religious Observance

Please bear in mind that due to religious holidays and related religious observances, a number of students will not be able to attend classes or take examinations. New York State Education Law (Title I, Article 5, Section 224-a) requires that we “make available to each student who is absent from school, because of [their] religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which [they] may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days.”

The University of Michigan maintains a helpful [list of religious holidays](#) for the 2020-2021 academic year, which may be useful when planning your activities for the term. Note that students may adhere to religious traditions, or have other religious obligations, not reflected in this list; the list should not be taken as exhaustive. If you have specific questions regarding granting a student's request to miss class or reschedule an examination on religious grounds, seek guidance from Anthony Brown, Chief Diversity Officer. Students may also be directed to Ronald Jackson, Vice President for Student Affairs, if they have questions about accommodations for religious observance. Faculty who must miss a class session for religious reasons should arrange for another faculty member to cover the class, as discussed above.

Other Important Considerations

- The deadline to submit Final Grades for the Spring Semester is **Friday, May 28, 2021**.
- Resolution of incomplete (INC) grades will be accepted only if the missing work was made up prior to the deadlines published by the [Office of the Registrar](#). Exceptions to this policy require the approval of the Committee on Course and Standing and must be supported by clear documentation of the reasons for the request. It is your prerogative to establish an earlier deadline in order to give you time to grade the missing work.
- During the first class meeting, make sure that the name of every student in attendance appears on your roster. Students who claim to be registered but are not on your roster should be referred to the Enrollment Services Center. Please download a roster from [CUNYfirst](#) on the first day of class so that your roster will accurately reflect drops for non-payment and other adjustments prior to the start of classes. (The Registrar's Office does not distribute paper first-day rosters).

Regardless of whether attendance is a component of your course grades, it is vital to ensure that all students appear on the roster, and to keep an accurate record of student attendance. Faculty are required to submit official "Verification of Enrollment" (VOE) through CUNYfirst indicating those students who have never participated in an "[academically related activity](#)" for your course. Failure to submit accurate attendance records jeopardizes the students' financial aid and puts the college at risk for federal penalties.

Spring Semester Verification of Enrollment (VOE)

- VOE Rosters available starting Friday, February 5
- VOE Rosters due by Thursday, February 18
- Please remind students that "late adds" will not be accepted after the deadline to add a class (except for acknowledged College error).
- Please mention that all students should read the section entitled "Academic Regulations and Procedures" in the Brooklyn College *Undergraduate Bulletin* or *Graduate Bulletin* for a complete listing of academic regulations of the College. These may be found on the [Academic Calendars, Course Schedules, and Bulletins](#) page of the Registrar's website.
- Video and/or audio recording of class lectures and review sessions without the advanced consent of the instructor is prohibited. Upon written request, the instructor may grant in writing permission for students to record course lectures, on the condition that these recordings are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Students with approved accommodations from the [Center for Student Disability Services](#) permitting the recording class meetings must present the accommodation letter to the instructor in advance of recording. On any days when classes will be recorded, the instructor will notify all students in advance. Distribution of recordings without written permission of the instructor is a violation of educational law.
- Finally, Brooklyn College faculty are expected to check their **official college e-mail** on a regular basis, and to use their college account for all college business.

Your assistance in this effort to inform our students of key academic information is greatly appreciated. Thank you and best wishes for a productive semester!

cc: President Michelle Anderson
Provost and Senior Vice President Anne Lopes
Vice President Lillian O'Reilly
Vice President Ronald Jackson
Dean Qing Hu
Associate Dean Merih Uctum (interim)
Dean April Bedford
Associate Dean María Scharrón-del Río
Dean Kenneth Gould
Professor Lynda Day
Dean Peter Tolia
Professor Sophia Suarez
Dean Maria Ann Conelli
Anthony Brown, Esq.
Tony Thomas, Esq.
Associate Provost Tammie Lea Cumming
Natalie Coombs

The following are the full addresses for key links embedded in the text above.

Faculty Handbook

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/administration/provost/faculty/handbook.php>

Brooklyn College Self-paced Blackboard Basics Course

https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/ld.php?content_id=54361426

Brooklyn College Self-paced Guide to Online Pedagogy (BCGO)

http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/abo_administration_provost_faculty/G2OP_Self-enrollment_instructions.pdf

Transitioning to your CUNY Zoom Account

<http://info.brooklyn.cuny.edu/confluence/display/technology/CUNY+Zoom>

Office of the Registrar

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/administration/enrollment/registrar.php>

Academic Calendars, Course Schedules, and Bulletins

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/administration/enrollment/registrar/bulletins.php>

Office of Diversity and Equity Programs

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/offices/diversity.php>

University of Michigan: Religious Holidays during the 2020-2021 Academic Year

https://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays20-21.html

What is an “Academically Related Activity”? – Guidance for VOE Rosters

http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/abo_administration_provost_faculty/VOE_AcademicallyRelatedActivity_10-2020.pdf