Message from the Provost

Dear Millersville University Faculty:

As a follow-up to President Wubah’s communication this morning, Millersville University is taking the necessary steps to ensure a healthy and safe learning and working environment for all University community members during the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak. The primary objective of these actions is to ensure that students complete their academic requirements for the semester. Millersville does not have any confirmed or presumed cases of the virus at this time; however, we will be transitioning our courses to remote delivery via D2L and other technologies and will be reassessing our return to normal operations on a weekly basis.

Faculty are permitted on campus to complete any work necessary to ensure academic continuity and access any resources they need. Academic performances and events on campus are suspended until further notice. All faculty supervising internships for credit, clinical and field placements, and student teaching assignments will continue as long as the host institution is open for business.

For non-instructional faculty who provide services to students (e.g., counseling/advising/library services) we encourage you to maintain your accessibility to students through phone and video (Zoom) sessions. Online library services and information resources will continue to be available to faculty and students. Please contact your subject librarian (http://library.millersville.edu/directory/subject-librarians) with any questions. The Writing Center will move operations online and continue supporting students. Any questions can be directed to Dr. Bill Archibald, Director. The link to the Writing Center is: https://www.millersville.edu/english/writingcenter/index.php.

IT is creating course shells in D2L for any faculty member whose courses currently do not have a course shell. The course shells are located in D2L and will be inactive. Faculty will need to activate their course shell so it becomes accessible to students. Once activated, the course will appear in D2L for students to access. Faculty will need to modify their syllabus, update assignments or directions, and post it in the D2L shell so students are aware of any modifications. All faculty must provide their chairs and deans with an explanation of how the course will be completed.

To support faculty with the transition for remote delivery, face-to-face classes will be suspended for the week of March 23rd. This week will be dedicated to faculty in person and Zoom trainings/meetings in order to transition needed materials to virtual format. Previously scheduled online classes will continue as scheduled.

Sessions will include Basic D2L resource sharing, course communication, grades set-up and collection and assessment of student work. Additional sessions will be offered using University supported tools for live synchronous class sessions and performance or presentation assignment assistance. Please see the March 12 ‘Ville Daily for sign-up information and a calendar.
Workshops will be 30-45 minutes in length and are scheduled so interested faculty may attend multiple sessions in sequence. All workshops will be hosted in McNairy Library room 104 and facilitated by Marie Firestone and Matt Fox from the Instruction & Technology Support Team. All sessions are open to anyone who is interested in refreshing their skill sets.

Faculty who have not used D2L or delivered courses through a remote environment will be required to participate in the training. Training will be available during the week of Spring Break on a voluntary basis. Training will be required the week of March 23 for those who do not attend sessions during the Spring Break. You are strongly encouraged to have materials available for students via remote delivery by the end of the day on Friday, March 27th. This will enable students to check their ability to access materials in a timely manner.

In addition to the in-person trainings, the Instruction & Technology Support Team has created and made available: Preparation Guides, Self-Paced Training Module for Remote Teaching, Self-Paced Training including 22 topics and a host of resources available on the Wiki. Instructional Designers will be available if you have specific questions. The Instructional Design team will be available in person and via Zoom for assistance.

For the current semester, faculty are required to report student attendance for Title IV aid compliance. Faculty advisors are expected to reach out to their advisees to complete academic advising (through remote technologies) and also provide TAP numbers to complete their registrations. We will instruct students to reach out to their faculty advisors. Course registration for Fall 2020 semester will begin as scheduled the week of April 6.

As we make this transition, I want to also remind faculty that FERPA regulations prohibit any type of “posting” of student grades where others have access to them. This applies even if a unique, non-identifying number is used to “mask” each student. Also, grades should never be posted on a non-University approved source such as google docs or sent within a list of grades via a mass email. If you have any questions regarding the FERPA requirements, please contact Registrar Alison Hutchinson.

We will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as needed. Our primary goal is to keep the university community safe while making every effort to minimize adverse impact on the academic progress of our students. Thank you for everything you do for our students and the university.

Have a safe and healthy Spring Break.

Warm regards,

Vilas A. Prabhu
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs