

COVID-19 FAQs for FACULTY

These FAQs will be updated regularly. Information is subject to change.

The Q&A's are grouped by the following subjects:

GENERAL INFORMATION (last updated 4/7/2020)

FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

EVALUATIONS OF FACULTY

SABBATICALS/LEAVES

TEACHING

GENERAL INFORMATION (last updated 4/7/2020)

- 1) Where can I find the most current information on University action regarding COVID-19?

You should go to the Fresno State COVID-19 web page at <http://fresnostate.edu/president/coronavirus/>.

- 2) Are faculty being provided with the emails that are being sent to students?

We have been providing faculty with all of the same information that students are getting but not the exact emails. To limit the traffic in your inboxes, we will not distribute all of those communications to students to faculty but we will post all communications on a web site available to faculty. Those messages can be found at <http://fresnostate.edu/president/coronavirus/communication/index.html>.

FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

- 3) Will faculty get refunds of parking fees for the remainder of the semester?

Faculty and staff are able to stop payroll deductions for parking if they will not be coming to campus and using parking facilities. If you purchased a semester pass, the University will honor the same percentage refund as it is doing for students.

- 4) I have incurred expenses for travel to a conference that was cancelled. Can I be reimbursed?

Yes, if you were approved to attend a conference or other professional activity with reimbursement by the University, you can be reimbursed for the prepaid expenses that you incurred for that activity. You need to try to minimize expenses and seek refunds as much as possible but you will be reimbursed for expenses that you have incurred in anticipation of your professional activity.

EVALUATIONS OF FACULTY

- 5) Will peer reviews and student ratings of instruction be done this semester?

Student ratings of instruction are proceeding as usual this semester. Emails recently went out to faculty from Katie Dyer, Chair of the SRI Task Force, giving you dates for your selections of questions. The student ratings are an important piece of information for faculty about instruction. This semester, with the transition to virtual teaching, it is valuable to have the information about students' responses to this instruction.

A document explaining the circumstances under which faculty were working this semester will be included in every PAF. Since evaluation of faculty looks at patterns, one semester's performance will not be a determining factor in evaluating teaching effectiveness. The document in the PAF and the intended use of reviews combine to ensure that faculty will not be negatively affected by one semester's evaluations.

We know that you are doing your best to move to a new mode of delivery. The information offered by peer reviews and student ratings of instruction will be of benefit if any future adjustments are needed.

- 6) How will peer reviews of classes be done this semester?

Your peer reviewers can be invited to join your Zoom classroom to observe your teaching and the engagement of your students. The review of course materials and syllabi will be done by providing the documents to the reviewers via some electronic medium that will work for you both. A set of guidelines for peer evaluations were developed in consultation with faculty leadership, deans, department chairs, and the CFA representatives. The guidelines can be found at http://fresnostate.edu/academics/facultyaffairs/documents/Peer_Evals_SP2020.pdf.

- 7) Evaluations for lecturers and range elevation determinations have not been completed in my college yet. Are those being performed this semester?

Yes, the evaluations for lecturers for initial three year contracts and for reappointments to three year contracts and the reviews of range elevation applications are being completed on the established time schedule this semester. Personnel files were scanned by the custodians of the PAFs and were uploaded securely into our electronic RTP system Interfolio to allow for remote review of files by the appropriate reviewers. Interfolio limits access to the files to those who have authorization to complete the requisite reviews so no one will see the files who is not part of the review process.

- 8) Can probationary faculty extend the tenure clock based on the changed mode of course delivery this semester?

The CFA CBA 13.7 and 13.8 provides for the possibility of extension of the probationary period for various reasons. If a faculty member fits within one of these provisions, the extension of the tenure clock can be requested by the faculty member.

In addition to the extension option provided in CFA CBA 13.7 and 13.8, the campus and the union have agreed to allow faculty to request a one (1) year extension related to the COVID-19 conditions and the transition to a virtual environment. See REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD at

http://fresnostate.edu/academics/facultyaffairs/documents/Extend_Probation_SP2020.pdf .

If you decide that you would like to request an extension, please send a letter making the request and referencing the COVID-19 extension to the Office of Faculty Affairs.

- 9) Will the RTP process continue for this year for those faculty members currently under review?

All of the binders for tenure/promotion and for promotion to full professor were at the level of the Provost prior to the transition period due to COVID-19. The Provost is carefully and thoughtfully reviewing each binder and will deliver his decisions before the contractual deadline.

- 10) I was accepted to a conference to present a paper but was not able to attend due to travel restrictions. Will that still be counted toward fulfillment of my probationary plan?

The presentation that was accepted for a conference that you were not able to attend will count for the RTP process. You should include the documentation of the acceptance of the paper presentation or speaking engagement in your RTP file as evidence of completion of that element of your probationary plan.

SABBATICALS/LEAVES

- 11) I am scheduled to be on sabbatical in the fall. Can the sabbatical be postponed if travel is not possible in the fall?

If you are scheduled for sabbatical next academic year and are concerned that your plans may be interrupted because of COVID-19, please talk with your chair and your dean. A change in timing of awarded sabbaticals will have budgetary impact as well as impact on course schedules. A change in sabbatical project could have an impact on the ranking that would have been given to your proposal at the time of application so a change in project would need approval.

While a modification of the proposal or a change in semester for the sabbatical may be considered, your departmental needs are a factor to be weighed in that determination. Deferment to a later year is not a likely outcome. Usually, faculty who have to forego a sabbatical because of change of plans such as parental leave are not able to defer the sabbatical to a later year and would simply reapply during the next cycle. However, if a significant number of faculty members who have been awarded sabbaticals for 2020/2021 seek alteration in the

timing or the sabbatical project, the Office of Faculty Affairs will work with the CFA, deans, department chairs, and faculty leadership to develop a response for the Provost's consideration.

Faculty who are currently on sabbatical in Spring 2020 and who are not able to complete their sabbatical projects due to COVID-19 should speak to their chair and dean about possible options to meet the requirements of APM 360 part VII.

TEACHING

12) Is virtual teaching the same as online teaching?

Online teaching at Fresno State requires that faculty have specialized training in online teaching pedagogy and have had the opportunity to develop the online course to those standards.

Virtual teaching is not the same as online teaching which is defined by our APMs. (Please note that, in its March 9, 2020 memo to the President and the Provost, the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate permits flexibility in interpretation and administration of APMs 206, 232, 237, and 338.)

The transition to virtual teaching that you are currently undertaking is a response to the current public health situation. This is a temporary approach to the situation in which face-to-face instruction is not feasible. The goal is to move content delivery and assessments from face-to-face to virtual instruction. The goal is to approximate the experience of face-to-face instruction of the same materials as much as possible. For example, if you normally lecture, you may hold the lecture in the Zoom classroom setting and record the lecture and put it on Canvas for students to view online later. If students normally submit assignments in paper, they may now submit through Canvas. Office hours can be held through Zoom as can discussion groups.

13) Can we hold our classes on a different schedule since we are now in the virtual classroom?

You need to maintain your scheduled class time and office hours to prevent conflicts with other courses in which students are enrolled.

14) What if students want to take an incomplete or withdraw from a class?

To ensure that students move forward toward completion of their degrees and to do our part to prevent spread of COVID-19, we have moved to virtual presentation of course content and assessments. While this may be a challenge for you and your students, the opportunity for you to engage your students in the material in this different mode of delivery is one that will help them meet their educational and ultimate career goals. While students may be concerned about their grades or about their ability to learn the material in this way, your role as educator is to help them to find ways to address their concerns, which will be an important part of the learning and educational process this semester. If a student must take an incomplete or withdraw from a class and the reasons cannot be addressed through conversation and creative options from you, the options are available to them. Please be aware of the impact of large number of withdrawals or incomplete on the future semesters in which those students will need

to make up the courses that they do not complete this semester. The Drop/Withdrawal forms are available via the University Registrar's website at <http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/registrar/forms/index.html> .

All student forms will now **ONLY be processed electronically**. Both the Office of Undergraduate Studies and the University Registrar process the following forms:

- Change of Major
- Degree Advising Memos
- Drop/Withdrawal
- Excess Units
- Special Majors

These forms will continue to be processed following the regular approval path except it will all be completed electronically. If the form goes to Undergraduate Studies, it should be sent to Dr. Bernadette Muscat, Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies directly at bmuscat@csufresno.edu for signature and processing of the form electronically. If the form goes to the Registrar's Office, please send it to 5592786020@fax.csufresno.edu .

Both offices will be accepting electronic signatures. If you do not have the ability to use an electronic signature, we will accept an e-mail from your Fresno State e-mail account indicating approval/denial of the form as documentation of your signature.

The Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies is working with IT on the use of DocuSign for the various forms. Once that process is in place, all stakeholders will be notified about the streamlined process.

Dean of Undergraduate Studies Bernadette Muscat is working on electronic forms to allow for easier processing of requests and is available to provide guidance to you and to your students about options and best practices.

15) What guidelines can we share with students about virtual classroom behavior?

Remind your students that the virtual classroom requires the same engagement and respectful behavior as the face-to-face classroom. To create a learning environment that allows each student to hear, participate, and benefit from the knowledge of the instructor and the other students, each student should be on-time for class, should ensure civil and professional discourse on the subject matter of the course, should limit distractions and disruptions from background interruptions at home or the remote site from which they have chosen to attend class, and should be professional and respectful in presenting themselves in the virtual classroom. All of the same Student Conduct rules apply in the virtual classroom as they do in the face-to-face classroom so student misconduct would be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students.

You may want to offer tips and reminders to students at the start of each class session such as:

“Please mute your microphone unless you are speaking.”

“Please remove distractions from your work space being used to attend class. Multitasking is not an effective way to learn.”

“Please reduce the background noise and disruptions as much as possible. For example, put your phone away just as you would in our face-to-face classroom. If possible, please attend class from a quiet space away from others, whether family members, friends, or pets.”

“Remember that your classmates will appreciate your assistance in making our classroom an environment suitable for everyone to learn without disruptions or distractions.”

You can also ask your students to contact you if they are not able to participate in class at the scheduled time or have difficulty with the expectations of the virtual classroom because of family obligations that create distractions or disruptions. Your class session can be recorded and made available to students to view at a later time.

- 16) I am concerned that my materials will be downloaded or copied or that the class sessions will be recorded by the students and put up on social media or used otherwise for non-educational purposes. Do I have any protections?

The Student Conduct rules apply to the virtual classroom just as they do in the face-to-face environment. You can include warnings in your syllabus and can include the notice to students at the start of classes.

The following statement was provided to deans for distribution to faculty:

As part of your participation in virtual/online instruction, please remember that the same student conduct rules that are used for in-person classroom instruction also apply for virtual/online classrooms. Students are prohibited from any unauthorized recording, dissemination, or publication of any academic presentation, including any online classroom instruction, for any commercial purpose. In addition, students may not record or use virtual/online instruction in any manner that would violate copyright law. Students are to use all online/virtual instruction exclusively for the educational purpose of the online class in which the instruction is being provided. Students may not re-record any online recordings or post any online recordings on any other format (e.g., electronic, video, social media, audio recording, web page, internet, hard paper copy, etc.) for any purpose without the explicit written permission of the faculty member providing the instruction. Exceptions for disability-related accommodations will be addressed by Student Disability Services working in conjunction with the student and faculty member.

Students are prohibited from violating copyright law by reproducing your materials. In addition, according to CFE, the technology of Canvas limits a student's ability to download or print materials.

- 17) I want to hold a class during spring break. Can I do that to make up course work?

Spring break is a break in classes and will be observed as spring break as usual. The same is true for holidays that fall within this virtual instruction period; for example, March 31 is Cesar Chavez Day and will be observed as a holiday. No classes can be held, no exams can be given, and no assignments can be due during spring break or on holidays on the University calendar.

18) Will exams follow the original schedule?

To ensure that students do not have conflicts for exams, you are to follow the original exam schedule found at

https://fresnostate.edu/academics/scheduling/documents/Final%20Exam%20Schedule_Spring_2020.pdf . You should not make changes to the dates and times of final exams or class sessions.

19) I am in need of equipment to teach my virtual classes. Will that be provided to me?

The Deans and the Provost's Office collected information on equipment needs for faculty during the week of March 16th. Technology Services and CFE worked closely together to determine the most efficient ways to get equipment to faculty. If you are still in need of equipment, please notify your dean who will relay that information to the IT liaison for the college.

20) I was planning to teach my classes in an empty classroom on campus or in my office to be sure that I had reliable Internet access. Is that allowed?

The campus Emergency Operations Committee would like you to consider the safety of yourself and others as you contemplate using campus facilities. On March 30, campus operation hours were reduced to 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for essential functions only. Campus buildings will be locked after 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and on weekends. All campus buildings are locked during spring break week.

Faculty can access their office buildings between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays as they normally do. If you need to access your office after 5 p.m. for virtual teaching, please call campus dispatch at 278-8400. Please remember to carry your Fresno State ID card for access to campus buildings.

Please be aware that non-essential access to university facilities after 5pm or on weekends adds extra work and potential risk to our security and cleaning staff. Unless it is truly needed, our best practice is not to come on campus after 5pm or on weekends.

For the campus announcement, see <https://campusnews.fresnostate.edu/march-30-2020/covid-19-related-operational-updates>.