



FACULTY NEWSLETTER

August 31, 2021

Dear Faculty Members and University Instructors,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 academic year at The Catholic University of America!

Yesterday's official start to the fall semester represented the next step in our journey together through the challenging and changing situation of the continued COVID-19 pandemic. This semester will again require the kind of teamwork and flexibility you have all shown this past year and a half, but I am glad to say that because of our continued teamwork, we are in a good position to welcome back the students for an on-campus, in-person education this semester.

There are a number of things that I want to bring to your attention in this (somewhat long) message regarding this semester. Also, please do feel free to reachout to me or our team if you have any questions you can't find the answer to.

COVID-19 MANAGEMENT

FAQ Resources and Websites

Please familiarize yourself with the Fall 2021: Faculty FAQ at <https://provost.catholic.edu/resources/fall-2021-faculty-faq.html> and the Fall 2021: Research Continuity Plan at <https://provost.catholic.edu/resources/fall-2021-research-continuity.html>, where you may find answers to some of the most common questions coming out of the beginning of this year.

I also ask that if you do not already do so, please regularly consult [this website](#) for University-wide COVID-19 updates, visit the Mullen Library's website for its [latest COVID-related information](#), and visit the Student Life website for their [FAQ](#).

Vaccinations and Reporting

Since vaccination rates are on lots of our minds, it is worth reporting them here. **As of the morning of August 27th, we had a vaccination rate of more than 88% among the faculty, staff, and enrolled students who have reported**

(85% for students and 90% for faculty and staff). Our survey response rate is at 98% for enrolled students (with 4441 total responses) and 99% for faculty and staff (with 1234 total responses), and we continue to reach out to non-reporting individuals to reach full compliance with the reporting mandate.

In your downloadable class rosters, there is a column that indicates whether or not a student has finished the vaccination report. As you read above, we can surmise that somewhere between 80-90% of those who have not finished the report are in fact vaccinated, so this should not be taken as an indication of non-vaccination.

If a student has not filled in the survey, he or she should not attend class.

Instructors can email students before class, and/or discreetly ask them to leave class, if they have not finished the survey. However, there is a delay of about a day between finishing the survey and having Cardinal Station pick up the change in status, so if you have questions, you can email deanofstudents@cua.edu.

Quarantine and Isolation

A reminder that all results from symptomatic testing conducted by Student Health and surveillance testing conducted by the Dean of Students office and Athletics are routed to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students has also requested that all students report off-site positive test results to his office.

The Dean of Students then communicates to those students who need to quarantine, conducts contact tracing, and notifies close contacts.

It is possible that unvaccinated students will need to isolate or quarantine over the course of the semester. Additionally, vaccinated students who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 will be subject to isolation or quarantine restrictions. The Dean of Students office will notify you if that is the case. Faculty should allow students to participate remotely in those circumstances.

Face Coverings and Masking

The University follows the [District of Columbia mask mandate](#) requiring masks indoors except when alone or when eating or drinking.

A common question raised about the District mask mandate is whether teaching is considered the equivalent of "giving a speech for broadcast or an audience, provided no one is within six feet of the speaker".

Please note in this regard that a classroom lecture or classroom instruction is not characterized as a "speech" for broadcast or to an audience. Even though one may argue cases for both masking and not masking exceptions, the spirit of this guidance as intended by the DC Department of Health (DC DOH) does not extend to the classroom. When considering the various pedagogies across a university, DC

DOH decided upon a narrower interpretation of the exemption for a speech or broadcast that does not include a classroom lecture or classroom instruction.

However, if you are teaching and have both social distance (6 feet or more) and wear a face shield (ideally while also behind plexiglass), you can remove your mask to teach.

Faculty should also remind students that face coverings are required. If a student is not complying after this friendly reminder, you can remind the class that students are asked to adhere to a [Student Code of Conduct](#). If students have been reminded and are not complying with the safety protocols in place in the classroom, please follow the [disruptive student policy](#) and email cua-studentconduct@cua.edu or deanofstudents@cua.edu.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is central to the teaching and research missions of the University, both understood in their broadest terms: educating the whole person and pursuing the truth in all of its forms. Our need to maintain academic integrity is all the more important during this semester, since many of our students are spread throughout the country and may be tempted to use different methods to complete their assignments and examinations.

Instructors are obliged to familiarize themselves with University policies and procedures and to follow them (see <http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityfull.cfm>).

It is important to be proactive in educating students about academic integrity. Best practices include:

1. Use the distribution of the syllabus as an opportunity to discuss academic integrity within the context of the course and the discipline/field. Explain why it is important as a member of the academic community. This concept is even more important for graduate students who are becoming intentional members of that community; expectations are higher for that reason.
2. When possible, include professional codes of ethics, case studies, and/or discussion questions to prompt student thinking beyond mere consequences and sanctions. Stressing integrity over dishonesty puts the proper constructive context on the discussion.
3. As the first "major" graded assignment nears - paper, report, design, midterm, etc. - revisit this discussion and acknowledge the increased pressure compared to the start of the semester. Situations like these are the decision points, and there are resources to help students make the best decision; the first and most important resource is the instructor. Asking questions is the best way to avoid suffering

sanctions. There are other resources, including the Center for Academic and Career Success and the Writing Center.

Attendance and Student Success

There is a strong correlation between attendance and student success. As such, instructors are asked to review their attendance policies during the first class. Also, you should be clear about your expectations for in person attendance or virtual attendance in the first classes and on your syllabus. Instructors of first-year undergraduate students must take attendance. All undergraduate instructors will receive surveys at week 5 soliciting information about student attendance and academic performance via cardinalsuccess.cua.edu. I ask you to please complete these surveys promptly. Concerns about students not on the first-year class rosters or arising between surveys can be reported to the Center for Academic and Career Success (<https://success.catholic.edu>) or by issuing an alert through [Cardinal Success](#). I am also requiring that midterm grades be submitted for all undergraduate students.

If you are concerned about any of your students and their academic progress, please issue an alert through [Cardinal Success](#). We all know the transition back to in-person learning may be an adjustment for some, and we want to provide both academic and mental health support as needed.

For graduate students, advisors, chairs, and deans should be in regular contact with their graduate students and be sensitive to their academic and personal needs, including mental health support when needed.

Language examinations, comprehensive examinations, dissertation defenses, and the like should be in-person experiences. Of course, we will need to be flexible and adaptable, as circumstances warrant, regarding the format. If circumstances warrant an online dissertation defense, please have the school administrator consult with the graduate dean, Steve Brown, prior to approving any online defenses.

Please continue to ensure that graduate students are enrolled in your courses and appear on Blackboard and your Cardinal Students rosters. This is extremely important if your graduate students receive any financial aid, grants, or scholarships, as they are based on accurate registration and enrollment.

Class Rosters – Students attending who are not registered

All instructors are responsible for checking class rosters on Cardinal Station regularly through the end of the drop/add period, which is Friday, September 10. It is all the more important to maintain a proper class roster this semester as the majority of our courses will be offered remotely.

For the Columbus School of Law, the last day to add or drop a class is Tuesday, August 31.

Do not permit a student who is not registered to attend class. All students must be properly registered. If a student who is not on your class roster attends your class, you may allow her or him to remain for that class period only; however, please tell the student that you will not permit further attendance until her or his name appears on the official class roster and communicate clearly so that the student does not think that you are resolving the situation for him or her.

If the student is unsure what to do, direct her or him to the Center for Academic and Career Success (<https://success.catholic.edu>) or to the appropriate dean's office.

Class Rosters – Students registered and on the roster who are not attending

Please also inform the Center for Academic and Career Success (<https://success.catholic.edu>) if students on your rosters are not attending class. The Center for Academic and Career Success and the dean of their school will follow up to determine the status of these students.

Remote Lab Access

Catholic University provides access to technology resources intended to be used by students as a component to their academic progress.

In addition to the in-person use of desktop computers located in campus computer labs, classrooms, dedicated spaces and library facilities, the University provides students with remote-friendly access to both specific applications and to individual desktop environments.

The remote lab access website is <https://technology.catholic.edu/programs/labremoteaccess/>, and I encourage you to share this link with your students, so that they can take advantage of this access and find which type of access is most useful to them.

Textbook Mandates – Higher Education Opportunity Act

In order to ensure we are in compliance with U.S. Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) and Middle States accreditation requirements, we are obligated to *"disclose, on the institution's Internet course schedule and in a manner of the institution's choosing, the International Standard Book Number and retail price information of required and recommended college textbooks and supplemental materials for each course listed in the institution's course schedule used for preregistration and registration purposes."*

To ensure compliance with HEOA mandates, there is functionality in the Campus Solutions Student Administration system (Cardinal Students) that will allow us to include textbook information as part of the class maintenance table for each course section. This information will be displayed on the schedule of classes in Cardinal Station Self-Service to students and faculty. The textbook and pricing data are populated by an interface with the bookstore ordering system. It is therefore

imperative that your textbook information is completed accurately so that the ISBN and price information in Cardinal Students is updated and available to students as they register for courses.

SOME GOOD NEWS

Fall Semester Kick Off Event

I want to thank everyone who joined us for the celebration of the beginning of the fall semester with some food trucks and fellowship. Over 500 faculty, staff, and students enjoyed lunch and dessert on a warm Monday afternoon, and the best part of the gathering was the laughter and conversation that could be heard across the University Mall, the Pryz, and outside Mullen Library.

Fall Faculty Luncheon

This year's fall faculty luncheon will be held on Tuesday, September 21 from 12:00pm – 2:00pm. Details are still being worked out regarding the location of the event and RSVPs for the luncheon will be sent out soon, but please block off your calendars and I hope you will be able to attend.

The Center for Teaching Excellence

The [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) team is excited to welcome you back to campus for the fall semester!

We will have drop-in Q&A sessions with the instructional design team on Tuesday, September 14th at 11am and Wednesday, September 15th at 2pm - use [this link](#) to join the Zoom meeting. There will also be weekly [Connect and Collaborate](#) sessions beginning September 10th, where instructors can meet up virtually to discuss triumphs and challenges they are experiencing while teaching in this unique environment. We hope you can join us - and remember you can always [request a one-on-one consultation](#) if you would like individualized assistance.

If you would like to receive weekly updates from the Center, you may subscribe [here](#).

Published Works

In the May 2021 newsletter, I mentioned that one of my hopes for a newsletter in the fall 2021 semester is to highlight all of the books, articles, presentations, and podcasts produced by our faculty from May 1, 2020 through April 30, 2021.

I thought now would be a good time show you some of what our faculty colleagues have accomplished over the past year:

- Andrew Abela and Joseph Capizzi, eds.: [A Catechism for Business, Third Edition](#)
- Aaron Butts and Robin Darling Young, eds.: [Syriac Christian Culture: Beginnings to Renaissance](#)

- Aaron Butts, Kristian S. Heal, and Sebastian P. Brock, [*Clavis to the Metrical Homilies of Narsai*](#)
- Trevor Davis Lipscombe: [*Quick\(er\) Calculations: How to Add, Subtract, Multiply, Divide, Square, and Square Root more Swiftly*](#)
- Stephan T. Lenik and Laura E. Masur, "[Introduction: The Archaeology of Jesuit Sites in the Americas](#)," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 8, no. 3 (2021): 341-354.
- Laura Masur: "[Plantation as Mission: American Indians, Enslaved Africans, and Jesuit Missionaries in Maryland](#)," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 8, no. 3 (2021): 385-407.
- Laura E. Masur, "[A Spiritual Inheritance: Black Catholics in Southern Maryland](#)" In *Engaging Sources: The Tradition and Future of Collecting History in the Society of Jesus* (Chestnut Hill: Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies, 2021).
- David Want and Bethany Cieslowski, "[Using Telepresence to Enhance Learner Engagement](#)," *Nurse Educator* Vol 47, Issue 1
- Andrew Weaver, ed.: [*A Companion to Music at the Habsburg Courts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*](#) (Brill's Companions to the Musical Culture of Medieval and Early Modern Europe 4)
- Jeffrey Dirk Wilson, ed.: [*Mystery and Intelligibility: History of Philosophy as Pursuit of Wisdom*](#)
- John Wippel, [*Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas III*](#)

Faculty Appointments

I am also pleased to recognize our colleagues who over the summer were appointed to positions in various Vatican offices:

On June 21, Professor William Daniel of the School of Canon Law was appointed as a Referendary of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura. A special department of the Holy See, the Apostolic Signatura processes and monitors tribunal proceedings from dioceses around the world. Also, if the decisions of a bishop or religious superior are challenged on a local level, they may eventually rise to the level of the Apostolic Signatura, which will then make a final decision. In his new role, Professor Daniel will serve as a referendary, or an advisor, who can provide an opinion on questions of canon law.

On July 19, Professor Jem Rosario Sullivan of the School of Theology and Religious Studies was appointed to a five year term as a Member of the International Council for Catechesis. The appointment was made by Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization.

The International Council for Catechesis was established by St. Pope Paul VI in 1973 and is made up of bishops, scholars and catechetical leaders from around the world, including Europe, Asia and South America. Professor Sullivan is one of two new members from the United States who will serve as advisory consultants for various initiatives of the Vatican in the area of catechesis.

These faculty members join Professor Maryann Cusimano Love of the Department of Politics in the School of Arts and Sciences, who holds an appointment to the Vatican COVID-19 Commission in the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human

Development, as representatives of The Catholic University of America in service to the Universal Church.

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

These are the important upcoming dates for all of us in the month of September.

Thursday, September 2	Mass of the Holy Spirit - University Mass , 12:10 p.m.; No classes held between 11:50 a.m. and 2:10 p.m.
Monday, September 6	Labor Day (Holiday; No classes)
Friday, September 10	Last day to register or add regular session (i.e., full semester) courses, including comprehensive exams and internships (use Cardinal Students)* Last day to drop a regular session (i.e., full semester) course without record or tuition charge (use Cardinal Students)*
Wednesday, September 15	Class of 2025 Convocation, 9:30 a.m.
Tuesday, September 21	Fall Faculty Luncheon, 12:00 p.m.

Please remember that you can always find the full listing of the Academic Calendar on the Enrollment Services website at <https://enrollment-services.catholic.edu/academic-calendar/fall-spring-calendar.html>.

As always, I thank you for your attention to these issues and events, and I wish you and your students every success during the upcoming academic year.

Sincerely yours,



Aaron Dominguez, Ph.D.
Provost

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