Update: this policy will also be in effect for Spring 2021. The lab accomodation does not apply to CPSC21, CPSC 31, or CPSC 66 since those courses have labs that accommodate all time zones

To help the Department plan for the semester, please make sure you have registered your time zone information if you are living off-campus. Please do so even if you are in the same time zone as Swarthmore. Go to ***mySwarthmore*** > ***Personal Info*** > ***Time Zone Entry***

Active Learning Classroom

Central to the teaching philosophy of the Swarthmore College Computer Science Department is the notion that students must be active participants in the learning process in order to build the problem-solving skills necessary for their success. This takes on many forms, including live coding exercises, peer instruction, and rigorous course discussions. As such, the department strongly believes that in the upcoming semester, remote learning must include **synchronous participation in class activities to maximize the impact on student learning.** This means that we will expect students to attend and actively engage in lectures and labs, just as we would if they were on campus.

Remote Learning Pedagogy

Our collective experience in Spring 2020 taught us that active participation can be more difficult. As your faculty, we are working very hard to develop practices to build classroom community, prevent technology drain (e.g., Zoom fatigue) and more actively connect with students both in and out of class meeting times. What this looks like will vary by course, including pre-lecture videos, more frequent breaks during class periods, and smaller, more frequent assessment activities. We will be revisiting our choices throughout the semester and work to adjust practices where they are failing. Your faculty will share with you their expectations and new practices as the semester nears.

International Student Lab Accommodations

While our default is to expect synchronous learning in all of our courses, we also acknowledge that many of you are not in the same time zone as your instructors. The solution to this difference is not to move to completely asynchronous learning; this, in our opinion, would be setting up our students for failure. In addition, fully accommodating our support structure to meet all of the time zone differences is not feasible for us, as individuals - whether it is for personal health, inadequate child care, fully-online schools, or a myriad of other stresses in our personal and professional lives.

As such, as a department, each of our upper-level courses will have one block of office hours with priority given to students with large time zone differences from Swarthmore College. Each faculty will decide when this is, but the expectation is that they will hold a one-to-two hour time

block within approximately one day of the normal lab meeting. The block will be either early in the morning or late at night (e.g., somewhere between 8-10 in the am or pm). This will allow students who cannot participate in afternoon labs to have support for the lab work. (Note: this does not apply to CPSC21 and 35 in the Fall and CPSC 21, 31, and 66 in the Spring since these courses already have a morning and/or night lab. Students not on campus should register for the lab that best fits their time-zone needs).

In addition, students utilizing this accommodation need to acknowledge the following:

- This policy applies to students for whom the lab occurs between 11 pm - 8 am in their time zone. Otherwise, you are expected to attend the lab.
- Prior to the start of the semester, you must reach out to your instructor(s) if this policy applies to you. You need to explain your circumstances and come to a firm agreement on the expectations your instructor has for you.
- With few exceptions, the target reason for not participating is because of a large timeshift. Overlapping courses or extracurricular activities are not valid reasons.
- If you are not attending the lab session, you are expected to update your instructor on the status of your lab, and it may be required that you attend the office hours.
- Students should not expect faculty to change their block of time week-to-week, or tailor it for each student. If a student has a course conflict, they will need to make a scheduling choice of attending the lab or the office hours. If they cannot do either, it is advised they drop the course to find one that suits their schedule.
- This office hour block is for lab purposes, **it is not for making up for missed lectures**. Please see the course syllabus for details about lecture format and participation requirements.
- This policy is in effect for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 ~~will not automatically extend to Spring.~~
- It is worth repeating that synchronous weekly attendance, if possible, is still the recommended format for the best learning experience.

Late Days

We understand that students will face many challenges that would otherwise be absent if they were living on campus. Our faculty are constructing lab assignments in ways that are more flexible and conducive to remote learning. For some courses, there will be fewer lab assignments with longer active times. For others, the learning objectives will shift to be narrower, or more conducive to remote work. Our department plans to return to our normal policies for group work (e.g., an emphasis on pair programming for courses above CPSC 21). The policies will be course-specific, so please refer to your course syllabus for information on late days, grace periods, extensions, accommodations, and lab expectations.