As we are all well aware, we are living through an unprecedented time – one that is full of uncertainty and constantly changing realities. One, that if we are completely honest with ourselves was beyond any glimmer of what we thought it would be just a few short days ago. If that is true for us, imagine the unrest and anxiety our students are feeling. We are all in this together; learning, adapting, and surviving the best we can in a constantly evolving reality.

Just like you, our students have more on their plate than ever before and are balancing responsibilities they couldn’t have imagined when they registered months ago. This Survival Guide is designed to be a one-stop shop of resources to help you navigate this transition with as much poise and sanity as possible.

Its pages contain reminders to be kind to yourself (there is no need to be perfect at the moment), to try to do the best you can, and to be a calming and steadying force for your students. There are also templates you can use to frame the important conversations your students are looking for you to lead, as well as tips and tricks for navigating BlackBoard and teaching remotely. Please take note that this document will continue receiving regular updates in the days ahead.

Yes, there are lots of tools available; use them as you see fit! For some, live conversations and lecture capture that help preserve the traditional learning experience are just the ticket. For others, a content-rich, asynchronous learning environment may be what works best. There is no right answer here; all we can do is try our best, be accessible, and preserve as much of the traditional learning experience as possible for our students.

Warmly,

Christina Robinson

Christina Robinson, Ph.D.
Interim Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies, Research, and Faculty Development
• Welcome Letter from Kristine Larsen

• Template for Communicating with Students
  Sample

• Adding Content to Blackboard
  New to Online Teaching or have minimal experience? If this sounds like you, please reference the following materials to get you started quickly and easily

• Blackboard Best Practices
  These Blackboard Best Practices can help you have a successful transition to Online instruction.

• Blackboard Tools
  Already know how upload files in your course and want to learn more?
  Here are a few more useful Blackboard tools!

• Ally
  The purpose of Ally is to check course materials to ensure they meet the WCAG 2.1 Level AA Guidelines. WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) are part of a series of web accessibility guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the main international standards organization for the internet.

• Universal Design for Learning
  A list of resources on UDL (J. Nicoll-Senft and N. Takemae).

• Helpful Websites
  Some useful websites to aid in your pursuit of academic integrity and personal sanity.

• Student Checklist
  A sample syllabus adaptation to aid students (AC 312, M. Kulesza).
Welcome Letter from Kristine Larsen

Colleagues –

Well, the other shoe has dropped, as we knew it would. It’s the middle of Spring Break, and we have to somehow convert our expertly crafted courses into what is a completely new format for some. It’s scary, it’s frustrating, and it’s not ideal, but it is our current reality.

Please remember that we are all in this together. Make use of the expertise (and patience) of our IT and IDTRC specialists and librarians. Today one of my favorite IT staff members patiently worked with me to debug remote access to my office desktop computer. My stress level decreased exponentially once I was able to retrieve files I had saved on my university computer!

It’s ok to admit to yourself and your students that you have doubts, concerns, and even fears about transitioning to an online platform, especially so rapidly. Remember, they share your feelings! Remind your students that you are all learning something new together. Ask them to help you ferret out bugs in the system, broken links, unclear voiceovers, etc. You can even open the class up to a little democracy in action, and have students vote on possible alternate assignments.

I highly recommend using the calendar tool on Blackboard to help remind your students to stay on track with their work now that we will not be meeting MW 9:25-10:40 AM. Time management skills (or a lack thereof) are a major challenge for online learners.

When crafting new course materials, don’t be afraid to let your personality show. At this point in the semester students have gotten to know you – your voice, mannerisms, sense of humor, and quirks. Weaving these into your online course materials is like having you there helping your student learn, even if you are not doing WebEx lectures. Do you have PPTs already made for your course? Break them into thematic chunks to create mini-lectures (less than 15 minutes each) and record a narration so that they can hear your voice. Do you tell jokes and anecdotes? Include those as well! Don’t forget the memes or cartoons you normally use. I was recording a narration the other day and found myself gesturing with my hands as I was describing the collapse of a star under gravity. I laughed and described to the students as part of my narration exactly what I was doing with my hands. It’s a little sense of normalcy in an abnormal situation. I also linked a short video of me dancing around like a neutron star that I had created for another course.

Use social media and make your media social! Create a private Facebook or Instagram page for your class or use Twitter to comment back and forth. The discussion board in Blackboard is also a natural place to continue conversations online. If you need to talk to students individually or in a small group, the Skype for Business through Outlook is easy to use. You can have students submit performances or presentations as YouTube videos. They can set the privacy to “unlisted,” so that only people who have the URL can see the videos.

Please don’t try and reinvent the wheel! There are many high-quality videos, websites, and open access texts available online. Use them! If you check your email, you will probably find that your professional organizations have already been sending you examples to help you convert your classes. Remember, faculty across the world are in the same exact situation you are, and some have been working on converting their classes for several weeks already.

Finally, take a deep breath and repeat the following mantra: “I can’t cover everything I want so I will only cover what I need.” Continue until you begin to accept this. If you are teaching an upper level course or a foundational prerequisite to a future course, you know what your students absolutely need to master to be successful later on. Concentrate on those topics and techniques. For other
courses, prioritize the key points and learning outcomes that you want them to take away from the course. Emphasize quality over quantity.

This is a grand experiment, one for which we certainly did not offer our informed consent. I guarantee you will come away from this experience having learned some valuable lesson about teaching and learning. Perhaps you will discover successful new pedagogies and techniques that you can apply to your courses in the future. But I can guarantee that both you, and your students will learn important lessons about the importance of creativity, perseverance, teamwork, and flexibility, lessons that certainly transcend a single course or semester.

Stay safe, practice self-care, and open your mind to the possibilities of this uniquely teachable and learnable moment. Please continue to share your creative solutions with your colleagues, because none of us is as smart as all of us.

See you on the other side!

Kris Larsen
Faculty Director
CCSU Center for Teaching and Faculty Development
Template for Communicating with Students

All classes:

As you have heard, we are moving classes fully online for the rest of the semester. I understand that this is not what you signed up for, but please know that I have been teaching distance learning courses for nearly 25 years so understand that while I am also scrambling, I have a good sense of what needs to be done. The balance here is to give you academically honest college credit for this course and making sure you master the basic learning outcomes while understanding that this format might be new to some of you (plus the added stress of a zombie apocalypse without the zombies – so disappointed about that).

A) SCI 211
Since your course has been flipped since the beginning, we are in the best shape of any of my classes. As noted in my previous announcement, I will continue to provide “minilectures” for each Lesson the morning after the online quizzes are due using narrated PPTS (also available as YouTube videos). Please continue to provide me with input on which topics you want me to go over. My mindreading skills have not improved while hunkering down at home :/ . I will need to make some adjustments in the “graded in-class activities” to make sure they are things you can do at home either with pencil and paper or simple household items. I have already posted several of these on Blackboard. I will also have to make some adjustments in the 3 remaining short “in-class quizzes.” We will move to Blackboard, but I will try to keep them similar in format to what you are used to. Stay tuned for more info on Monday. The portfolio will remain as is – that is something you have been working on and does not demand anything other than the incorporation of the “in-class activities” that you will be doing anyway or demonstrations that I will provide as video links. Recall that my main job in this course is to prepare you for your science methods class and the Praxis exam. I feel that I can do a reasonably good job of this without the added stress of a cumulative final exam. I will have to redistribute the weight of the other assignments – more on that Monday.

B) AST 418
Because your course is graded on homework, take home exams, and a final paper, there is no need to make any major adjustments. I will be providing information on how to write a good paper using online resources that are openly available to you. Recall that you get to choose the topic, but please run it by me so that I can give you helpful hints on making sure it is not too broad or too narrow in focus. Hopefully you have seen that I have begun to turn my lecture notes into narrated PPT lectures on Blackboard (also available in YouTube videos). As always, please let me know if you can’t understand my handwriting of the equations! I have started a Blackboard calendar letting you know how you should pace yourself through the material and when homework assignments are due. Please reach out to me when (not if) you have questions. I will create a discussion board on Blackboard where you can ask questions that will benefit the entire class (for example, if I have a typo in the notes!). I will be checking in with the class regularly.

C) AST 209
To be honest, your class poses the greatest challenge to me, because of its size, the labs, and the wide range of reasons why people are taking the course. I had a long discussion with myself last night and pondered the important differences between this course and AST 113 The Cosmos, a course I exclusively teach online. Putting aside the difference in content (that course also covers our solar system, which your course does not), the most important differences are the lab, the homework problem sets, and the capstone activity. Therefore, going forward those are the assignments that I am going to stress. Fortunately, none of them require anything other than pencil and paper and the materials I provide online. I am scrapping the cumulative final exam and changing the format of the two
remaining exams. I will have to redistribute the weight of the other assignments – more on that Monday. I am also trimming some of the course material that, while interesting, isn’t essential for students who are taking this course for gen ed credit to know. I WILL, however, make that material available for interested students, especially those taking the course for the Astronomy or Astrobiology minors (because you guys do need to have some exposure to this material). I will clearly mark such material OPTIONAL in big screaming caps. Having said that, since I have edited the course down to only its essential elements, you are responsible for engaging with and mastering that material. I have already started to post narrated versions of the PPTS on Blackboard. There are also links to YouTube video versions available. You will be expected to go through all of these. I have started a calendar on Blackboard to help you stay on task and keep up with the material, as well as submit the labs and homework in a timely manner. I will be checking in with you all weekly as I return your graded labs and homework.

All classes:

Remember that there is a Facebook group you can join to keep some sense of community (https://www.facebook.com/groups/528891841386589/), and I am available through email and Skype provided through Outlook (larsen@ccsu.edu). I know you are not getting the education you wanted. Instead I will be working as hard as I can to provide you with the education you need.

Take some much-needed “me-time” over the rest of this spring break week, and log into Blackboard on Monday with a sense of “let’s do this!”

Stay healthy, and please come visit me on campus in the Fall!

KL
New to Online Teaching or have minimal experience? If this sounds like you, please reference the following materials to get you started quickly and easily.

In just 5 easy steps you can add content to your Blackboard Course Shell.

The key to Blackboard is to start with the Course Menu (figure 1):

![Course Menu](image)

You must build a course menu so that your students can access the content posted and VIEW it!

1. Access your Course Shell by logging-in to [https://ccsu.blackboard.com/](https://ccsu.blackboard.com/)
2. Make sure Edit Mode is On
3. Add Content Area to Menu
4. Upload a file
5. Make sure it’s visible to your students

Need help building your course shell, please watch or read the materials below to get started building:

**Videos:**
1. [How to Create a Content Area](#) on the Course Menu
2. [How to Upload Files](#) to a Content Area

**Documentation:**
1. [How to Create a Content Area](#) on the Course Menu
2. [How to Upload Files](#) to a Content Area
Whether teaching entirely online, hybrid, or an on-ground course, these **Blackboard Best Practices** can help you have a successful kick-off to a great academic year.

- Use CCSU provided pre-built templates: https://web.ccsu.edu/files/idtrc/How_to_Access_PreBuilt_Templates.pdf
- Upload your syllabus!— even if you don’t plan on using Blackboard, it’s a good practice to upload for student reference.
- Remember Accessibility, one way is to use Blackboard Ally
- Use Kaltura Media to upload and closed captioned videos
- Use Google Chrome as your Blackboard browser—Blackboard is 100% compatible with Chrome
- Take an introductory or refresher to Blackboard Course through the IDTRC see available classes at: https://www.ccsu.edu/idtrc/calendar.html
- Take a Magna Commons workshop—ask us how!
- If you use the grade center, use the My Grades tool link
- Call Us!—We are here to help you with all of your Blackboard needs.
Already know how upload files in your course and want to learn more?

Here are a few more useful Blackboard tools!

Communication: Blackboard makes communication with your students quick, convenient, and flexible. Below are three of the most popular communication tools available.

1. **Announcements** – a mainstay of most Blackboard courses
   - Announcements provide a quick and easy way to share information with your students.
   - Announcements will appear on your student’s main Blackboard page and on the Course Menu if you have selected it as a course tool.
   - You can even send your announcements directly to your student’s in-box!
   - For a step-by-step guide please see the IDTRC walk-through for Announcements.

2. **Email and course messages** – another essential communication tool that allows you to easily send e-mails to your students and vice-versa.
   - You will receive a copy of all e-mails sent and can move these messages to your sent folder for easy tracking.
   - This tool will also allow your students to send e-mails to each other or to groups of their peers.
   - For a step-by-step guide please see the IDTRC walk-through for Email and course messages.

3. **Discussion Boards** – a great way to have a threaded conversation about any topic of interest with your students.
   - These conversations can take place at a scheduled time or held asynchronously.
   - You can control the flow of conversation, grade posts, and determine whether students can start new threads or only reply to threads you have started.
   - For a step-by-step guide please see the IDTRC walk-through for Discussion Board.

Assignments: If you would you like your students to submit their papers online, the Blackboard Assignment tool can help! You can create, and/or grade assignments directly through Blackboard.

1. **Creating Assignments** –
   - If you have assignments already prepared, as a word or .pdf file you can upload them as assignments, set your due date, and allow students to submit their work directly through Blackboard.
   - You can also create new assignments directly in Blackboard and link to content from many popular publishers.
   - As an added bonus, creating Blackboard assignments will simultaneously create a column in your Blackboard gradebook!
   - To see how, please watch this short Video or consult our quick reference guide here document.

2. **How to Grade an Assignment** –
   - You can also grade assignments in Blackboard, leave comments on your students work, and record the overall score in one screen.
   - To see how, please watch this short video or consult our quick reference guide here document.

Student Grades: It’s useful to add a link on your course menu to the **My Grades** tool. This tool allows the students to view their posted grades for your course. To learn more and see how to Add the My Grades Tool for a handy guide!
What is Ally?

Ally is a separate product created and sold by Blackboard that BOR purchased and integrated within our Blackboard Learning Management System. The purpose of Ally is to check course materials to ensure they meet the WCAG 2.1 Level AA Guidelines. WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) are part of a series of web accessibility guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the main international standards organization for the internet.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 defines how to make Web content more accessible to people with disabilities. Accessibility involves a wide range of disabilities, including visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, language, learning, and neurological disabilities.

Alternative Formats for Students

Ally creates alternative formats of your course files based on the original for your students. These formats are made available with the original file so students can find everything in one convenient location.

You don’t need to do anything. The alternative formats are created for you.
Accessibility Score Indicators

Ally measures the accessibility of each file attached to your course and shows you at-a-glance how it scores. Scores range from Low to Perfect. The higher the score the fewer the issues.

- **Low:** File is not accessible and needs immediate attention.
- **Medium:** File is somewhat accessible and could use improvement.
- **High:** File is accessible but could be improved.
- **Perfect:** File is accessible. No improvement needed.

For files with Low to High scores, Ally shows you the issues and gives a step-by-step guide on how to fix them.

Find a file and select the Accessibility score. Follow the steps in front of you to go step-by-step. Select All issues to see every issue in the file and decide what issues to fix first.

Instructor Feedback

Ally provides you detailed feedback and support to help you become an accessibility pro. Learn about accessibility issues, why they matter, and how to fix them. Green is the goal!

Select the Accessibility score to open the instructor feedback. Follow the steps in front of you to go step-by-step. Select All issues to see every issue in the file and decide what issues to fix first.
Universal Design for Learning: 
Recommended Resources

**College STAR** [https://www.collegestar.org](https://www.collegestar.org). College STAR is a grant-funded project that provides online UDL modules and opportunities for networking and research for college faculty.

**UDL on Campus** [http://udloncampus.cast.org](http://udloncampus.cast.org). UDL On Campus is a collection of resources developed by [CAST](http://udloncampus.cast.org) geared towards multiple stakeholders within postsecondary institutions, including instructional designers, faculty, policy makers, and administrators. The purpose of the site is to offer an understanding of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in higher education and contains four sections: 1) UDL in Higher Education, 2) Course Design, 3) Media and Materials, and 4) Accessibility and Policy. National Center on UDL.

**National Center on UDL** [http://www.udlcenter.org](http://www.udlcenter.org). The National UDL Center supports the effective implementation of UDL by connecting stakeholders in the field and providing resources and information on UDL implementation and research.

**DO-IT** [http://www.washington.edu/doit](http://www.washington.edu/doit). The DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) Center is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities through technology and education. It promotes awareness and accessibility—in both the classroom and the workplace—to maximize the potential of individuals with disabilities and make our communities more vibrant, diverse, and inclusive.
Helpful Websites

Videoconferencing Alternatives: How Low-Bandwidth Teaching Will Save Us All

Guest Post: Your Suddenly Online Class Could Actually Be a Relief

I Will Survive, Coronavirus Version for Teachers Going Online
Due to the closure of the CCSU campus, this course will now be conducted as an online course. I have provided the checklist for you to follow and track the required readings, assignments, and submitted homework and exams over the next 8 weeks. Each week will begin on a Monday beginning of day and end on Sunday end of day. All assignments, examinations, and projects are due by 11:59 p.m. on the assigned due date. Note that end of chapter assignments are due on Fridays and CONNECT homework are due on Sundays. Insert the required due dates on the checklist to stay on track.

**Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Check When Complete</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 10: (Mar. 23 – Mar. 29)</td>
<td>Review material and study for Examination II &lt;br&gt;Post to Discussion Board (and reply to at least one other participant) &lt;br&gt;Complete and Submit Examination II</td>
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<td>Week 11: (Mar. 30 – Apr. 5)</td>
<td>Read Chapter 13: Current Liabilities and Contingencies &lt;br&gt;View Chapter 13 - “Module 1” and “Module 2” and complete practice exercises listed on syllabus &lt;br&gt;<strong>Complete the “End of Chapter 13 Assignment”</strong> &lt;br&gt;<strong>Complete the “Chapter 13 CONNECT HW”</strong></td>
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<td>Week 12: (Apr. 6 – Apr. 12)</td>
<td>Read Chapter 14: Bonds and Long-term Notes, pages 773-785 &lt;br&gt;View Chapter 14 - “Module 1” and complete practice exercises &lt;br&gt;<strong>Complete and submit “Excel Project II”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13: (Apr. 13 – Apr. 19)</td>
<td>Read Chapter 14: Bonds and Long-term Notes, pages 786-795 and pages 801-803 &lt;br&gt;View Chapter 14 - “Module 2” and complete practice exercises listed on syllabus &lt;br&gt;<strong>Complete the “End of Chapter 14 Assignment”</strong> &lt;br&gt;<strong>Complete the “Chapter 14 CONNECT HW”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14: (Apr. 20 – Apr. 26)</td>
<td>Review and study for Examination III &lt;br&gt;<strong>Complete and submit Examination III</strong></td>
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<td>Week 15: (Apr. 27 – May 3)</td>
<td>Read Chapter 18: Shareholders’ Equity, pages 1047-1066 &lt;br&gt;View Chapter 18 - “Module 1” and “Module 2” and complete practice exercises listed on syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<td><strong>Post to Discussion Board (and respond to at least one other participant)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 16:</strong> (May 4 – May 10)</td>
<td>Read Chapter 18: Shareholders’ Equity, pages 1068-1075</td>
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<td>View Chapter 18 - “Module 3” and complete practice exercises listed on syllabus</td>
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<td><strong>Complete the “End of Chapter 18 Assignment”</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Complete the “Chapter 18 CONNECT HW”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
<td>Review and study for Final Examination</td>
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<td>Complete “Final Exam Review Packet”</td>
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<td><strong>Complete and submit Final Examination</strong></td>
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