

Subject: Start of the Semester Memo

Hello all Fall 2020 Batten teaching faculty!

I hope that you are ready for a fascinating fall semester! In this email you will find dates and various other items and policies that are important for faculty to know as we start the Fall 2020 semester. This is a very dense email, **please pay attention to important dates and other requests**. Feel free to save this information for your future reference. This memo will also be stored on the Batten [Community Faculty Resources](#) page.

DATES

Classes begin Tuesday, August 25 [The updated academic calendar for Fall 2020 is available [HERE](#)]

Additional NOTES:

- **All undergraduate** (4999 and below) **courses will start remotely for the first two weeks**. Any “in person” components of undergraduate courses may begin in person on September 8th.
- **Classes ARE held on Labor Day**, Monday, September 7.
- There is NO fall break/reading days in October.

Last day of classes is Tuesday, November 24.

Thanksgiving Recess: Wednesday, November 25 - Sunday, November 29th

Reading Days: Monday, November 30, Tuesday, December 1, Sunday, December 6 & Wednesday, December 9

Exams **[administered on-line only]**: Wednesday, December 2 – Friday, December 11

Drop/Add Information

Final Day to ADD a Course: **Tuesday, September 8**

Last day to DROP a Course (will not show on transcript) – **Tuesday, October 13** [this is a month later than usual]

Final Day to Drop a Course with a W: Tuesday, October 27

When are Fall 2020 Grades Due?

48 business hours after YOUR final exam. Absolutely no later than Tuesday, December 15 by 5:00pm.

Syllabus information

Syllabus submission for Collab Library

Please send me your Fall 2020 course syllabi as soon as possible and no later than Thursday, August 20th. Please include language regarding honor, personal well-being, and plagiarism. Additional information on each is below and is expected to be in your syllabus.

Syllabus Language for Honor, Grading, Additional Time, and a Personal Wellbeing statement

Statements are in the attachment to this email and are also on the [Faculty Resources webpage](#). **These were updated spring 2019 and must be included as written.**

Plagiarism

Because of misunderstandings among students about the definition of academic fraud, instructors are encouraged to address this subject in their classes and in their syllabi. Please distribute these standards in writing to the class and post in your course Collab site. You can find some good information about the honor system at UVA here: <http://honor.virginia.edu/faculty>. The Batten School feels very strongly

about academic fraud and enforcing the University honor code standards within our School. Faculty should take note that Batten supports the Honor Code and you.

Field Trips

Given the continuing risk associated with COVID-19, the University is restricting all non-essential domestic travel for instructional purposes for the foreseeable future. There should be no field trips planned for fall 2020.

Other Course information

Final Exams

University policy states that course final exams can only be given on the date and time announced by the University. At times, this date is inconvenient for students and/or faculty, but please note that **a synchronous final exam (in person or online) cannot be given outside of the date and time announced**. Faculty may choose to give an asynchronous take home final exam or another final exercise outside of the University announced date and time, but a final exam must be given on the date and time announced by the University. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Batten Grade Distributions

To ensure some consistency across courses, the Batten School has a grading scale as follows:

For all Batten courses (Undergraduate and Graduate – elective and core), faculty are encouraged to aim for an average course GPA of 3.5.

If you are teaching in the Batten School and feel a pedagogical need to deviate from this target, please let Associate Dean, Jay Shimshack, know no later than September 4. He is happy to talk through any such exceptions.

Faculty Teaching Core Courses in either the BA or MPP curriculum

The curriculum is designed so that students are put to the test academically, and we know that students will have multiple assignments due around the same time, which is part of the nature of this program. We simply ask that if you are planning to have major assignment due in your class (48 hour project, major mid-term or other large project) please give the other faculty teaching in the core a heads up; this way everyone knows what is coming for students.

Class Rosters

You will be asked to **verify class rosters through SIS**. Please do not rely on Collab for completeness or accuracy of the class roll. SIS, and **not** Collab, contains the official enrollment for instructors and students. If you have any challenges using SIS, please let me know. I am happy to help.

End of semester events/parties and alcohol

Please review the COVID-19 information regarding social gatherings HERE. Additionally, due to the Governor's Executive Order that institutions of higher education may only conduct onsite operations for essential functions, they are not accepting alcohol and other non-essential event requests at this time.

Useful Student information

Absences

Serious illness or death within the student's immediate family, religious holidays and UVa athletic contests are all understandable reasons for missing class. We hope that students will not be penalized when they are absent for such reasons. These students have the obligation to make the necessary arrangements ahead of time for make-ups. You are not obliged to provide makeup tests for students whose absence is not warranted by the listed circumstances.

Students attending class so irregularly as to be making no progress in the course may be excluded from this policy. Up to the Withdrawal deadline, the resultant grade to the student is a W; thereafter, an F. This policy is reasonable, however, only when announced to the students in advance.

Students occasionally disappear for extensive intervals from the radar screen. When that happens or you have serious concerns about the well-being of a Batten student, please alert Amanda Crombie, Director of Academic Programs or Jill Rockwell, Senior Assistant Dean of Student Services; one of them will follow up with you in these regards. If you are concerned about a non-Batten student in one of your classes, please contact the [University Office of the Dean of Students](#).

Validation of Students' Excuses

Neither Amanda nor Student Health provide written excuses for students, nor do we validate their reasons for absences or failure to meet course requirements. When a student leaves town on an emergency or is incapacitated or otherwise unable to contact instructors, Amanda will notify Faculty. In other instances, instructors, in responding to requests from students for accommodation in the completion of course requirements, may find it helpful to solicit from students a written statement, pledged on their Honor.

Mandatory Reporting

See the [Just Report It](#) web site for details. Click [here](#) for more information and resources on Reporting by Responsible Employees. Please also review the [Title IX](#) website for policies on preventing and addressing discrimination and harassment.

Violence Prevention and Bystander Intervention

The University is committed to promoting a healthy community of sexual respect and bystander intervention. If you are interested in learning more, there is a 1-hour [Hoos Got Your Back Bystander Intervention Training](#) session. Additionally, you are encouraged to review the other resources and links on the "Hoos Got Your Back" [website](#).

Learning Disabilities, Title 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act

The Student Disability Access Center (SDAC), located in the Elson Student Health Center, can arrange diagnostic testing when instructors suspect the possibility of a learning disorder. SDAC makes recommendations to faculty in terms of proposed classroom accommodations for specific learning disabilities and other medical conditions covered under federal legislation. The SDAC website has a section to assist [faculty](#). Academic Affairs staff [Amanda Crombie and Kristine Nelson] are always happy to work with our faculty, SDAC, and our students and assist with requested accommodations.

University Ombudsperson

Brad Holland is the [University's Ombudsperson](#). The University Ombuds is an independent, confidential resource available to assist faculty, staff, and students in resolving problems, complaints, conflicts and other issues when normal processes and procedures have not worked satisfactorily. You can reach Brad

by phone at 924-7819 and via email at bholland@virginia.edu. For further information, consult the [webpage](#).

Best wishes for a successful semester! Please do not hesitate to contact either Amanda Crombie [ajcrombie@virginia.edu] or me for any assistance.

Kristine