

Dear Colleagues,

As we near the end of the first week of online teaching (the second week in the Drama School), I write to thank you for your efforts and draw your attention to resources available at the Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. If you have any urgent teaching-related problems, please contact the Yale ITS help desk at [203-432-9000](tel:203-432-9000) and select Option 2. Poorvu Center staff members are collaborating with ITS to provide timely answers and expert referrals. For non-urgent questions, please use our [contact us page](#).

President Salovey has articulated Yale's aspiration "to be the research university **most committed to teaching and learning**." I am very proud of the efforts of our faculty and staff to provide the best possible education to our students despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there have been occasional glitches, many faculty and students have reported a generally successful first four days of teaching online. The challenges to delivering an excellent education via technology are real, but you have demonstrated creativity and resilience in meeting these challenges.

In particular, I would like to thank the staff of the Poorvu Center and all the other staff in similar roles at our professional schools who spent the spring break helping to support faculty and teaching fellows in the move online and who continue to put in long hours from remote locations. Hundreds of faculty and teaching fellows have participated in [workshops](#) or used the [Zoom Guide for Faculty](#) or the relevant [Library Resources](#) page. I am grateful also to the information technology staff, librarians, and all the others who make it possible for Yale to fulfill its mission.

Here I would like to remind you about specific types of flexibility that are important to ensure that all students can succeed.

- We have encouraged instructors to record live Zoom sessions so students may review lectures later. Please recognize that some students may not be comfortable being filmed—and communicate with them about **options to join without video** or by phone only. Recordings may not be valuable for all courses, so decide what is best for your class.
- Please demonstrate **flexibility with attendance policies**. A requirement to earn attendance or participation credit by joining live Zoom sessions by video will exclude students who have limited access to technology and those who prefer to avoid being filmed and will be difficult for some international students. You can mitigate student anxiety by suggesting equivalent alternatives, such as reviewing content independently and asking questions by email.

- The unanticipated transition to online learning calls for many **pedagogical adjustments**. Rather than always trying to replicate the in-person experience online (e.g. synchronous class time equivalent to in-person class time), you should choose your class structure according to your priorities for your students' learning. In some cases, for example, students are now watching recorded lectures and spending class time asking questions or solving problems in small groups. Please consider what alternative is likely to work best for your class.
- The Poorvu Center continues to provide **support for your students**:
 - [Undergraduate tutoring and Academic Strategies programs](#) have resumed in virtual formats.
 - [Graduate and Professional School Student teaching programs](#) continue with online offerings.
 - [Graduate Writing Lab support](#) continues with online programs and virtual consultations.

We believe you can be flexible in these and other ways as you continue to teach your students in very different circumstances from the beginning of the semester.

As a reminder, the Poorvu Center will continue to offer [individual consultations to address both pedagogical and technical questions](#). Poorvu Center staff are hosting ongoing [Continuity Community conversations](#) where faculty can address timely issues and share strategies.

Please also feel free to [write to me](#) personally if you have ideas for how to improve our students' educational experience in the coming weeks.

Thank you again for your unstinting efforts to offer the best possible education to our students in these uncertain times. I hope that we will all look back at this semester as a time when Yale rose to the challenge and demonstrated its commitment to excellent teaching and learning.

Best regards,

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