

Dear Colleagues,

We continue to thank you for the tremendous efforts you are making to teach and advise our students in these difficult times. As we continue to face difficult decisions and challenges, we appreciate all of the thoughtful discussions among faculty, staff, and students that have gone into the decision-making processes we delineate below, and we will continue to seek your thoughtful input moving forward. Our general operating principle for these last four weeks of courses is to maintain as much as possible our traditional deadlines for the sake of consistency and clarity while building in extensions and accommodations as needed. We hope that everyone will be able to take the relief you need and appreciate that we're all in different places—mentally, emotionally, and physically.

As always, we encourage you to consult with your departments, Executive Council representatives, and staff colleagues as you negotiate the coming weeks.

### **1) Suspension of S/D/F and Course Withdrawal Deadlines Until Next Week**

We have heard from many constituencies with many ideas about how best to revise the original April 10 S/D/F and withdrawal deadlines, which did not provide enough time for students to make informed decisions. To maintain our collaborative and iterative decision-making process, which ensures that we are hearing and learning from as many perspectives as possible, we are **suspending** the April 10 deadlines so as to present a final decision to you about S/D/F and Course Withdrawal next week. Please note, **no student needs to declare S/D/F or a Course Withdrawal for any courses tomorrow** (April 10). With thanks to representatives from CAS, SGA, the Curriculum Committee, and the Academic Continuity team, we, with our fellow members of Executive Council, are committed to presenting a final decision about S/D/F and Course Withdrawal next week so as to provide a way forward for both faculty and students.

### **2) Open-Note, Open-Book Final Exams Policy and Further Guidance**

Executive Council, building on the CAS recommendation that final exams be open-book, open note, and asynchronous, has unanimously approved a policy that, **for the Spring of 2020, all final exams will be open-book and open-note**. This change ensures access and equity as well as academic honesty in testing situations.

### **3) Fall Registration Proceeding as Planned**

Thank you to Joyce Stern, dean for student success and academic advising, for the message sent to all faculty advisers this morning providing detailed guidance about the April 13–23 Registration period. As of Tuesday morning, 500 students had already completed their schedules for fall, and many more are signed up for conversations with their advisers. What we are learning from public health officials and from experiences shared by community members shaped the rationale for moving forward with registration in order to take advantage of the time we have before the virus peaks, especially around the country. Nevertheless, we also want to offer anyone who needs extra time for deadlines, the opportunity to secure it. If you are a faculty member who is unable to advise students during this period, please contact the Dean's Office.

### **4) Challenges of Teaching Across Multiple Time Zones**

Thank you for your responsiveness and flexibility regarding synchronous and asynchronous instruction. We recognize that some instruction is very difficult to adapt to asynchronous. If you are doing synchronous class meetings, we encourage you to maintain your scheduled time slot. Please keep in mind that we cannot require students to participate in a synchronous meeting if it is not scheduled in its

regular time slot. At the same, we don't want to unduly burden students in distant time zones. Some faculty are actually teaching twice because their students are in such different time zones. However, even if you let students know that a meeting is optional, they may feel pressured to attend.

### **5) Postponement of Review and Promotion Schedules**

We want to emphasize to colleagues that our policy to postpone already scheduled reviews and promotions is **optional**, and not automatic or mandatory. Executive Council and the Personnel Committee are working with the Dean's office to clarify the options for faculty to consider. We want to emphasize that the Dean's office will work with individual faculty in determining what works best for their specific schedules and situations.

### **6) Requesting Books from the College Libraries**

Please follow this [link](#) for a brief explanation on how to request books and pick them up:  
See also the Library's "[Distance Learning Guide](#)" for information about other changes to services.

Again, we thank you all for your hard work, patience, ingenuity, and good will as we continue to work through the many challenges facing Grinnell College as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate as well your understanding and patience as we continue to work through the many issues that have arisen these past weeks.

In solidarity,

Anne F. Harris, Dean of the College  
Todd Armstrong, Chair of the Faculty