

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST



Dear Colleagues,

Thankfully, the battle against COVID-19 has been much more successful in the United States than anyone could have predicted in January. Preparations for the fall semester are well underway and hold the promise for a campus experience much more familiar and expected.

And without missing a beat...it is time to start thinking about spring semester 2022! Yes, it's true! We believe that next spring Kent State University will have a typical semester. And no, it is not too early to start preparing to be fully back on campus in Spring 2022 (if not sooner – depending on your teaching choices for Fall 2021). We hope you are as excited about things returning to “normal” as are we and our students.

Turning our focus to spring semester 2022, what do we see?

- We see a vibrant campus, filled with students, faculty, and staff.
- We see a full array of in-person classes.
- We see faculty once again able to meet with students, supporting student educational experiences, and participating in students' growth as citizens of the world.
- And finally, we see faculty engaging and exchanging ideas with students and colleagues, providing mutual support and encouragement in the intellectual life of students and peers on campus.

SPRING SEMESTER 2022

ALL FACULTY MEMBERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO

- ✓ **TEACH IN-PERSON AS ASSIGNED**
- ✓ **BE PRESENT AND CONTRIBUTE TO A VIBRANT CAMPUS WHETHER THEY ARE ASSIGNED TO TEACH ONLINE OR IN PERSON**

Kent State University was so successful in navigating the pandemic because we already had a rigorous presence of online courses and programs which appeal to some segments of our student population, particularly those students who seek the flexibility of online course offerings. We have faculty and staff with expertise who were willing to share it and technology to support our expanded offerings in online education. We fully expect those online courses and programs to continue serving the student populations who rely on them to succeed. We also expect that many faculty members have learned new and different tools that they will now want to incorporate into their in-person classes.

Some units may wish to consider whether student demand exists for new online courses or online programs in their academic units. As academic units begin this analysis, the primary consideration should be the mode of instruction that best serves the needs of current and potential students.

Further considerations are noted below:

- Starting in spring 2022 academic units must use standard curricular processes for approving online courses, which are designated either V1 (100% online requiring no face-to-face or online live sessions), V2 (100% online with one or more synchronous online live sessions), or V3 (a blend of a minimum of 50% online sessions— asynchronous or synchronous—and requirement of one or more face-to-face meetings).
- Decisions regarding whether courses approved for online delivery are offered in that mode are made by Department Chairs/School Directors, in consultation with FACs and Curriculum Committees, and consider the overall strategy being employed for program delivery within the unit.
- FACs, Curriculum Committees, and Chairs and Directors will need to inform themselves regarding federal and state requirements for online education.
- Online course delivery does not negate the need for faculty presence on campus.

At this critical time, faculty should think about ways in which the life of the mind is fostered beyond the classroom. Faculty presence on campus presents opportunities for students and colleagues to interact in spontaneous ways. Presence on campus helps in making connections with new faculty and students and helps our traditional students make the transition from adolescent to adult. These are the students who constitute an overwhelming majority of our undergraduate population and who crave face-to-face interaction.

We encourage you to think of the fall semester as a bridge to the future your academic unit envisions at Kent State. Specifically, this is an opportune time to think about the ways in which you may want to incorporate some of what you learned during the pandemic into your courses and

curricula. Avoid using a piecemeal approach as you consider the future. Units should think holistically about the courses and programs they offer and the modalities in which they offer them.

Thank you for being part of the Kent State community and thank you for working to rebuild our community that was displaced during the pandemic.

We are all in this together!

Pamela Grimm
Chair, Faculty Senate

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