

**From:** [Summers, Greg](#)  
**Subject:** Academic Affairs Update, 07-31-20  
**Date:** Friday, July 31, 2020 7:50:30 AM

---

Colleagues,

We're roughly a month away from classes beginning this fall, and the questions we're all asking and trying to answer are growing more specific. There is a lengthy message below, but before you read it, please pause to note this:

We saw this week the funeral of Representative John Lewis, the great American civil rights leader and congressman. Shortly before his death, he wrote an essay to be published on the day of his funeral. Regardless of your political views, I hope you agree that Lewis' message transcends politics, providing a call to action that is both reassuring and urgent. You can [read the essay](#) in the New York Times, but I recommend listening to Morgan Freeman read it [here](#). (Because don't we all want to sound like Morgan Freeman?)

On Tuesday, our Provost's Council team will be discussing a draft strategic plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Academic Affairs for the coming year prepared by Lindsay Bernhagen. I continue to welcome your ideas.

At this week's meeting of department chairs and directors, we discussed a variety of issues related to the fall semester. Following the meeting, Lindsay Bernhagen, Mary Bowman, Jennifer Collins, Jason D'Acchioli, Mick Veum, and Todd Huspeni took time to draft the guidance below, including a proposed policy on grading attendance.

Graded Attendance/Participation:

The Faculty Affairs Committee of the Common Council will be meeting soon to recommend policy regarding graded attendance and/or participation components during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed policy they will be considering is:

“Given the extraordinary nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, requiring students to be physically present in a face-to-face class is inappropriate. Requiring participation in a synchronous online class can also be problematic. Therefore, for the duration of this health crisis, instructors may not establish an attendance policy that directly connects class attendance to a student's grade without providing online, asynchronous alternatives that can substitute for attendance. Grading policies that include attendance are acceptable provided that they define “attendance” to include participation in online asynchronous activities as an alternative.”

In addition, to facilitate contact tracing this fall, the university will require that each instructor take attendance in class using the Roll Call and Seating Chart tools available in CANVAS. Sean Ruppert in CITL has created a video to explain how to set these tools up:

<https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/ebf417fc-4c52-4737-a894-a0e17a22c6c4>

#### Office Hours:

For the 2020-21 AY, instructors should schedule regular office hours, following department guidelines where applicable, to be accessible to students. These office hours may be either face-to-face or online, at the discretion of the instructor (and in compliance with face-to-face distancing policies). If (in compliance with all health and safety criteria) instructors choose to schedule office hours as face-to-face opportunities for students, instructors should be available for online meetings with students (e.g., via Zoom). At the discretion of the instructor, any face-to-face scheduled hours may be offered concurrently with online office hours.

#### Scheduling Exams for Asynchronous Courses:

Regarding courses or course components that are offered asynchronously, instructors may schedule exams on specific dates and times, provided these are clearly specified in the syllabus. As with the face-to-face modality, instructors are strongly encouraged to accommodate students with conflicts during an instructor-scheduled exam time. Instructors are also reminded that the campus does have an online proctoring service (Honorlock). Any questions about this service and its features can be answered by [CITL](#).

As we suspected, a significant number of students are electing to participate in classes online rather than in-person. Some faculty have asked how the bookstore will operate in this new environment. Laura Ketchum-Ciftci, Director of University Centers, provides this note:

#### Text Rental Check Out @ UWSP

During the month of August, we are pulling all freshman textbooks and pre-checking them out to reduce touchpoints when students come to pick them up. Residential Living is having move-in to the halls by appointment over a week-long stretch rather than just two days. As first-year and returning students check-in, they will be told 2-3 hours later to come over and pick-up their PointCard ID's and get their textbooks so we are not inundated with students all at once and can social distance them.

We are extending hours for the University Store/Text Rental for about a week in advance of normal. We will also do a campaign for students who are living in the surrounding communities to come and pick up books in advance – the week before

first-year students start to move-into the halls.

We are also working with Barnes and Noble to have textbooks and supplemental materials for classes shipped to their home addresses if they do not wish to come to campus.

Finally, UW System is also working to provide additional resources, including seeking funding from the state for broader surveillance testing on campuses. This week we received this link to a [COVID-19 Awareness Video](#) which can be widely shared with students.

Take care,  
Greg

~~~~~

Greg Summers

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs | [UW-Stevens Point](#)

202D Old Main | 2100 Main Street | Stevens Point, WI 54481

Phone: (715) 346-4686 | [gsummers@uwsp.edu](mailto:gsummers@uwsp.edu)



(This message is being sent to the Academic Affairs Faculty/Staff list.)