

Please make sure to complete these actions as requested in the email:

- 1. Telecommuting [form](#)**
- 2. Teaching plans form (to be sent via email for each class)**

Dear Faculty Members:

I would like to thank everyone for their patience, understanding, tolerance, and collaborative work. This has been an incredibly challenging time, and I have been awed by the generosity and vigor of SUNY Poly's faculty response. Each of us is experiencing unique hardships, but we are moving forward together as a strong community.

Below, I address several topics that are important to faculty as we move into the distance learning environment.

On being a faculty member

Expectations of faculty: In consultation with faculty representatives from the Joint Governance Council, we have developed a statement of [expectations of faculty](#). In brief, faculty are expected to clarify their plans to teach classes with their Deans, Chairs or Coordinators, and to communicate these plans to their students.

Telecommuting: With sincere apologies, we now ask that all faculty complete the more robust form issued by the Governor's Office for Employee Relations, which we have developed as a google form for everyone's convenience. [Please complete this telecommuting form as soon as possible](#).

Travel: All Faculty are asked to [review the current policy](#) with regard to personal and business travel policy **before** coming to campus.

Teaching plans: This afternoon, faculty will receive one email for each class they teach, with links to google forms asking them to identify several components of their teaching plans. Specifically, faculty will be asked to identify the extent that they plan to offer synchronous classes, and their need to be on campus. Faculty who identify that they must be on campus to provide distance education are asked to include their anticipated schedule of being on campus.

Interacting with students outside of class: Faculty should try to maintain office hours as initially posted, ideally using synchronous tools to facilitate interaction with their students. Office hours, especially if changed from the hours shared on the initial syllabus, should be posted clearly on Blackboard, with links for synchronous office hours posted in the Announcements section.

We will be reaching out through Deans to Chairs and Coordinators next week to identify requests to create new Blackboard organizations for student groups.

Using Blackboard: I want to draw your attention to the excellent [Blackboard Tutorials](#) that have been developed, as well as the opportunity to use the [Blackboard App on your smartphone](#)

Requests for feedback from faculty and students

We have developed a feedback system designed to give all members of our community the opportunity to tell us how our temporary shift to this mode of instruction is working for them and to quickly address any issues that may arise. During the week of March 23, we anticipate reaching out to every student for feedback about every class in which they are registered. We will also reach out to every faculty member about each class they teach. Please respond to these short surveys to quickly identify any difficulties, or to report that all is well. As we move forward in the semester, the frequency of feedback will decrease.

(Important note: This feedback will only be used to address challenges faculty and students are having engaging each other in distance learning environments. Data from this feedback will not be used as part of the faculty review process).

Promoting Student Success

Attendance: We ask that faculty be mindful of student attendance and participation at this time. Faculty should make all reasonable allowances to accommodate the many challenges students are now faced with by granting appropriate extensions and permitting alternative assignments for students unable to attend synchronous learning times. With this, we ask faculty to be particularly vigilant in identifying students who may be struggling in their adjustment to the distance learning environment, and to notify Michelle Kent Landes at kentlam@sunypoly.edu with any student concerns that may arise. We are currently working on an implementation of the academic warning system that will provide faculty an opportunity to identify students who have not established a presence in the distance learning environment by March 25.

Disability Services: We ask that faculty be sensitive to the specific needs and challenges that students with disabilities may now face. Please reach out to Evelyn Lester lestere@sunypoly.edu with any concerns and refer to Tod A. Laursen, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor's March 18, 2020 Memo regarding Guidance and Resources for Students with Disabilities for further guidance.

Students with barriers to distance learning: We recognize that students may have barriers to participating in distance learning such as lack of a computer or tablet and/or lack of internet access. If students have any barriers to participating in distance learning, they should [complete this form immediately](#), and we will reach out to them to address these needs.

Again, thank you for all of your dedication to our students.

Sincerely,

Steven M. Schneider

Interim Provost
SUNY Polytechnic Institute