

TEACHING CONTINUITY FAQ FOR VANDERBILT FACULTY

When does Vanderbilt return to classes?

Vanderbilt returns to classes on **Monday, March 16**. Assignments and assessment can resume that week. We are asking that faculty be thoughtful about the transition. Faculty are aware of the difficulties many students are facing as they move off-campus or cope with other significant changes in their lives resulting from the current crisis. Faculty too are trying to manage many challenges, and we are asking students to be patient as faculty work to continue to teach.

Are there examples of how to communicate with my students at the beginning of the transition?

[This blog post](#) shares an example of introductory emails.

Are undergraduate campus residents required to leave campus?

Most undergraduates who live on campus are required to [move out](#) by March 15. Exceptions are granted based on need, and include international students.

Can faculty hold in-person classes if students want to attend?

No. In-person classes, regardless of size, are suspended for the semester.

Can I go to my classroom if I want to tape my class?

Yes. Your building will be accessible by Vanderbilt card access or may be open. For assistance recording in a classroom, please reach out to [VUIT](#).

Where can I learn about alternative methods of instruction like online tools?

The Faculty Online and Alternative Education Resources web portal will direct you to resources, including training, digital tools, virtual classes and group discussions, teaching guides, and assessment. The web portal is regularly updated: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/faculty-affairs/faculty-online-and-alternative-education-resources/>.

Should I hold my class at the same time and try to do a live class? Or should I change the timeline?

If you're going to host a synchronous online class session, you should schedule that session during one of your scheduled class meeting times to prevent conflicts with other class meetings.

However, you may find that running synchronous online class sessions isn't necessary for your course. You could post videos and/or readings for students to engage with asynchronously, and even handle faculty-student and student-student interactions asynchronously through email, discussion boards, blogs or external tools like [Flipgrid](#). If your students have limited bandwidth or are spread out over multiple time zones, asynchronous activities could be particularly useful.

If I plan on holding synchronous class meetings, when should they be?

They should be during the scheduled class time so that they don't conflict with other course meetings students have.

What are solutions if I'm concerned that my students won't have stable internet access?

Consider using asynchronous activities to a significant degree. When thinking about presenting information, consider posting [videos](#) or readings with guiding questions for students to engage with in their own time. When considering interactions your students have with you and each other, consider using a [discussion board](#) or [blog](#) for some of the interactions. Using the announcement tool within Brightspace regularly can help students recognize that you are present and interacting, even if they can't interact "face-to-face."

For synchronous activities that you schedule, be sure to be flexible for students who can't attend. Both Zoom and Virtual Classroom allow instructors to record live sessions for later viewing by students, which is sometimes easier than participating live. These tools also allow users to turn off their own video as they participate, which can make it easier for participants on limited bandwidth.

How do I hold office hours?

There are several ways to offer office hours.

- Zoom: [Set up a Zoom meeting](#) that your students can opt into if they want.
- Virtual classroom: [Set up a Virtual Classroom](#) meeting that your students can opt into if they want.

Note: Both Zoom and Virtual Classroom are videoconferencing tools that are integrated into Brightspace. Both can work well for this purpose; just pick the one that you are most comfortable with.

- Chat: Set up a [chat room](#) in Brightspace that your students can opt into.

If you normally have appointments for office hours, you can continue to do that and to interact in one of the ways above or simply via phone.

Can faculty hold in-person office hours?

Yes, faculty can hold in-person office hours as they usually would. The office meetings can be one-on-one or with a small group of students – again as would usually be scheduled. Faculty should recognize that some students are no longer in Nashville or may feel uncomfortable coming to office hours. In those cases, faculty should provide alternative ways of asking questions, such as phone calls, video conferencing, emails, discussion boards, and so on.

What are potential solutions for moving labs online?

Moving labs online is one of the most challenging parts of completing the semester online. This [post](#) shares some ideas, emphasizing the importance of thinking through your goals for the course and focusing on the ones—like data analysis, data presentation, etc.—that can be accomplished remotely. Adam List, who leads the Organic Chemistry labs at Vanderbilt, is planning to videotape a graduate student completing experiments, posting the video in short segments that are accompanied by questions. For example, if a student is purifying a product, the video might show an extraction procedure. The accompanying question might ask students which fraction their product would be in. This approach can enable students to approximate the cognitive work of the lab.

How do I arrange a small group meeting for student projects?

All students have full access to Zoom, inside and outside of Brightspace. Therefore, you can set up [groups](#) of students in Brightspace, give them information about how to set up Zoom meetings, and tell them to set up their own meeting, inviting you as a participant. This allows students to start the meeting without your presence but also allows you to drop in if needed.

Alternatively, you can set up student groups and a [discussion](#) within each group.

Can I set up breakout rooms in Zoom?

Yes. This [video](#) tells you how.

Where can my students get help using some of the unfamiliar Brightspace tools?

There are multiple guides for students here, and they can ask for help from [VUIT](#) for connectivity issues and for pedagogical purposes from brightspace@vanderbilt.edu.

How do I implement remote accommodations for students?

Accommodations may change as classes move from in-person to remote. The [SAS Faculty page](#) has information on remote accommodation implementation as well as information on how to ensure your online content is accessible, including applying extra time for exams. Contact SAS for any questions or concerns at studentaccess@vanderbilt.edu.

Do I have to make videos?

No. Video is one way to present information, but we can also present information through readings and links to other resources, including videos created by others. The most important piece is to make sure you are communicating with your students so that they know you are present and they know what to expect, with a clear message that that plans can evolve.

Can I use email?

Yes. You should use the tools for interaction that are comfortable for you and accessible to your students.

How can faculty arrange a conference call?

We recommend using one of three options:

- Zoom (Vanderbilt's license): The [guides](#) here walk you through the steps of using Zoom through Brightspace, from [creating an account](#) to [setting up and then hosting a meeting from within Brightspace](#). You can also use Zoom outside of Brightspace by logging in through <https://vanderbilt.zoom.us/>. Whether you access Zoom via Brightspace, through the Zoom website, or through a Zoom app, you can create, host, and schedule meetings. For more help with Zoom, see [VUIT's page on Zoom](#).
- Skype (Vanderbilt's license): A description of Skype can be found [here](#).
- Vanderbilt conference call service: Information can be found [here](#).

I previously had an individual Zoom account using my Vanderbilt email. How do I associate my Vanderbilt email with the Vanderbilt Zoom license?

1. Log out of zoom.us if you are currently logged in.
2. Navigate to <https://vanderbilt.zoom.us> and click Sign In.
3. You will receive an invitation email. Accept the invite when it comes.
4. If you are asked to switch your account, you should do it.

Can students who go to other countries, such as international students returning home, confidently expect to receive all content?

No. In countries that censor content, students cannot be confident that they will receive all course content, even with the Vanderbilt VPN.

What are my best options for remote instruction if I am trying to also manage children who are unable to go to school?

Teaching remotely with children at home is one of the challenges many of us will be facing over the coming days and weeks. It might be useful for caregivers to think about how they can maximize asynchronous learning activities, meaning activities that can be created by the instructor at one point in time, and then students can engage with that learning activity afterwards at a different point in time. Here are some examples:

- Instead of delivering live lectures or demonstrations, consider using a screencasting tool to record ahead of time when the house is quiet, and then add the lecture video to your course for student viewing.
- Instead of facilitating live discussions, consider asynchronous discussions. Students can post when they are able, and the instructor can review the posts and add to the discussion when they are able.

[This blog post](#) explores these and other more ideas for asynchronous tools you can use in your remote teaching.

Vanderbilt Child and Family Center has created a webpage that lists care resources and will continue to update it as more options become available: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/child-family-center/services/backup-child-care-com.php>

Where can I go for help?

- **For questions about Brightspace**, please email brightspace@vanderbilt.edu or call 615-322-0200. Staff are available from 7am to 11pm Monday through Thursday, 7am to 3pm on Friday, and 5pm to 11pm on Sunday.
- **For questions about alternative teaching methods**, please contact the Center for Teaching at 615-322-7290 or complete this form: <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/about/contact-us/>.
- **For questions regarding technology issues**, please call the VUIT support number (615-343-9999) or submit a help request (help.it.vanderbilt.edu).
- **For other questions**, please contact the Office of Faculty Affairs at vpf@vanderbilt.edu or reach out directly to Vice Provost Tracey George at tracey.george@vanderbilt.edu.