

COVID-19 Communication Update

March 20, 2020

To: College of Art and Design Faculty and Staff

From: Todd Jokl

Dear Faculty and Staff,

We are coming to the starting blocks for a second time this semester and I appreciate your hard work. I also recognize we continue to navigate a rapidly changing environment and while I am particularly grateful for your adaptability and dedication, I also want you to continue to take care of yourselves.

At the time I am writing this message, Governor Cuomo has asked all businesses to keep non-essential employees home. By the time you read this, there will likely be updates from the University as to what this means for RIT. However, in short, unless you are specifically requested to report to campus on Monday, you should work from home. This includes faculty as you continually work on your course content. Again, I appreciate your flexibility under rapidly changing circumstances.

Staff

The overall staff effort has been inspiring. Many of you have transitioned to working remotely and have done so very effectively. You should be in close contact with your supervisors regarding expectations and communications.

Overall, we will work to keep student support in a similar fashion as it is under regular circumstances. By that, I mean students and faculty should work to solve problems and our school and college staff will be an integral part of this. I ask that you monitor email regularly and check voicemail, etc.

Voicemail instructions: <https://www.rit.edu/its/services/network-communication/telephony/messenger-user-manual#tty>

Academics

All courses should have their updated syllabus posted to MyCourses today.

All faculty should communicate with EACH of their students today if you have not already done so. This communication should include a positive message and information about your updated course materials and expectations. Continue with ongoing communications next week and as we move forward, but try to be strategic and efficient with your communications. Numerous emails each with tidbits of information will be lost in the clutter. Just as this is a point of high stress for us, it is equally stressful for students.

Many faculty have questions about the Pass/Fail options that have been made available to students. I will provide more information about this next week. In the interest of keeping today's message succinct and for faculty to focus on the immediate delivery of courses, I will share that the Pass/Fail option is not an item faculty need to be concerned with. You need not reference this option at all in your syllabus. In fact, you should NOT reference it. Regardless of what option a student chooses with the registrar, faculty will submit letter grades as normal for ALL of their students. In fact, you likely won't even know if a student selects this option. Again, more information to come.

Are students accessing MyCourses? Next week we will ask all faculty to provide an update on EACH class and let us know if any particular students are not checking in. Details and instructions will be provided. At any time if you have concerns about a student, you should use Starfish!

All courses should be using Zoom for synchronous delivery and can work with Access Services on captioning and/or interpreter needs. Course should NOT use BlueJeans moving forward.

Resources

Chris Jackson has put together a wonderful readiness tool for you to use as a checklist as you prepare for remote delivery of your classes. I encourage you all to use it. It can be accessed [on this page](#).

RIT has also created a dedicated website for students as they transition to the online environment. It includes information about how to best engage in the online experience; how to connect with support services online; how to access electronic versions of select textbooks. It will be an evolving page as updates are made throughout the weekend.

<https://www.rit.edu/coronavirus/student-support-learning-online>

Ongoing faculty resources, workshop info, and other course support can be found at:

<https://www.rit.edu/coronavirus/for-faculty-and-staff>

Inside CAD

<https://inside.cad.rit.edu/>

with specific CAD Tech support at

<https://confluence.cad.rit.edu/display/CIASKB/CADTech+COVID-19+Response>

Facilities

Please note the following may change without advanced notice.

At present, the campus is open but is operating under holiday access. This means that moving forward external building access will be available via card swipe access points located at the Gannett and Booth Hall loading docks and the breezeway entrance at Bevier Gallery. In addition, any of your keys, for example your office keys, will give you access to your building through any of the entrance doors.

At present, our labs, studios, and shops are NO LONGER accessible to undergraduate students. Graduate students still needing to retrieve and or photograph EXISTING work should do so as soon as possible. The initial timeline given was that graduate students would have access to facilities until next Friday, March 27th at 5 p.m. but again, accessibility may change at a moment's notice.

Final Thoughts

I can't stress enough the commitment that RIT has to our students, faculty, and staff. I hear it every day in my discussions with RIT administrators. We are all in this together. I know that we will come through this challenging time stronger than ever. Thank you again for your Herculean efforts! Please try to find some time to unwind and enjoy your weekend.

Yours in Creativity,

Todd