Dear Faculty Member,

As you have seen in the Academic Plan for Reopening Campus in fall 2020, there will be a number of modifications to classes that will be meeting on campus this fall, including a revised academic calendar, required face masks, and social distancing.

Social distancing requires that a distance of six feet be maintained between all persons in the classroom at all times. Consequently, the capacity of most classrooms will have to be reduced. Your academic unit has been surveying each classroom to determine the maximum capacity consistent with social distancing. Your Dean’s Office or Department Chair will provide this revised classroom capacity information to you for classrooms you are scheduled to use.

While classroom capacity has been revised, course section capacity has not been changed. As a result, in any course section in which your total enrollment exceeds the revised classroom capacity it will be necessary to teach the course in Web-Blended format, and to make arrangements to divide the section into smaller groups that meet at different times. For example, a section with 80 registered students might have revised classroom capacity of 30 students. In this case, the section would need to be divided into three cohort groups of 26 or 27 students, with each group meeting only every third scheduled class period. For a schematic illustrating different teaching scenarios please see this document from the ILC.

As with all Web-Blended courses, the remaining instruction will be provided online. Please begin considering how your course syllabi may need to be adjusted for Web-Blended instruction. The ILC has a variety of resources to help you design effective Web-Blended instruction, and you are encouraged to consider options such as flipped-classroom models in which the primary lecture content is delivered remotely, allowing for alternative activities such as problem solving or group projects during the remaining classroom time.

The first day of the fall term is August 17th and as it approaches, we are asking that you begin to monitor your on-campus course section enrollments in PAWS and prepare to divide the students into rotating cohort groups that will be within the revised classroom capacities. Note that the last day for a student to add a course is August 20th so there may be small variations in enrollments throughout the first week.

How you choose to assign students into cohort groups is up to you, but you will need to notify the students via email prior to the first day of class which cohort group they are in, so that they know on which class day they should arrive. A separate message is being sent to the students to prepare them for this change in the instructional format. Your students will be told both to look for an email from you, their instructor, in their jagmail account before the start of classes, and to watch their Canvas course site for a posting from you of their cohort assignments. To create Groups in Canvas, see the section on “Groups” at this ILC resource.
The Reopening Plan encouraged faculty teaching on-campus courses to develop them to allow students to complete the course online, and to give students the option to designate at the beginning of the term their intention (on-campus or online) for planning purposes. If you have chosen to give students this online option, please notify your enrolled students by email as soon as you reasonably can, so that they can plan accordingly.

We realize that face-to-face instruction this fall will require significant flexibility and innovation on the part of our instructors, and we greatly appreciate your commitment to providing our students with the most effective and meaningful experience possible in these challenging circumstances.

G. David Johnson
Provost and Senior Vice President
Academic Affairs