Dear Faculty Colleagues:

We want to share our sincere appreciation of your hard work in pivoting your course to online instruction. We have completed two weeks and are learning a lot about this vastly different classroom environment. The activities you had originally planned may not have worked out in your new online classroom, and that's okay. Here is a great article from the Chronicle of Higher Education called: "How (Not) to Evaluate Teaching During a Pandemic".

As we continue to navigate the new demands required of this virtual environment, be sure to take care of yourselves, your families, your colleagues and your students. Our mutual relationships are at the core of what we cherish about South. When it comes to our students, it is important that we remain flexible and patient, in addition to thinking creatively about the best practices to support them. We know most of you are already doing these things, however, this is a short list of things to bear in mind. See for instance, the ILC's Working and Teaching Remotely page.

Frequent communication with students

- Use Sakai or Canvas to send course updates, check-ins, and assignments. This is easier for you and your students since all of your course communication/information is housed in one place.

Flexible deadlines

- The due dates for your face-to-face course may not translate into your online course. Students may need more time to work through the presentation slides and additional homework. Consider extending deadlines and increasing shorter, check-for-understanding type assignments.

Compassion for students

- The virus has impacted everyone. Using virtual office hours, Sakai/Canvas email, or discussions, you can check in with your students to see how they are experiencing this virus and remote instruction and make course corrections. Family obligations, care-giving, and a more chaotic household environment may make it difficult to maintain the structure and stability provided on campus. Your compassion and empathy will make it possible for students to continue learning and feel supported as they do so.

You are not alone; we have all been thrust into a giant experiment. The Chronicle article asks us to 'be more interested in learning than grading’. The ILC and Student Academic Success are here every step of the way for you - come join one of our online sessions to just chat and tell us how you are. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to each other and our students.