

From: [Office of the MSU Provost](#)
Subject: Additional guidelines on remotely delivered instruction
Date: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:51:26 PM
Attachments: [image003.png](#)



MONTANA
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the Provost

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your engagement as we seek creative ways to continue advance the mission of MSU in these challenging circumstances.

I am grateful for the enthusiastic response of faculty and for the great efforts from CFE, ATO and faculty leaders in their work to support our campus in transitioning to remote teaching and learning.

Montana State University is transitioning to all on-line and remote course delivery as of Monday, March 23 under the direction of the [Montana Commissioner of Higher Education](#). The Spring semester 2020 is continuing, but we now have the directive to move all coursework to be delivered on-line and remotely. This includes everything from courses through a web portal, to assignments made via email, to even the possibility of conference calls or skype-like sessions for smaller courses.

The expectation at MSU is that all courses will move to remote delivery. There will be a few select exceptions; for example, some of our residential two-year workforce development, career technical education programs, in-situ teaching education and nursing clinicals. The requirement for remote delivery is directly connected to the critically important need to reduce densities of people gathering together; social distancing. During this unprecedented situation, our guiding north star is the safety and well-being of students, faculty, staff and the community. Let's work to together to avoid a situation in which a student's courses are all available remotely, except for one lab, which forces a student to choose between dropping the lab or changing their plans to stay home with family.

I ask faculty to work with your department heads and discipline peers to explore creative approaches for re-thinking how the remainder of the course material can be presented to students, with a focus on essential course learning outcomes and

assessment of these learning outcomes.

With this restructuring, different alternatives to conventional assessment methods become feasible. These alternatives will be preferable in the current circumstances, especially in light of the challenge involved in insuring integrity in the remote delivery of conventional examinations. Faculty instructors may wish to consider assessment alternatives at the outset of planning for the transition because these changes will have an impact on your review and modification of course schedules, syllabi, pedagogy methods and technologies. Additional details and support materials are available in the [MSU Learn Anywhere](#) site.

Instructional laboratories and other hands-on experiential learning studios and practica are more challenging to deliver remotely. For this emergency situation, I ask faculty to use their highly creative minds and talents in planning remote delivery by considering strategies such as: putting some parts of the experience online; providing raw data for analysis; providing short video presentations and introducing virtual laboratories. Universities across the country are researching and developing solutions to these same challenges and I encourage faculty to reach out to their discipline colleagues to share ideas. Again, the [MSU Learn Anywhere](#) site provides some great information for getting started.

Changes in the virus situation are occurring rapidly, which affect our planning and responses, and calls for a high degree of flexibility as we navigate our professional and personal activities. I encourage you to check your email as frequently as possible over spring break. Should MSU make any changes, it will communicate those to students, faculty, staff and the community via email and through our [MSU COVID-19 webpage](#).

Let me express my thanks for the kindness that you all have shown as we work together to navigate this grand challenge that has landed on our doorstep. Patient and supportive kindness – expressed to one another, and especially to our students– is what will continue to make this University a generously warm place, even as we begin to practice the sweet sorrow of social distancing.

I have received many stirring messages these past few days, and I'll close by sharing a message I received from a faculty member yesterday that really lifted my spirits. *"As we navigate the unfamiliar for the remainder of the semester, let us reframe what we might now perceive as inconvenience and frustration into a golden moment of opportunity and worth. They are a reminder of the threads of resilience and sensitivity that have always been part of the fabric of Montana State University—the characteristics*

that make us collectively strong and special."

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted.

Sincerely,

Robert Mokwa
Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs
Montana State University

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