

## Provost’s Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

### Summer/Fall Provost Faculty Updates - Table of Contents

Sent September 4, 2020 .....	1
Sent August 28, 2020 .....	2
Sent August 18, 2020 .....	4
Sent August 3, 2020 .....	4
Sent July 23, 2020 .....	5
Sent July 21, 2020 .....	6
Sent July 7, 2020 .....	7
Sent June 24, 2020 .....	10

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### Sent September 4, 2020

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, the governor announced metrics that Universities must follow in the decision to move classes to a completely remote modality for two weeks if they reach 100+ or 5% COVID-19 positive cases on-campus (whichever is smaller) within any given two-week window. For St. John’s, this means our trigger to fully remote learning is 100 positive cases (onsite employees and students).

#### How will I be informed if we reach this threshold and need to move to remote modality?

In the event that we reach this threshold you will be notified by the Dean and also informed of the date when the campus will be reopened and you can safely return. You have already worked with your Dean to create your “rapid exit plans” so for the most part, you will be using them for the two weeks we are unable to be on campus. At the end of the two week period, when we return to campus, you will resume teaching your class in the same manner as how you left it – hybrid rotating or fully in -person.

#### What if I have heard that someone in my class has tested positive, but the university has not reached the governor’s 100 person threshold for remote learning? :

As the semester progresses, we will hear of new COVID-19 positive cases on campus. However, we will need to maintain our operation before we reach the 100 person threshold, which includes our in-person and rotating hybrid classes and our on-site workforce. *Faculty should not convert in-person or hybrid rotating classes online unless they have confirmed the need to do so through the contact tracing process. In addition, all decisions should be made in consultation with their chairperson/director and Dean.* If the safety protocols are followed by students and faculty in the classroom, the risk of exposure according the NYC Dept. of Health, even if a student or the faculty member test positive, is minimal. All

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

of our classrooms have been configured for social distancing. All HVAC systems across all buildings on all campuses are operating at the higher flow rates and with upgraded filters in compliance with CDC guidelines. If students and faculty wipe surfaces down before and after class, if face coverings are used properly, and we stay six or more feet apart in the classrooms, the contact tracing process would not consider anyone in these classrooms to be at risk. *Everyone's vigilance in adhering to safety protocols is key.*

If the student informs you directly of a positive test result, please ask them to complete the self-reporting form if they have not already done so. It can be found at [https://sju.formstack.com/forms/self\\_isolation\\_notify](https://sju.formstack.com/forms/self_isolation_notify). Completing this form triggers the contact tracing process.

Each day, the University updates the entire community on reported cases: <https://www.stjohns.edu/stjohnsopens/campus-health-and-covid-19-monitoring/reported-cases>.

The University has also started a COVID-19 testing program. We first tested more than 400 random resident students and student athletes almost two weeks ago, followed by 356 random commuter students last week. To further expand our testing capability we are currently establishing a COVID-19 testing facility in St. Alberts Hall in partnership with a biotechnology company. This NYS-approved COVID-19 testing facility will allow testing on site with test results being available the same day to allow for rapid tracing and minimizing community spread.

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Sent August 28, 2020

Colleagues,

Monday was a special and significant day for all of us. After month of hard work by the our community, we welcomed our students—many of whom walked onto our campuses full of excitement and anticipation—back to a new academic year. I am sure that, like me, you were both excited and a little nervous on Sunday night. After all, this fall semester is very different from any other. However, we have now successfully completed the first week of the fall 2020 semester with a combination of in-person, rotating hybrid, and online classes. I am so extremely grateful for all your work and contributions during the spring and summer months; this week has truly demonstrated the strength and resilience of our St. John's community.

Given all the emails and updates you have been receiving from across campus, I will keep this message as brief as possible and focus on updates since my last communication.

The latest updates:

- **Re-Opening Website:** We'll continue to update the new [re-opening website](#) as we have more details to share. And unlike the [Faculty Guide](#), which was designed to be static, the website will

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

reflect feedback and advice that we receive from you and others in the community. In particular, I encourage you to review the ["Reopening Information for Faculty, Staff, and Administration" section](#), which includes guidance on preparing for your time on campus, if relevant. In addition, we hope that the ["Academics" section](#) serves as a useful repository for details you have received separately.

- **On-Campus COVID-19 Case Reporting:** The re-opening website also includes details on actions we will take to keep the campus safe (see the ["On-Campus Health and COVID-19 Monitoring" section](#)), as well as test results to date (see the ["Reported Cases" section](#)).
- **Ongoing Union Discussions:** We remain engaged with the unions to determine alternate procedures for items that the CBA and or/the statutes currently indicate as requiring in-person presence. We will share solutions as they are finalized.
- **University LGBTQ+ Resources:** Over the summer, colleagues from throughout St. John's created a [website with resources for the LGBTQ+ community](#), including a draft version of a new all gender/ADA restroom map. If you have suggestions for changes or additions, please reach out to Matthew Pucciarelli ([pucciarm@stjohns.edu](mailto:pucciarm@stjohns.edu)).
- **Back-to-School Memo:** Last week, I sent my annual back-to school memo to deans. In it, I ask our academic community to consider this year's plans in terms of the following:
  - Student engagement
  - Faculty development with emphasis on technology
  - Equity and Inclusion in teaching
  - Strengthening our commitment to anti-racism through action

And a few reminders:

- **Assigned Classrooms:** In order for us to remain in compliance with guidance and requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED), all classes and meetings must be held in assigned/approved areas. We appreciate your assistance in ensuring we adhere to plans submitted to NYSED for this fall, which were created to keep the community safe.
- **Course Modalities:** All classes must be offered in the format specified in UIS. Students have made important decisions based upon the time and modality of the course offerings they selected, so changes would have serious implications for the students and the University.
- **"Campus Pass Health Screening:** To keep the St. John's community healthy, we ask all faculty, students, and employees to download the "St. John's Connect" app to their smartphones ASAP. Full details on the app, the daily screening, and computer-/printer-based alternatives are available on the ["On-Campus Health and COVID-19 Monitoring" section](#) of the re-opening website (look for the "health and wellness screening" area). Notes:
  - The screening **must** be filled out each day **prior** to coming to campus.
  - Once submitted, you will receive either a "green" pass (come to campus) or a red pass (stay home or, for on-campus students, in their residence hall). Green passes will be available on the app (click on "Campus Pass" a second time, after submitted the self-screening), and will also be sent to your email as an attachment (file type: PDF).
  - ***We also ask that you please also remind your students directly to download the app and that they, too, must complete this screening EACH day.***

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

A sincere thank you again for your hard work, commitment, and support.

Simon

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Sent August 18, 2020

### Provost's Back to School Message

Overall goals for the University for the upcoming year were sent to the deans. In turn, the deans provide goals for each school/college.

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Sent August 3, 2020

Dear faculty colleagues,

This past Saturday, 138 students from many U.S. states and from abroad moved into the residence halls as part of our return to campus. As you can image, this was not a typical move-in day, but it offered an early indicator of how our plan can both keep us safe and allow us to offer an in-person experience for students. Even with six feet of social distance and face coverings properly in place, the students' excitement for and commitment to the fall semester was unmistakable. It reminded me of why we all continue to work so hard for them, for their families, and for each other. I am truly grateful for each of you, for our staff and administrative colleagues, and for the expert advice—from the city, state, and partners such as New York Presbyterian-Queens—that has helped us move forward with appropriate care.

In the coming weeks, I will be sending the Provost's annual "back to school" message to your Deans that will outline my vision for the upcoming academic year. The differences between this year and every other are apparent, but my message will focus on what remains constant: how we ensure that our students are successful, firmly grounded in our Vincentian mission and values. If we consider every decision we make, however complex, through the lens of our founding ethos, we will serve our community well no matter the challenges ahead.

### This Week's Updates:

- **Residence Hall Move-In & Quarantine Requirements:** Though guidance is subject to change, students arriving from [many U.S. states](#) or [from abroad](#) must complete a mandatory 14-day quarantine and provide a negative COVID test prior to arriving on campus. Please note that these quarantines apply both to students living in University housing and those living off-campus. For more information on quarantine requirements, including information about the on-

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

campus quarantine option that is currently in progress, please visit the Office of Residence Life's "[Move-In Survival Guide](#)."

- **Academic Calendar/Arrival Requirements:** As you know, for most programs, classes begin on Monday, August 24, and the last day to add/drop classes is Saturday, August 29. All students taking in-person or hybrid courses must be prepared to attend their on-campus classes by this week, which will require them to complete all quarantine requirements in advance. Full academic calendar information, including a link to the School of Law's calendar (which is substantially different), can be found [here](#).

### And this Week's Reminder:

- **Keep Checking Email & Reviewing the Website:** We have all become familiar with the rapidly shifting nature of "COVID normal," so I'm making a special request that you continue to read your St. John's email and check our website regularly. To make that effort as straightforward as possible, we are working on a few general repositories of all guidance to date, which will include a website and Faculty Guide. In addition, each of the college deans will be in touch with our "Back to School" message within the next two weeks.

Simon Geir Møller, Ph.D.

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Sent July 23, 2020

Dear faculty colleagues,

As the fall semester rapidly approaches I want to thank you for working with your chairs, Dean's offices and the Office of the Registrar to finalize the class schedule for our incoming and returning students. I realize that it was a huge undertaking to ensure that our students will have a combination of in-person, rotating hybrid and online classes for the fall semester, all within the current federal, state and local COVID-19 guidelines.

As you are aware, students have been able to view their class schedules on UIS since the 6<sup>th</sup> of July and have been finalizing their plans to come to campus for their in-person and/or their rotating hybrid classes. I ask therefore that if you have been assigned one of these classes that is scheduled to be on campus but would like to request an accommodation due to a medical reason, please contact The Office of Human Resources, Benefits Department [before the 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2020](#) so that your school or college can plan accordingly.

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

Again thank you for all that you continue to do for our students and University.

Simon

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Sent July 21, 2020

Colleagues,

In this time of “COVID normal,” I am often reminded of how difficult it is to make and stick to plans as decisions we make one day no longer work in light of the next day’s news. To ensure that you have the latest information on our next steps as a University—including any unanticipated twists and turns that emerge—I will keep sending regular updates as we approach the first day of fall classes, which will build on prior messages and on the [“Preparing for the Fall Semester”](#) communication. I ask for your continued patience and understanding as we respond to inevitable shifts in the pandemic’s trajectory, regulatory guidance, and needs emerging from students and colleagues.

I also appreciate that everything about this summer has been far from normal. As faculty members, during ideal times, we can take steps to separate ourselves from the day-to-day activities of the campus, focusing perhaps instead on critical research projects that form the backbone of our work. However, this summer, we have made—and will likely continue to make—extraordinary requests on your time as the semester draws near, particularly in preparation for classes that will look different from anything we have done before. I am truly grateful for your work, and I ask you to remain up to date on emails and regularly check the website to ensure that you have the most recent information.

### A few updates:

- **International Student Guidance:** Particularly as signatories to an amicus brief supporting the Harvard-MIT lawsuit, we were delighted by the news that the government will revert to its March guidance related to U.S. study visas. In short, the vast majority of international students can now take a fully online course load this fall from within the U.S. The change also means that students will not need to depart the U.S. if we need to transition in-person/hybrid classes to a fully online mode. Note, however, that new students—i.e., most first-semester undergraduate or graduate students entering the U.S. for the first time this fall—still need to be registered for at least one in-person or hybrid class to qualify for U.S. study visas.
- **Technology Assistance for Students:** We recognize that students may need assistance acclimating to hybrid rotating or fully online courses. To meet that need, the Student Success in a Hybrid Learning Environment Working Group, a subcommittee of the Provost’s Academic Task Force, is developing an Online Academic Success (OAS) module specifically for incoming students. The module, which will be available online prior to the fall semester, will include short video presentations by faculty members and students sharing their advice on how to succeed in a hybrid and online learning environment. Through the module, we also provide students with information on a broad range of support services available at St. John’s.
- **CTL Summer Professional Development Options:** To gear up for the fall, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) has offered a full slate of development opportunities. To date, 378 faculty members have attended ten Canvas-led webinars; 209 faculty members have completed the

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

asynchronous, self-paced "Canvas Instructor Training" course; and 102 faculty members have finished the self-paced, asynchronous "Remote Pedagogy Fundamentals" program. In addition, 121 faculty have completed the facilitated, four-week "Online Teaching Essentials" certification course, with another 182 enrolled this month. For more information, visit the [CTL events website](#).

- **Faculty Guide:** The Provost's Academic Task Force is also working on a summary guide that will compile a full range of resources, including information on varied fall course formats, accommodating students, and supporting students who need to self-isolate over the course of the semester.

### And a reminder:

- **Fall classes may need to move to a fully online mode at any time.** Though we hope to avoid changes in format, courses taught partially or fully in person will need to remain responsive to potential shifts in guidance from national, state, and/or local authorities. That shift could take place at any time—from day one onward—in the event that New York City is no longer at "phase 4" or if other health guidance requires a change. I have asked each of the deans to work with you to plan for that potentially rapid transition, so please look for messages advancing that effort.

Again, you have my sincere gratitude for everything you have done, and will continue to do, to support our students and our University.

Simon Geir Møller, Ph.D.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Professor Biological Sciences

St. John's University

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Sent July 7, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

As we prepare for the fall 2020 semester, I wanted to provide updates on course modality/delivery options intended to provide as many students as possible with an in-person class experience. I recognize that every form of teaching represents a huge investment of your time, and perhaps never more so than in this period of great uncertainty. And though no words are sufficient in themselves, I realize and appreciate the work you have done, and will continue to do, to get ready for the upcoming semester. With your support, we will be well-positioned to meet our students' needs independent of the pandemic's trajectory.

As you read through these details, be aware that students will receive a shorter version of this same communication by email later today, so you may hear from them in the coming days.

**General Course Guidelines**

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

To ensure that we can remain responsive, all courses should be:

- **Ready to move fully online at any time.** Though we hope to avoid changes in format, courses taught partially or fully in person will need to remain responsive to potential shifts in guidance from national, state, and/or local authorities.
- **Sensitive to the needs of our full student body.** We are often reminded that good pedagogy is inclusive pedagogy, which ensures that all students learn and thrive, especially given our current context. Of particular concern, international students may be unable to travel due to visa/border restrictions and may therefore be unable to join synchronous sessions due to time differences. We also have an ethical and legal obligation to meet ADA requirements for students with disabilities. In both cases, including where the groups overlap, recordings of synchronous class sessions are necessary. In short, all courses—except for those offered fully in-person—must therefore offer recordings to ensure that we meet the needs of *all* our students. We understand that some faculty have understandable intellectual property concerns, which we've addressed in greater detail below.

### Course Modality/Delivery Options

These formats will help us offer as many in-person sessions as possible while maintaining appropriate social distance in each classroom. In the coming weeks, you will be able to log into UIS to review your teaching schedule. You may find new course delivery options listed.

- **Fully In-Person Courses:** This mode is the most traditional. As noted above, these courses must be planned to allow a shift to fully online teaching if needed.
- **Hybrid Courses:** In previous communications, “hybrid” courses were referred to generically; however, please note that they come in two varieties:
  - **Rotating Courses:** This new format was developed to better reflect social distancing requirements in larger class sections. In this model, faculty members teach each session in person, but a rotating group of students attend either in person or online on a 2- or 3-week rotation (i.e., either 1 week in person/1 week online, or 1 week in person/2 weeks online). During their online weeks, students will participate in the course via a livestream and/or via a recorded lecture (see above). Your UIS schedule will indicate whether your students will be committed to a 2- or 3-week rotation cycle. We've provided the rotation calendar below.
  - **Traditional Hybrid:** In these courses, the faculty member and all enrolled students meet in person one day a week and online for a second weekly session.
- **Fully Online Courses:** Note that on-line courses can be delivered in synchronous or asynchronous formats.
  - **Synchronous:** In this format, faculty members livestream their course, at the exact day and time of their course, to remote learners while also recording lectures/sessions for student use.
  - **Asynchronous:** In this format, all interaction is asynchronous. If any sessions are offered synchronously, they must be recorded for student use.

### Fall 2020 “Rotating Course” Calendars

## **Provost's Faculty Updates** (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

The switch dates for Rotating courses follow a 2- or 3-week schedule (as detailed above). The dates provided indicate weeks when a given group will attend in-person classes. We will be in touch again with a more thorough set of guidelines to help your ongoing preparations for the semester.

- Classes on a 2-Week Rotation:
  - "A" Weeks: August 24, September 7, September 21, October 5, October 19, November 2, November 16.
  - "B" Weeks: August 31, September 14, September 28, October 12, October 26, November 9.
  - After Thanksgiving week, all classes/exams/assessments will take place fully online.
- Classes on a 3-Week Rotation:
  - "A" Weeks: August 24, September 14, October 5, October 26, November 16.
  - "B" Weeks: August 31, September 21, October 12, November 2.
  - "C" Weeks: September 7, September 28, October 19, November 9.
  - After Thanksgiving week, all classes/exams/assessments will take place fully online.

### **Professional Development & IT Support**

As I mentioned in my May 28 email, we are moving from Blackboard and toward Canvas as our Learning Management System. We have therefore made two courses available within Canvas for self-paced review.

- Canvas Instructor Basics: To access the course, log on (signon.stjohns.edu), then select "Canvas LMS." Once you're within Canvas, choose "Canvas Instructor Training (ModA)".
- Online Pedagogy Basics: To access the course, log on (signon.stjohns.edu), then select "Canvas LMS." Once you're within Canvas, choose "Remote Pedagogy Fundamentals (ModB)".

Please see the [Center for Teaching and Learning website \(http://campusguides.stjohns.edu/ctlevents\)](http://campusguides.stjohns.edu/ctlevents) for more details on these modules, as well as additional professional development opportunities. If you have any difficulty logging on to Canvas, please call (718) 990-5000. In addition, Information Technology will provide more details by mid-July.

### **Intellectual Property Concerns**

St. John's will not invoke any right of ownership over online courses or lectures that you deliver, whether that recording has been provided to meet ADA, accreditation, or other needs. Under no circumstances should lectures be sold and/or otherwise transferred for someone else's use. To that end, faculty members may include a provision in their syllabi prohibiting students from distributing recordings or other materials (a situation analogous to prohibiting students from recording a course with their cell phones).

The entire campus community will also receive a more general "return to campus" memo by mid-July and faculty members will be sent a more detailed faculty guide as procedures are developed. Please continue to look for these and other messages in your in-box. Thank you again for all you do.

Simon Geir Møller, Ph.D.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

## Provost's Faculty Updates (sent via each college dean by e-mail)

Professor Biological Sciences

St. John's University

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Sent June 24, 2020

We would like to provide you with further information regarding the delivery of Summer Session II academic programs as noted in the announcement dated May 1, 2020. The original plan was to offer a limited number of Summer Session II courses in an in-person or hybrid format based on public health guidelines. However, the latest New York state and local government guidelines stipulate that higher education institutions can only reopen under Phase 4, which is not expected to begin until late July. Accordingly, all Summer Session II courses will be offered in a fully online format. If you have any questions regarding your specific classes, please contact the dean's office of your respective College or your academic adviser.

As announced last week, the University is actively preparing for the reopening of the campus for the fall semester, which will now begin on August 24 and with in-person instruction ending prior to the Thanksgiving break. To provide you with the St. John's campus experience, we plan to offer a combination of on-campus, in-person courses; courses in a hybrid format; and online classes. All classrooms will be reconfigured to accommodate social distancing during in-person instruction. To reduce density in classrooms, hybrid classes will allow students to attend some of their classes on campus and at other times attend classes remotely. Students who are registered for hybrid classes who prefer to take the class only remotely will be accommodated. More information regarding the fall semester is forthcoming; we continue to ask for your patience as we develop a schedule based on health and safety precautions.