

## Report of the Academic Working Group

The Contingency Task Force charged The Academic Working Group (AWG) with investigating four scenarios for Fiscal Year 2021. The first is a baseline scenario that assumes students will be able to return to campus in the fall. The three additional scenarios are:

1. Hybrid Instruction as the fall term is split with a portion of it on campus and a portion with students at home,
2. Limitation on number of students who can return to campus due to limitations in facilities, services, etc. that can be provided due to social distancing and other guidelines/mandates,
3. Students cannot return to campus for the full fall term.

The AWG members include Jim Casey, Marc Conner, Jon Eastwood, Brant Hellwig, Lena Hill, Jemma Levy, Toni Locy, Elizabeth Oliver (chair), Lynn Rainville, and Rob Straughan.

Since the Law School operates on a separate calendar and does not provide housing for students, it formed a separate Law School Academic Working Group (LSAWG) comprised of David Baluarte, Beth Belmont, Brandon Hasbrouck, Brant Hellwig (chair), and J.D. King. This report provides the results of that group's deliberations separately.

### **Academic Working Group (undergraduate education)**

The AWG sponsored Canvas forums asking three different questions:

1. What are your ideas and concerns about how we as faculty can honor our commitment to the academic portion of the liberal arts education of our students if we cannot be on campus for part or all of the fall term?<sup>i</sup>
2. What should the timing and structure of the calendar be?<sup>ii</sup>
3. What should the class schedule be?<sup>iii</sup>

The Canvas site also hosted a bibliography of pertinent articles with links curated by Emily Cook. A separate email address ([AWG-FY21@wlu.edu](mailto:AWG-FY21@wlu.edu)) also received comments that were conveyed to the committee anonymously by Scott Dittman and Paul Youngman. The discussion threads are still available on Canvas, and Appendix 1 provides a synopsis of the themes found in each. Twenty-nine faculty participated in the first discussion, fifteen in the second, and thirty-seven in the third. According to the data, 198 faculty logged into the Canvas site. These comments have proven quite useful in shaping the Academic Working Group's discussions.

Beyond those discussions, the group met with the department heads from the sciences and then members of PE and Athletics to discuss their particular needs. The group also met jointly with the Student Life Working Group to discuss crossover issues. These discussions have shaped our responses to the different considerations.

In all cases that involve the students returning to campus, the AWG believes that the university should develop a statement of community principles. This statement should include, as the LSAWG noted,

such things as agreeing to wear masks when in the building, refraining from attendance if ill or experience[ing] flu-like symptoms, using technology to track social contacts, refraining from discretionary travel, and others.

Given that students and faculty are beginning to come back to campus, we believe that a University Statement should be developed as soon as possible and certainly before the official return to work so that the standards expected are an integral part of everyone's return.

### **ITHAKA S+R COVID-19 Pandemic Response Survey**

The ITHAKA S+R COVID-19 Pandemic Response Survey was designed and administered by the consulting firm ITHAKA S+R. A total of 872 (40%) law and undergraduate students from Washington and Lee University completed responses. Of those students, 679 (37%) were undergraduates. All of the data included in this report refer to these Washington and Lee undergraduate responses unless otherwise noted.

### **The Baseline Case: Return to campus of students in the fall (a slow return to normal)**

- **Mode of Instruction**

Under this model, primary instruction will occur during in-person class meetings as it did prior to the pandemic. Some instruction will be entirely virtual in order to meet the needs of faculty and students who require adjustments (see discussion in Student and faculty adjustments), or if necessary facilities are not available. Otherwise, in-person instruction will be strongly encouraged. Faculty know their pedagogical needs and will continue to adapt a range of class delivery methods in order to deliver the unique W&L experience all our students value and our most vulnerable students depend upon. (The ITHAKA S+R COVID-19 Pandemic Response Survey found that 71% of the 62 Pell-eligible Washington and Lee students who responded to the survey indicated that “[a]djusting to online instruction” was either “Very Difficult” or “Somewhat Difficult.” There are a total of 149 Pell-eligible students in that population, so the responses represent 42% of the group.)

- **Calendar/Daily Class Schedule**

The AWG proposed a calendar containing no breaks that begins Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup> and finishes before Thanksgiving week. This would minimize the movement of people in and out of Lexington. This calendar proposal remains the same for all the scenarios. Since this potential revision of the calendar has been passed by ACSR, FEC, and the undergraduate faculty, it provides President Dudley with an option that the AWG endorses.

Two potential alternate daily class schedules have been approved by ACSR and FEC and the undergraduate faculty. The decision as to which one of the three (original schedule and two proposed options) to use will be based on safety and classroom needs. Facilities has been identifying additional classroom spaces (see Teaching Spaces), and that information along with the information on how many professors need to teach virtually for health reasons will determine which of the three class schedule options we need to adopt.

However, since classes tend to cluster in peak times, some will have to be shifted. These shifts will allow a more even utilization of classrooms (including those temporary classrooms created to expand teaching capacity) and spread out foot traffic on campus. It will probably be necessary to shift some classes to early morning, late afternoon, and evening class blocks. The two optional schedules contain evening classes and either a 15-minute passing time or a 30-minute passing time. Medical advice on how much time will be necessary to safely transition between classes has varied, and expert advice will guide the decision.

See Appendix 1 for a summary of the Canvas discussions on calendar models and class blocks.

- **Teaching Spaces**

Facilities worked to provide a list of alternative teaching spaces that could supplement the existing ones. The current CDC guidance suggests six feet between people even with masks. This is not attainable in all spaces, and the deans are in conversations with departments that teach labs and studios to determine what changes, if any, can be made to these spaces or these course structures. ITS will work on the supplemental teaching spaces to provide technology wherever possible. It will also work to make sure that as many rooms as possible have recording technology so that classes can be recorded in case students cannot attend class in person due to illness, quarantine, or other health or travel reasons.

Faculty members are also concerned that teaching and office spaces will not have sufficient ventilation and that most windows do not currently open. (See “Concern over air quality in teaching spaces.”)

Discussions of whether plexiglass dividers might allow closer workspaces for labs, for example, are also being considered.

- **Student and faculty adjustments**

It is proposed that if faculty members need adjustments in order to teach virtual-classes due to health and safety concerns, they will apply through Human Resources. The Return to Work Special Topics Group is developing a plan for identifying and addressing these needs. The details of such requests will remain confidential within Human Resources. The Student Life Working Group is addressing student adjustments.

- **Academic technologies and faculty preparation for virtual instruction**

The Academic Technologies and Virtual Instruction Special Topics Group is preparing a schedule of summer trainings that will be taped so they will be available online after the initial presentation. This Summer Academy, which we anticipate beginning the second week in June, will include both pedagogical and technical offerings. The former will address how to teach more effectively in a virtual setting.

Paul Hanstedt (CARPE) and David Saacke (ITS) plan to send surveys to the faculty gathering information on what worked well and what did not.

Changes to technology in classrooms are being addressed by ITS. The survey should provide ITS with information about what changes are needed. David Saacke noted the possibility of equipment shortages or delays in shipping, but there is also the possibility of keeping existing equipment that is being replaced to use in some of the supplemental classrooms.

- **Concern over air quality in teaching spaces**

Faculty expressed concern over the air quality in the teaching spaces. Facilities has already begun planning to address that concern throughout the campus. See Appendix 2 for a description of Facilities' planned response.

- **Desire to use tents to increase teaching spaces and move classes outdoors**

A number of faculty expressed a desire to explore using tents. Facilities and ITS have considered it but found that it would be problematic, although the idea of using outdoor spaces for classes that do not require technology or electricity have not yet been addressed. See Appendix 3 for a detailed list of the issues Facilities found with using tents and a rebuttal by one of the AWG members.

1. **Scenario 1: Hybrid Instruction as the fall term is split with a portion of it on campus and a portion with students at home**

- **Mode of Instruction**

The on-campus method would be the same as noted in the baseline case. If forced to leave campus or delay return, any portion where the students are not on campus would be virtual.

- **Calendar/Daily Class Schedule**

The calendar and daily class schedule would be the same as in the baseline case. However, the proposed calendar, which has exams completed before Thanksgiving, could be extended to finish after Thanksgiving if the students had to leave campus in the middle of the term. Exams could be completed virtually after the students left campus. Any change would need to be vetted by FEC and voted on by the faculty.

- **Teaching Spaces**

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Faculty members are also concerned that teaching and office spaces will not have sufficient ventilation and that most windows do not currently open. (See “Concern over air quality in teaching spaces.”) Discussions of whether plexiglass dividers might allow closer workspaces for labs, for example, are also being considered.

- **Student and faculty adjustments**

The adjustment process would be the same as in the baseline case. It is proposed that if faculty members need adjustments for virtual classes, they will apply through Human Resources. The Return to Work Special Topics Group is developing a plan for identifying and addressing these needs. The details of such requests will remain confidential within Human Resources. The Student Life Working Group is addressing student adjustments.

- **Academic technologies and faculty preparation for virtual instruction**

The on-campus portion would be the same as in the baseline case. However, for the virtual portion more technology will be needed for both faculty and students. Despite ITS’s amazing efforts, some faculty have indicated that they did not always have the technology that they needed during winter and spring terms this year. The results of the CARPE/ITS survey will provide more specific information. The ITHAKA S+R COVID-19 Pandemic Response Survey indicated that 15% of the 679 undergraduate students who replied indicated that they either “Strongly Disagreed” or “somewhat disagreed” with the statement that “I currently have the tools and resources I need to complete my coursework this semester or term.” In addition, 24% found “Having reliable access to the Internet (via WiFi or Ethernet)” either “Very Difficult” or “Somewhat Difficult.” However, only 8% found “Having reliable access to a functioning computer, laptop, or other similar device” either “Very Difficult” or “Somewhat Difficult.”

- **Transition Time**

Having been through the transition from on-campus to virtual teaching this winter, it is likely that another transition, if required, could be made more rapidly. For example, if the fall starts virtually and then transitions to on-campus courses, the transition might be accomplished in a matter of a few days rather than weeks as in March.

## **2. Scenario 2: Limitation on number of students who can return to campus due to limitations in facilities, services, etc. that can be provided due to social distancing and other guidelines/mandates**

- **Mode of Instruction**

If part of the student body returns to campus, the first years are the easiest group to provide with discrete classes. Seniors would probably be the next easiest group to teach in such a model, and most of them live off campus. For the students who return, we believe appropriate classes could be organized. However, a number of faculty believed that teaching both virtually and in person at the same time for the same class would be challenging. This is the option that needs the most lead-time to organize if the classes are to

be taught as successfully as possible because some reorganization within the departments would be required.

- **Calendar/Daily Class Schedule**

As noted in the baseline case, the AWG proposed a calendar containing no breaks that begins Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup> and finishes before Thanksgiving week. This would minimize the movement of people in and out of Lexington. This calendar proposal remains the same for all the scenarios. Since this potential revision of the calendar has been passed by ACSR, FEC, and the undergraduate faculty, it provides President Dudley with an option that the AWG endorses.

Two potential alternate daily class schedules have been approved by ACSR and FEC and the undergraduate faculty. The decision as to which one of the three (original schedule and two proposed options) to use will be based on safety and classroom needs. Facilities has been identifying additional classroom spaces (see Teaching Spaces), and that information along with the information on how many professors need to teach virtually for health reasons will determine which of the three class schedule options we need to adopt.

- **Teaching Spaces**

We would not need all of the alternative teaching spaces in this model, but we would still expect to provide larger areas where social distancing could occur.

- **Student and faculty adjustments**

As noted in the baseline case, we would need adjustments for faculty who have health issues.

- **Academic technologies and faculty preparation for virtual instruction**

As noted in the baseline case, the Academic Technologies and Virtual Instruction Special Topics Group is preparing a schedule of summer trainings that will be taped so they will be available online after the initial presentation. This Summer Academy, which we anticipate beginning the second week in June, will include both pedagogical and technical offerings. The former will address how to teach more effectively in a virtual setting.

Paul Hanstedt (CARPE) and David Saacke (ITS) plan to send surveys to the faculty gathering information on what worked well and what did not.

Changes to technology in classrooms are being addressed by ITS. The survey should provide ITS with information about what changes are needed. David Saacke noted the possibility of equipment shortages or delays in shipping, but there is also the possibility of keeping existing equipment that is being replaced to use in some of the supplemental classrooms.

And as Scenario 1 noted, for the virtual portion more technology will be needed for both faculty and students. Despite ITS's amazing efforts, some faculty have indicated that they did not always have the technology that they needed during winter and spring terms this year. The results of the CARPE/ITS survey will provide more specific information. The ITHAKA S+R COVID-19 Pandemic Response Survey indicated that 15% of the 679

undergraduate students who replied indicated that they either “Strongly Disagreed” or “somewhat disagreed” with the statement that “I currently have the tools and resources I need to complete my coursework this semester or term.” In addition, 24% found “Having reliable access to the Internet (via WiFi or Ethernet)” either “Very Difficult” or “Somewhat Difficult.” However, only 8% found “Having reliable access to a functioning computer, laptop, or other similar device” either “Very Difficult” or “Somewhat Difficult.”

- **Recommendations on which students would return to school if limited number only can be allowed on campus**

First years would be prioritized because more classes aimed only at them could be arranged. Seniors should be the next group permitted to return, as their needs are more certain. Sophomores and juniors provide challenges because their class needs are so varied.

- **Other**

The faculty on the AWG asked that it be noted that they consider this option by far the least desirable of all.

### **3. Scenario 3: Students cannot return to campus for the full fall term**

- **Mode of Instruction**

If students cannot return to campus, all instruction will be virtual. The ITHAKA S+R COVID-19 Pandemic Response Survey found that 56% of the undergraduate Washington and Lee students who responded to the survey either “Strongly” or “Somewhat” disagreed with the statement, “I currently feel connected to other students at this college or university.” And 42% either “Strongly” or “Somewhat” disagreed with the statement, “I currently feel connected to my instructors at this college or university.”

When asked about the nature of the classes, 93% of W&L students who participated to the survey reported that at least part of their classes was delivered “Virtual in real time,” but 78% reported that at least part of their classes was delivered “Virtual not in real time.”

There is consensus that this outcome is unappealing given our mission for direct interaction with our students. It is at odds with both President Dudley’s and our students’ desire to return to in-person teaching if it can be done safely. Virtual teaching places an enormous hardship on lab, studio, and experiential pedagogies that rely on in-person teaching. However, in contrast to a hybrid model (option one) or a return to campus for some students but not all (option two), this model does have the benefit of providing certainty for planning purposes.

- **Calendar/Daily Class Schedule**

This model could be implemented with an early return to campus as noted in all of the other models. No adjustments to the class blocks would be necessary, however.

- **Teaching Spaces**

As noted in the other scenarios, increased technology to support recording of materials is important. Additional support throughout the summer will also be important.

- **Student and faculty adjustments**

Faculty adjustments would not be necessary in this model since all teaching would be virtual.

- **Academic technologies and faculty preparation for virtual instruction**

As Scenario 1 noted, for the virtual portion more technology will be needed for both faculty and students. Despite ITS's amazing efforts, some faculty have indicated that they did not always have the technology that they needed during winter and spring terms this year. The results of the CARPE/ITS survey will provide more specific information. The ITHAKA S+R COVID-19 Pandemic Response Survey indicated that 15% of the 679 undergraduate students who replied indicated that they either "Strongly Disagreed" or "somewhat disagreed" with the statement that "I currently have the tools and resources I need to complete my coursework this semester or term." In addition, 24% found "Having reliable access to the Internet (via WiFi or Ethernet)" either "Very Difficult" or "Somewhat Difficult." However, only 8% found "Having reliable access to a functioning computer, laptop, or other similar device" either "Very Difficult" or "Somewhat Difficult."

- **Other Potential Challenges**

Some elements of the curriculum might be difficult to replicate in a purely virtual term. Science faculty, for example, noted that winter term succeeded because eight weeks of lab instruction had been completed in-person. Teaching an entire twelve-week term virtually would pose different challenges for students. For example, some medical schools will not accept lab courses taken online.

## **Other Issues**

On April 13, 2020, SACSCOC sent an email detailing "Temporary Emergency Relocation of Instruction," which addresses "relocation of instruction to online/distance learning." In the email, it states:

**Therefore, all institutions submitting notification will be automatically granted relocation approval through December 31, 2020. No additional action is required by you.** This will be added to your institution's record and will be publicly available on the SACSCOC website as required by the U.S. Department of Education. I will make further adjustments if needed and will keep you apprised. You do not need to notify the Commission again when instruction returns to its previous locations.

Thus, W&L can continue online instruction through the Fall Term without any adverse effects from SACSCOC.

## **The Law School Report**



As part of the University's Contingency Planning Task Force, an Academic Working Group was formed to contemplate adjustments needed to the academic program in the AY 2020-21 in anticipation of a variety of scenarios resulting from the COVID-19 public health crisis. Given the distinct circumstances faced by the Law School as the University's only graduate program, a separate, Law School-specific academic working group was constituted to work in parallel on the academic planning front. That working group consists of Dean Brant Hellwig, Associate Dean David Baluarte, and the following three faculty members who were elected by members of the law faculty to serve on the working group: Prof. Beth Belmont, Prof. J.D. King, and Prof. Brandon Hasbrouck.

The Law School Academic Working Group (LSAWG) began its meetings on Thursday, April 23. The LSAWG has met daily since then, apart from days on which the LSAWG called for meetings of the full law school faculty. A meeting with the law faculty was called on Thursday, April 30, to discuss the AWG's deliberations and preliminary recommendations. Following another week of meetings, the LSAWG called another meeting of the law faculty on Thursday, May 7, to finalize recommendations and to hold faculty votes on necessary one-time adjustments to our academic program.

**The conclusions and recommendations of the LSAWG are as follows:**

1. We believe it is critical to return to in-person education at the Law School to the greatest extent possible in the fall semester.
2. We considered a number of adjustments to our academic calendar to increase the likelihood of returning to in-person instruction while also preserving a safe and healthy environment for all members of the Law School community. We ultimately concluded that a traditional, 13-week semester that permitted the exam period to conclude prior to the Thanksgiving Break provided the most productive path forward in this regard. A key consideration was the ability to conclude the semester before many of our students travelled for the Thanksgiving holiday – avoiding a second return of students to the building from distant locations during one of the most pivotal and stressful times of the year.
3. As part of this calendar adjustment, the law faculty voted to suspend the Immersion program (which typically runs in small sections during a dedicated 2-week period in mid-August prior to the start of semester-long classes) for the 2020-21 academic year only. The Law School will seek to increase experiential offerings on similar subjects to offer alternatives to the Immersion, but in a different pedagogical format. One possibility that we are exploring is offering several elective virtual short courses during the period immediately following the Thanksgiving holiday.
4. To accommodate the greatest number of in-person classes in a manner that will comply with likely physical-distancing requirements, we have revised our teaching schedule to extend further into the early evening. Additionally, in limited cases, certain sections of multi-section classes will be scheduled on Saturday. We will take steps to ensure that students who engage in religious observance on Saturdays, or who have early evening childcare obligations, will not be placed in Saturday or early evening sections.
5. We will ask all law faculty to make their classes available remotely to students who may be ill or otherwise face complications related to COVID-19 that prevent their attendance in class. The law faculty is committed to working over the summer to offer necessary remote instruction at a high level that facilitates participation in class discussions and group work to the greatest extent possible.

6. The Law School understands that circumstances may preclude a return to in-person education or, alternatively, that we may need to once again transition from an in-person educational model to distance education due to public health developments over the course of the semester. To plan for such scenarios, the law school faculty will dedicate time and energy over the course of the summer in planning to offer our coursework in as effective a manner as possible through distance education. In doing so, we will explore ways to preserve the individual attention each student receives through our traditional program.

7. Regardless of whether we must offer some or all of our courses in a distance-education format, the law faculty and administration are committed to maintaining a rich and varied menu of extra-curricular and co-curricular offerings, including student groups, competitions, and outside speakers (subject to any limitations imposed by the University).

8. The LSAWG believes it is critical to develop and disseminate a statement of community principles regarding the preservation of a healthy and safe environment at the Law School. Law School-specific principles could include such things as agreeing to wear masks when in the building, refraining from attendance if ill or experience flu-like symptoms, using technology to track social contacts, refraining from discretionary travel, and others. We also understand the importance of and are supportive of a University wide approach. We believe any principles the University adopts should apply to all constituents of the University in order to ensure that faculty, administration, staff, and students all model healthy behavior while supporting the entire community's health.

9. The Law School will explore optional, virtual programming over the summer to incoming students to build excitement for our program and to start building a sense of community in advance of the start of the school year in mid-August

## Appendix 1

### Discussion 1 Themes

Response: 45 replies, 29 faculty participated

Discussion 1 common themes:

Should **delay fall term registration** until figure out how the term will look

**Testing, tracing, quarantining policies**—and intense cleaning of classrooms—if the term is in-person

- Ask students to come back early and put them in quarantine
  - Problem in enforcing it: Kids who came back from Italy went to parties, Kroger
- Masks for all
- Disinfectants/wipes in classrooms
- Need all of above

General support expressed for **Beloit-like modules**, with W&L splitting into two six-week mini terms in fall, but ...

- Opposition from sciences because students put at disadvantage with condensed material; if they take lab in the first mini term, too much time will go by before they take (next part of Organic Chem) again.

- Concern from dance, theater that students won't register for courses that rely heavily on in-person instruction and hands-on learning. Hurt departments now and for years to come.

Offer **mix of online and in-person courses no matter whether we go modular or try the regular term**

- Protect faculty and students who may have health issues or live with someone who does—or are frightened of coming back to campus
- Would free up classroom space to employ social distancing in in-person classes
- Some courses could convert to online more easily than others (Math)

Must **provide online access to all courses taught in-person**

- International and domestic students who cannot get back to Lexington
- Provides kids who may get sick with access to course material
- (That means we need to record all in-person lectures ... technology to do so needed)

**Start fall term 1½ weeks early** to avoid weird break at Thanksgiving (and to prevent situation where kids go back home and come back, possibly bringing COVID with them)

**More training in online teaching for faculty** over summer

- Share experiences with each other
- NTT faculty contracts don't start until September: They want to be compensated
- Want feedback from students about what worked and didn't during our online portion of winter term and with the virtual spring term.

**Discussion 2 Themes**

Response: 22 Replies, 15 faculty participated (cannot tell who "liked" the comment)

Discussion 2 common themes:

Six-week modules:

- Strong support from three (to 3.5) people
- Strong opposition from seven people

Supporters of the modules:

- Allows for rapid changes to emptying or populating campus. If Colorado College can do it, so can we. Summer sessions are six weeks, and we transfer those courses for credit. Labs can be taught this way. "Nobody wants to, but we can."
- Provides flexibility and consistency
- Could work if did it for the entire academic year (for languages, organic chem, etc.)
- Resembles our four-week spring term (which used to be six)
- Provides inclusivity for international students who cannot travel back to Lexington
  - With a modular calendar, they'd lose only two on-campus courses, not four from a full term.
  - It also addresses concerns of others who might be hesitant to fly back to campus at first. So, all such students could enroll remotely in the first six weeks and still have a real option to return to campus in mid-fall instead of having to wait till January.

Opponents of six-week modules (**aka proponents of keeping the 12-week term**):

- Too disruptive to science labs, theater, journalism (Locy respectfully disagrees)
- “Enormous” amount of work for faculty to convert courses to six weeks from 12
- Denies students of the time they need to “read, think, write, work on problems, make mistakes, get feedback and help in office hours, etc.”
- Asks too much of students to adapt to an educational model that is fundamentally different than what they’re used to.
- Asks too much of faculty to adapt to an educational model that they are fundamentally not used to
- Would require enormous preparation to be ready for in-person and virtual instruction

No matter the model (six weeks or 12 weeks), **most people generally support starting in August and ending before Thanksgiving**. They also support:

- Eliminating breaks that would allow students to leave and return to campus
  - Reading Days and Washington Break
- Retooling the academic day to stagger when classes meet and with limiting the number of students per session

There were about three people who support the 12-week term with a twist:

- First two weeks virtual
- Eight weeks in-person
- Last two weeks virtual

One faculty member had good ideas for nuts and bolts of everything from testing to housing to utilization of space to comply with social distancing.

### **Discussion 3 Themes**

Response: 57 Replies, 37 faculty participated (cannot tell who “liked” the comment)  
AWG Discussion 3 themes:

Everything below is based on responses from 37 faculty members who participated in the forum. Some of them made multiple comments on the discussion board.

The most powerful revelation in the forum was the participants’ belief that they will (and should) have the freedom to design and offer hybrid courses that incorporate F-2-F and virtual components into their pedagogy. Most participants seem willing and able to adapt to a hybrid approach for teaching courses in the fall.

Another key, related theme that emerged among the forum’s participants: They believe faculty should have the choice of teaching virtually. In other words, they think faculty have a right to decide whether to put their health at risk by teaching F-2-F. This may be at odds with what Mary Main is working on, if a doctor’s note is going to be required to confirm an underlying condition before dispensation would be granted. (It would be great if HR could roll out its return-to-work policy soonest to ensure that faculty are fully informed about the university’s intentions.) Given the comments, faculty will be caught off guard if the university insists on 100 percent F-2-F instruction for every course in the fall, with the exception of people with documented underlying health issues.

The idea of shorter classes (60 minutes or less) gained steam among the forum's participants as they discussed that infection can spread easily and quickly when people are speaking at a normal level in a confined space.

Many participants raised concerns about ensuring faculty have access to proper technology (that works) to ensure that we can meet the needs of students on campus and students who cannot get back to Lexington and must participate virtually.

Most faculty support adhering as closely as possible to the status quo model:

- They favor the model with a heavy dose of all-virtual or hybrid courses to free up classroom space
- Students and faculty most familiar with it
- Students already registered
- Concerns about threatening pedagogical methods

There was very little, if any, support for the 180-minute model:

- People concerned about health being confined in a room with students for three hours
- This model would require significant changes to fall term courses
- It doesn't help the performing arts because they need lots more time for rehearsals

A few faculty members support the 90/180 model:

- It would provide some relief for faculty who teach labs or rehearsals (but doesn't, according to the arts' folks, who need several hours per week)

Most faculty want us to figure out how many courses could be taught **online only** and how many could be taught as **hybrids**:

- They (like us) believe this exercise could lead us to free up classroom space so that in-person classes can be offered while following social distancing protocols.

Most faculty are already thinking about how they could offer hybrid courses (that could more easily be converted to all-virtual if the situation deteriorates):

- Use of pre-recorded lectures
- Lectures could be delivered by alternating in-person and virtual sessions
- Professors could divide students into two groups, with one group receiving in-person instruction, while the other tunes in virtually.

Others advocated for **shorter** class periods because of health concerns over spending too much time in a confined space with other people. They suggested that shorter class periods would be safer. A couple of people quoted at length from the article by Erin Bromage, biology prof at UMass-Dartmouth, that's gotten lots of attention: <https://www.erinbromage.com/post/the-risks-know-them-avoid-them>

One faculty member also uploaded several photos that showed how quickly real estate is eaten up when applying six-foot social distancing protocols to one of Huntley's larger classrooms.

Faculty need more tech and other support:

- Better lecture capture software (audio and video); Yuja has issues
- Need white board software for use in online instruction
- HVAC issues need to be addressed

Saturday classes could interfere with religious observances

Concerns were raised that there is not enough time between classes to avoid bottlenecks in doorways and hallways. Amanda Bower pointed out that coming and going between classes could be “the most dangerous and time-consuming part” of whatever we try to do.

Several participants also asked who is going to clean classrooms in between classes. They asked: Is that going to be faculty? Is there enough time to do it properly?

Some faculty also questioned whether our efforts to manage density on campus would be wasted if students lack adequate and safe spaces to attend classes virtually. In other words, will they be forced to go back to their dorm rooms or apartments if they have a virtual class? Or will they be able to go to the library or elsewhere? How will they be able to participate in the virtual class without disturbing or interfering with others who are nearby?

Others talked about their preferences for teaching outdoors as much as possible. Others expressed concerns about W&L’s persistent problems with HVAC, sealed windows and other issues related to air flow in our classrooms. They want fresh air.

## Appendix 2

Facilities draft document below:

University Facilities is closely monitoring available guidelines for operating heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are using guidelines issued by the American Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA), the National Institute of Building Sciences, the CDC, OSHA, and other organizations to make decisions ensuring a safe indoor working and learning environment for our Campus community. Although this message focuses on HVAC systems and their impact on COVID risk factors, it is important to emphasize that non-HVAC control measures focused on hygiene and social distancing remain the most effective controls available to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

ASHRAE has issued the following two official statements:

“Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 through the air is sufficiently likely that airborne exposure to the virus should be controlled. Changes to building operations, including the operation of heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems, can reduce airborne exposures.”

“Ventilation and filtration provided by heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems can reduce the airborne concentration of SARS-CoV-2 and thus the risk of transmission through the air. Unconditioned spaces can cause thermal stress to people that may be directly life threatening and that may also lower resistance to infection. In general, disabling of heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems is not a recommended measure to reduce the transmission of the virus.”

Recommendations for altering HVAC operations during the COVID-19 pandemic which are applicable on our Campus include:

1. **Increase the volume of fresh outdoor air delivered through HVAC Systems and keep HVAC systems running longer hours.** Increasing the percentage of fresh air delivered to spaces helps reduce the load of airborne infectious particles. Campus HVAC systems have been designed in compliance with ASHRAE ventilation standards, which require relatively high ventilation rates and thus have the capacity to deliver more fresh air than generally required. ***Although Facilities has utilized new controls strategies to reduce equipment run-time and ventilation rates and gain energy efficiency for many years, systems will be adjusted back to higher ventilation rates and longer run-times.***
2. **High efficiency air filtration in HVAC systems.** Air filters in central air handling equipment have been proven effective at removing airborne viral loads. Recirculation of air through filters further reduces airborne loads. ***Facilities already utilizes air filters which meet the rating recommended by ASHRAE.***
3. **Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation (UVGI)** of recirculated air damages the structure of airborne infectious particles, rendering them inactive. UVGI is a proven technology and although testing on COVID-19 has not been completed to date, it is effective against similar strains of virus. ***Facilities has installed and maintained UVGI air treatment systems in many of the central air handling systems on Campus since 2014.***

4. **Maintain temperature and humidity as applicable to the infectious aerosol of concern.** Humidity levels between 40% and 60% have been shown to reduce the transmission of some airborne infectious organisms. ***Most central HVAC systems in Campus buildings include provisions to control humidity between 40% and 60% relative humidity.***

In addition to these measures, Facilities is planning an extensive program to clean internal components of central air handlers and replace all air filters prior to the return of the student body.



### Appendix 3

Facilities addressed the question of using tents as backup classrooms as follows:

Tents in the academic core of campus would create a series of physical issues :

- Environmental conditions ... Tents in the Bay Area in the Fall is one thing ... the Shenandoah Valley is another
- Providing electrical service would be a challenge and create site/mobility restrictions
- Tents need to be placed on level hard surfaces along Stemmons Plaza ...so 30 gallon drums of ballast surrounding perimeter.
- No tent is 100% waterproof .... Would need a BASE X type structure. Guess tents could be set-up in parking structure to help assure staying dry ... it's level too
- Providing network connects (not sure WiFi would be sufficient) and academic technologies would be another challenge ... David can expand upon that

One member of the committee addressed facilities concerns as follows:

I believe analysis of the learning space data will indicate with increased utilization (75%+) and 2-3 additional class periods per day or Saturday mornings ... sufficient existing space can be provided.

#### **SUFFICIENT YES, SAFE IS ANOTHER QUESTION**

Tents in the academic core of campus would create a series of physical issues :

- Environmental conditions ... Tents in the Bay Area in the Fall is one thing ... the Shenandoah Valley is another

#### **THE CLIMATE CONDITIONS FROM LATE AUGUST TO MID NOVEMBER, WHILE NOT PERFECT, ARE ACTUALLY QUITE AMENABLE TO OUTDOOR EDUCATION**

- Providing electrical service would be a challenge and create site/mobility restrictions

#### **NO NEED FOR ELECTRICITY IF THE CLASS IS DISCUSSING PAPERS**

- Tents need to be placed on level hard surfaces along Stemmons Plaza ...so 30 gallon drums of ballast surrounding perimeter.

#### **WE PLACE TENTS EVERYWHERE FOR ALUMNI EVENTS – INCLUDING LIBERTY HALL RUINS**

- No tent is 100% waterproof .... Would need a BASE X type structure. Guess tents could be set-up in parking structure to help assure staying dry ... it's level too

**IN THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT, NOTHING IS 100% GUARANTEED. I WOULD RATHER GET A LITTLE WET THAN BE EXPOSED TO POTENTIALLY HEAVY VIRAL LOADS**

- Providing network connects (not sure WiFi would be sufficient) and academic technologies would be another challenge ... David can expand upon that

**AGAIN, NO NEED IF DISCUSSION BASED WITH PAPERS AND TEXTS.**

No doubt there is also a list (the "P" list) of pedagogy, psychological, perception issues.

**PEDAGOGY WILL CHANGE NO MATTER WHAT WE DO. SO WILL THE OTHER Ps.**

**I still think tents is a sensible option and I hope it will be given more than cursory consideration.**

## End notes

<sup>i</sup> That wording is the actual prompt.

<sup>ii</sup> The prompt read as follows:

First of all, we would like to thank everyone for their thoughtful feedback. In this second round of our discussion, we need to determine **how and if we adjust our academic calendar for 2020-21.**

To be able to do that, we ask that you keep in mind several key principles:

- flexibility for the university to adapt to national and state healthcare guidance;
- freedom for faculty to be creative in delivering the best liberal arts instruction in the U.S., regardless of whether it needs to be in person or virtual;
- and a commitment to providing equal access to all students.

We appreciated all of the suggestions, and a few models have emerged. If we can return to in-person instruction, we undoubtedly must manage the density and movement of students and faculty on campus. We need to consider the fact that we might only be able to be on campus for part of the term. In addition, we must remember that some international and domestic students might not be able to return to Lexington, and some faculty and students may need to quarantine during the term.

You can see from the number of variables below that the term could be planned any number of ways. **What combination will give us the greatest flexibility and agility to meet whatever happens next?**

### Calendar models:

1. Adhere to our 12-week term
2. Adopt a modular approach with two six-week mini-terms, with two courses in each.
3. Flip our academic calendar to start with a four-week term in September. For example:
  - - Four-week term—one class [e.g., 9/24-10/23]
    - Six-week term—two classes [e.g., 10/26-11/20, one week off for Thanksgiving, 11/30-12/18]
    - Winter Break [12/19-1/10]
    - Six-week term—two classes [e.g., 1/11-2/15]
    - [Washington Break, 2/20-28]
    - Six-week term—two classes [e.g., 3/1-4/9]
    - Spring Break [4/10-18]
    - Six-week term—two classes [e.g., 4/19-5/28, with Commencement moved to early June]

### Curriculum question:

1. Do we have some percentage of our classes planned as virtual to decrease the density on campus?

### Timing:

1. Conduct the term, beginning the first week of September as usual.
2. Conduct the term but start earlier in August in time to finish before Thanksgiving Break. Resume in January, as usual.

<sup>iii</sup> The prompt read as follows:

In an effort to have students safely return to campus in the fall, the Academic Working Group has been looking at both **calendar adjustments** (e.g., completing the fall before Thanksgiving as noted by many in an earlier Canvas discussion) and **class day adjustments**. The calendar has now been referred to the Academic Calendar, Scheduling, and Registration Committee. A decision about the class schedule now must be addressed. Social distancing protocols and a finite number of classrooms, each with fixed capacity, will probably require expansion of teaching hours, even if we include spaces that are not traditionally used as classrooms (Lee Chapel, Hillel, Northen, etc.) Realizing that we will have to make adjustments, the AWG spent the entirety of its last meeting discussing various class schedule options and seeks your thoughts on three different alternatives.

We are all familiar with our **status quo class scheduling model**, which features options of 60-, 90-, 120-, 180-, and 240-minute sessions taught across five days of the week, primarily MWF and TR. Our current scheduling parameters accommodate 12 classes per classroom (more if evening and/or Saturday classes are scheduled). So far, the following pros and cons have been identified.

- Pros:
  - Classes are already designed around this model.
  - Class blocks of varying lengths allow pedagogical flexibility.
  - Fall registration, recently completed, assumed this model.
  - There could be a two-hour period held for athletics and performing arts rehearsals if evenings and weekends were used.
- Cons:
  - Modeling our expected capacities in light of the revised 6 foot spacing guidelines, our classroom inventory will be insufficient and other rooms that do not normally serve as classrooms will have to be utilized, which may affect some pedagogies.
  - Concentration of classes in working hours may make it difficult for faculty with young children if K-12 school/daycare hours are compressed.
  - Passing times required between shorter class blocks erode instructional time.

Another model would be to go to **180-minute class blocks** throughout the day. Each class would meet once a week for three hours. This model would enable 15 classes per classroom (more if evening and/or Saturday classes are scheduled).

- Pros:
  - Maximizes instructional time per classroom by minimizing the number of breaks between classes.
  - Matches up the timing of many labs with non-lab classes.
  - There could be a two-hour period held for athletics and performing arts rehearsals if evenings and weekends were used.
  - Some Saturday classes could provide faculty with young children flexibility for childcare if K-12 school/daycare hours are compressed.
- Cons:
  - Other than labs, few classes are currently designed for 180-minute blocks.
  - Students could end up with classes on only two or three days, raising concerns about how they might spend days on which they have no classes.
  - Saturday classes might be difficult for some faculty with young children.
  - Scheduling in recently completed registration was not designed around this model.

Another alternative would be to pair **90-minute (twice a week) and 180-minute (once a week) class blocks**. This would also enable at least 15 classes per classroom (more if evening and/or Saturday classes are scheduled).

- Pros:
  - Many classes are already optimized for 90-minute blocks and many labs for 180-minute blocks.
  - The 90- and 180-minute blocks align reasonably well.
  - Time could be reserved for athletics and performing arts rehearsals.
  - Saturday classes could make it harder for students to leave campus on weekends.
  - Some Saturday classes could provide faculty with young children flexibility for childcare if K-12 school/daycare hours are compressed.
- Cons:
  - Would require Saturday classes (likely scheduled as MR, TF, WS).
  - We may need to avoid WS classes in the evening, even if evenings are used on MR and TF, or could run 180-minute classes in the evening.
  - Saturday classes might be difficult for some faculty with young children.
  - Saturday classes could interfere with athletic competitions and musical and dramatic performances.
  - Scheduling in recently completed registration was not designed around this model.

We anticipate some classes being taught virtually in **all of these models**, chosen through a process that accounts for faculty health issues and departmental curricular needs.