



FACULTY NEWSLETTER

August 25, 2023

Dear Faculty Members, University Instructors, and members of the Academic Area staff,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 academic year at The Catholic University of America!

In many ways, today marks the beginning of the academic year for us as a University. While this coming Monday is the first day of classes, most of our first year and transfer students have already moved into their dorm rooms or apartments, our graduate students have been "oriented" both online and in-person, and our newest faculty members have been introduced to some of the intricacies of life as an academic in our schools and departments.

As we continue our orientation sessions for the class of 2027 and our transfer students, and as we slowly welcome our other classes back to campus, I want to take a moment to remind you of a number of important matters regarding the beginning of this 2023-2024 academic year.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTINUITY and CONTINGENCY PLANNING

As part of our constant efforts to maintain instructional continuity, I ask that you continue to include in your course syllabi the following or similar contingency language:

1. "In the event that the University as a whole, or this class in particular, must shift to entirely online course delivery, the following adjustments will be made to the mode of instruction, assignments, and assessments for that specified time period..."

Note: Your syllabus should include how you will handle these situations that impact the whole class. If online instruction will be used, Zoom links should be available in advance.

2. "Students may still be required to quarantine due to close contact or to isolate them at times over the course of the semester due to a number of health reasons, including COVID, RSV, or other illness. In these cases where

students are told by Student Health and/or the Dean of Students that they cannot attend class in person, students need to have access to course materials. In this case, the following adjustments will be made to the mode of instruction, assignments, and assessments for students who are required to not attend in person..."

Note: Your syllabus should clearly specify whether access is hybrid participation, recording of the class, or make-up class participation. If hybrid participation is the option specified, provide Zoom links in advance.

3. In other rare circumstances, students may make requests for alternative class participation arrangements for a limited time period related to their personal health, family emergency, or extraordinary circumstance. In such a case, students may request to have access to course materials in place of in person attendance only for these circumstances. All of these arrangements are at the exclusive discretion of the instructor.

Note: You should specify what conditions (if any) are acceptable to request alternative participation. For example, health issues other than COVID, family emergencies, etc. You should also make clear what access they will allow for students (hybrid, Zoom recording, make up class, etc.).

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](#).

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. 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 8. 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 29.

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 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.

Classroom Setups

Please make sure that at the end of each class meeting, the classroom is set up as it is displayed on the floor plan posted on the back of the classroom door or near the door.

It is understandable that instructors will want to change the seating arrangements at times, but the rooms need to be reset with the desks/tables back in place at the end of the class.

Facilities has no more than 2 people working in each building overnight and with limited time to get all the regular tasks done, the Facilities teams cannot keep putting furniture back in place as it affects the time the staff has to clean the rest of the building.

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.

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

The Center for Teaching Excellence

The [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) offers a wide range of services for all instructors at the University, including full time and part time faculty, adjunct faculty, and graduate student teaching fellows and teaching assistants. Please visit their [events page](#) for the fall programming schedule, and the [resource page](#) for helpful guides and video tutorials.

The Center is excited to announce a new resource designed to answer common instructor questions and provide guidance on the use of artificial intelligence at Catholic University. Please find it by selecting Resources in the CTE website menu bar or by clicking here: [Artificial Intelligence FAQ](#).

The Center will also be hosting a series of Artificial Intelligence Workshops from September through November that are open to all instructors. Faculty Fellows Jonathan Askonas and Justin Litke from the Department of Politics will be facilitating the workshops. Sessions will be formatted as workshops (be ready to try your hand at using AI!) and will require short readings to be completed in advance. For more information and to [register for the workshops](#), please visit the CTE website.

You can always [request a one-on-one consultation](#) if you would like individualized course design or instructional assistance from one of the CTE team members.

Finally, if you would like to receive weekly updates from CTE, you may subscribe [here](#).

Event and Speaking Engagement Requests

My office has created a form to request my attendance at school or department events, which has been placed on the [Provost Office website](#).

Faculty Newsletters and Academic Senate Reports

Every month I share my report given to the Academic Senate with the entire community. These reports are posted on the Provost Office website under "[Faculty Newsletters and Updates](#)," where all my previous newsletters and updates have been posted as well.

I encourage you to link to that website and visit the site often for updates throughout the semester.

Mass of the Holy Spirit - Thursday, August 31

On Thursday, August 31, we will celebrate the Mass of the Holy Spirit in the Great Upper Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

The officers of the University along with administrators and faculty in academic attire are requested to join in the academic procession which will form in Memorial Hall on the ground level (crypt) of the Basilica at 11:45 a.m. The University Marshal will lead the procession.

Since the Mass is televised live on EWTN, the academic procession will begin exactly at 12:00 noon, with the Mass starting at 12:10 p.m.

Priests in attendance are invited to concelebrate and are asked to bring alb and stole and assemble in the Upper Sacristy no later than 11:45 a.m. Please let the Office of Campus Ministry know if you will be concelebrating by emailing cua-campus-ministry@cua.edu.

If you are unable to attend because of an unmovable conflict, you must submit your absence request by [completing this form](#) with my office.

Academic Calendar

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

Thursday, August 31	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 4	Labor Day (Holiday - No classes)
Friday, September 8	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 13	Class of 2027 Convocation, 9:30 a.m.

Please remember that you can always find the full listing of the Academic Calendar on the [Enrollment Services website](#).

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Dominguez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Aaron Dominguez, Ph.D.
Provost

Office of the Provost

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