

Dear SDSU Faculty,

Given the continued spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), San Diego State University has been preparing since January for the possibility that some members of our community may become ill or quarantined. In that case, we will likely need to offer alternatives to in-person meetings and classes. In the continued interest of health and safety, this is an appropriate time for all instructors to be prepared, or if the campus needs to temporarily suspend in-person instruction. Please also know that the campus will continue to provide updates about this evolving situation at [SDSU's COVID-19 web page](#), which includes updates related to study abroad, travel, and other individual actions members of our community should take.

We hope you will agree that our primary focus is the health and safety of our students and our teaching community. In addition, we want to uphold the quality of education for our students so they can continue progress towards their academic goals.

In this regard, and after consultation with colleagues across the campus, we wish to share with you advice and resources to support faculty and students who become ill or are quarantined. We strongly encourage you to review these now and consider how you would apply these to your undergraduate (and if applicable, graduate and professional) courses for the remainder of the Spring semester.

In addition, departments are encouraged to discuss the best approach for their own disciplines and pedagogy. Each of the suggestions offered below will help us to be prepared to best support students, faculty and staff who may be unable to come to campus.

### **Suggested Immediate Steps**

**Update and Use Blackboard and/or Canvas:** Our Academic Continuity Plan requires setting up your virtual classroom first. All classes at SDSU are provided with an online course site and all faculty have access to educational technology tools that can assist you with remote instruction including Zoom, Mediasite, Camtasia, and more. Place all key course documents in Blackboard/Canvas so all can be accessed in case you or your students cannot come to campus. Materials that cannot be placed in Blackboard/Canvas should be placed in a file

or other designated place accessible by the department chair.

**Be prepared to provide online or remote teaching:** For the benefit of academic continuity, faculty should start to make preliminary plans to teach online or remotely for a single session or even for an extended period of time.

**Get training on how to provide online instruction:** The Office of the Provost and Instructional Technology Services are announcing "Teaching Online Primer (TOP): Moving Elements of Your Face-to-Face Course Online" training sessions for faculty, to be offered March 11-19. These sessions are being offered to assist with preparing for and providing online instruction. Faculty are asked to register online via the [Eventbrite page](#).

The dates and times of sessions are as follows:

- Wednesday, March 11, 9 to 10 a.m. in EBA 410
- Thursday, March 12, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in EBA 410
- Friday, March 13, 11 a.m. to noon in EBA 410
- Tuesday, March 17, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. via Zoom (SDSU Imperial Valley are encouraged to participate)
- Wednesday, March 18, 9 to 10 a.m. in EBA 410
- Thursday, March 19, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in EBA 410

These workshops will provide information to move elements of your face-to-face course into an online environment by integrating research-based pedagogy and technology to teach and assess student performance. Instructional Technology Services Staff and Faculty Fellows will share tools, methods, and effective practices for teaching online.

**Adjust attendance policy and provide alternative means of turning in assignments:** Adjust course policies related to class attendance so as not to penalize students who become ill or are placed under quarantine. Should a student or instructor be absent, provide a way to turn in assignments by other means than in-class. Please try to ensure flexibility in your syllabi to allow students to make up exams or assignments.

### **Anticipate and plan for internship and clinical placement**

**disruptions:** Internships and student clinical placements may be impacted. Faculty are asked to coordinate with deans and department heads to address any disruptions if they occur.

**Departments should make every effort to designate an alternate instructor to be on standby** should the instructor become ill or quarantined and unable to teach.

**It may be helpful to increase the number of summer session courses to support the academic advancement of students from abroad who cannot return home.** We encourage flexibility and responsiveness should Summer Sessions staff reach out to departments to assess their capacity to increase summer course offerings.

**Rely on current, accurate information:** When speaking with students, faculty, staff and visitors, please rely on [SDSU's COVID-19 web page](#), which contains frequently asked questions. The site, which is constantly updated, has information about what to do if they become sick, how to be best prepared and what to do if they need to or plan to travel.

### **Faculty Resources**

In addition to the face-to-face development of online trainings available to faculty noted above, I would like to provide information regarding additional resources available to faculty and staff.

The Employee Assistance Program offers SDSU faculty and staff confidential support for a variety of concerns, including emotional, relationship, health, legal and workplace issues. Information, resources and tools are available by calling 1-800-342-8111 and visiting the [EAP](#) website.

Instructional Technology Services has introduced the [Educational Resources During Emergencies](#) site with information and resources for faculty members. Faculty and staff who are currently abroad and need support are asked to immediately contact their dean's office. If you require added support, contact SDSU's Office of Faculty Advancement at 619-594-6111.

Researchers and scholars who need support involving international research, or who have international travel plans, should contact their dean, or SDSU's Office of Faculty Advancement at 619-594-6111.

Both the spread of respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, and our related decisions have an impact not only on our programs and planning, but on the lives of people. I thank every one of you for prioritizing your personal care, encouraging others to do the same, and for also applying goodwill as we address this global health concern together as a campus.

*Salvador Hector Ochoa*

SDSU Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs