FAQ -- Academic Questions
Last updated 10 am 3/13/2020

What does "remote teaching and learning" mean?

Remote teaching simply means that the faculty and the students are in different locations. The range of approaches that faculty may adopt to teach in this manner is enormous: one extreme is a synchronous discussions hosted on a video platform, such as Zoom or Google Hangouts, and the other can be a model that amounts to a correspondence model such as that employed by our low residency MFA in writing program. Approaches between these models could include recorded lectures, on-line discussion groups, etc. Faculty will determine what specific structure will work best to achieve the learning goals of their courses and will strive to maintain as much of their own pedagogical methods as possible. They will also be clear about what structures they will employ and how students will engage in their courses.

What do I do if I don't have the necessary computer hardware to participate in remote courses or do not have access to broadband internet access?

The College is committed to ensuring that students have access to remote learning and we will work with students individually to address obstacles to their access to computer hardware and/or internet.

How do I put Academic Accommodations for Remote Learning in Place?

Students who are currently receiving academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Katy Evans to explore potential new academic accommodations as we shift to remote teaching and learning.

I opted to receive letter grades for my courses; can I elect to take my classes pass/fail instead?

Yes. Because faculty will be shifting their content, approach, and certain learning outcomes, we are allowing students who opted for letter grades to take some or all of their classes pass/fail instead. If you would like to do so, please complete this form by April 15.

Will faculty and staff "meet" remotely with students who remain on campus?

Yes. Social distancing has been demonstrably effective in minimizing the spread of viruses, and reducing the number of people meeting in our small spaces throughout campus will assist in our efforts to reduce the spread of viruses and the impact on our community and regional

healthcare systems. Given this, we ask that students, staff, and faculty meet remotely via phone, skype, or google hangouts.

My instructor has informed the class that we will meet in real time via video conferencing, but I will be in a different time zone. Is it possible for the class to meet at a more convenient time?

Because the College will have students in many different time zones, it will not be possible to have remote meetings at times that are mutually convenient. In addition, straying from regularly scheduled course time for real-time instruction will create untenable scheduling conflicts. For these reasons, courses meeting in real-time will do so according to the current weekly schedule using Eastern Daylight Time. Of course, some courses might not meet in real time and, in those cases, engaging with the remote environment can occur at other times.

Will the College's transition to remote teaching and learning affect my Visa if I go home?

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), which oversees the SEVIS database, has allowed colleges and universities to adapt their procedures to address the significant public health concerns associated with COVID-19, including moving instruction online.. Please direct any additional Visa questions to [Kate Child](#).

I am in my 8th term. Will I be able to graduate on time?

Yes. You are still enrolled in your courses. As long as you are enrolled and successfully pass your courses, complete your Senior Essay, and earn the credits you need to complete this term, your graduation date will not change.

How do I access Peer Tutors remotely?

Peer Tutoring for writing and languages will offer online tutoring sessions. When signing up for a [tutoring appointment](#), you'll be given the option for face-to-face or online session. Select online session, log on, and click on your appointment five minutes before your scheduled time and a window will pop up providing audio/video, a whiteboard, and a chat log.

Will Plan meetings take place on Plan Days?

Yes, we will be sending information to students and faculty regarding the electronic submission of Plan Essays and are making plans for meetings to take place remotely on the designated Plan Days: April 22, April 29 (½ day), and May 5.

Will we have an extension on the Plan Essay due date?

No, we must maintain the March 29 due date to adequately prepare schedules for the designated Plan Days. Students should work remotely with their advisors on their Plan Essays.

What about 3- and 7-week courses?

This change will necessitate the shifting of the start and end dates for certain 3- and 7-week classes. We will post revised dates on the academic calendar, and will communicate directly with students and faculty who are impacted by this change. Revised dates for certain 3-week courses will also be posted in the spring curriculum.

How can I add/drop/withdraw from classes, request transcripts, or do other paperwork I might have done in the Dean's Office?

All of this can now be done remotely. Visit the Student Forms section of the Registrar's Office webpage, or email registrar@bennington.edu for more information.

How will studio, performance, or laboratory instruction proceed remotely?

Faculty teaching courses that include components that are less readily adapted to remote delivery, such as studio art, performance, and laboratory science courses, are actively grappling with the problem of how students can achieve their course objectives in a remote teaching environment. Insofar as it is possible, faculty will use remote means to achieve the learning objectives specified in the course syllabus. For example, there are many "dry labs" and computer simulation exercises in science in which students can actively engage with the material without physically being in the lab. In some cases, however, it may be necessary to modify the course objectives in light of the limitations remote learning imposes. In those cases faculty will modify the work with the goal of providing students pathways to maintaining progress in the field. This will ensure the students have the opportunity to earn the total number of credits they are currently enrolled for. For example, work in courses with large studio components could include more historical, theoretical, or other contexts that can be just as useful in the development of student work.