

Remote Instruction FAQs for MiraCosta Faculty

You're encouraged to read through this FAQ in full, but if you're looking for a specific answer to a question, click a link below to jump to a subsection of this FAQ, or use your browser's search function to look for a keyword. If you can't find the answer to your question, please [submit your question](#) - we will include it here if it is a general question, or you can just request a personal response via email. Please remember that the latest and most authoritative source of information is MiraCosta's main [COVID page](#).

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General Information and Schedule Changes

Where can I find the most up-to-date college information about the situation?

The college's [COVID page](#) is the primary source for the latest information and support for faculty, staff, and students during the college's shift to remote instruction.

How can I ensure that I am receiving emails with the latest updates for the whole college, for all faculty, and for faculty in my department?

The best source for checking to see if you've received the latest updates is to visit the college's [COVID page](#) and resources linked from that page. AIS has [developed an information page](#) (Portal login required) to learn more about how to ensure that you are receiving college email.

I'm already teaching online. Do I really need to interrupt my class for the week of 3/23-28?

Yes, even if your class is already online it's important to put it on pause to avoid confusion for students. Students are being told they have a two-week Spring Break and we would not want them to fall behind or miss assignments because they didn't attend during that week. There is no instruction in any classes during that week. Faculty teaching full-semester classes, including online classes, should adjust class schedules and due dates.

If I'm moving an on-campus class to remote instruction, should we continue to meet live on the days/times we were meeting in the classroom?

You could, but it is not required, and may not be best for students. If you choose to use ConferZoom for live online instruction, it's recommended that you (a) work with your students to

figure out how many want to attend live and what days/times would work best; (b) do not expect or require live attendance; and (c) record all your sessions and make the recordings available to your students. See the [Support for Shifting to Remote Instruction](#) section for more guidance about ConferZoom.

Are there time requirements/expectations with remote instruction classes equivalent to the expectations for on-ground?

With the shift to online there is not a requirement to have your students spending any particular amount of time in any particular type of activity. Teachers new to online instruction often over-assign work, and in this difficult time for our students it is especially important to be careful about that. Aim for a simplified approach to helping students meet your class outcomes.

Are 8-week classes that were supposed to start the week of 3/23 delayed?

Eight-week classes that were scheduled to start on March 23rd are now starting on March 30 with an end date during the week of May 18-22. You can plan to end your class during the last day of class you would have met that week, or any time during that week.

What happens to finals week?

Finals week will now be a regular week of instruction, and the last week of the term. The college is still considering issues around exam timing; look for more information to come on this.

Support for Shifting to Remote Instruction

What guidance, training, and support is the college providing to faculty as they move to remote instruction?

The office of Online Education has developed a [Canvas site](#) with resources, suggestions, and guidance for faculty. Most faculty will probably be most interested in starting with an [extensive chart helping to translate various in-class activities](#) to the online environment.

Many faculty have stepped forward in support of their colleagues. Please see a [spreadsheet listing volunteer support faculty](#) by discipline and do not hesitate to reach out for support.

The C³ Teaching and Learning Center and Online Education have developed a [full slate of support and training opportunities](#) in the week of March 23-27..

Am I required to use any specific technologies or teaching methods when I move my on-ground class to remote instruction? Are there particular technologies that are recommended?

Flexibility, compassion, and helping students to continue to progress toward their goals are the expectations. Each faculty member will need to figure out what will work best for them and their students.

Most faculty at MiraCosta already use Canvas to some extent; it's likely that most faculty will find [Canvas](#) to be the most important tool in this time - it offers capabilities for sharing information, facilitating communication and interaction, enabling activities and assessment, and providing feedback and grades. A Canvas "shell" or site is automatically available for every MiraCosta class, and students are automatically loaded into it - faculty just need to [access Canvas](#) and they will see each class they are teaching available there.

Many faculty have expressed interest in a tool for live online teaching and connection with students; Zoom is recommended for this purpose - and specifically [ConferZoom](#), a pro-level version of Zoom available to faculty and staff in the CCC system. Interested faculty must [request a ConferZoom account](#) - it is not automatically provided. If you haven't done this previously, do so ASAP as ConferZoom is overwhelmed with requests. Expect a response to take several days. Be aware that the level of usage of this tool will be off the charts, and be prepared for interruptions/outages. Short live sessions aimed primarily at checking in with students rather than long lecture sessions mirroring what you would have done in the classroom may be more viable for both students and the technology.

Students do NOT need a ConferZoom account - only people who host meetings need to sign up. When you share a meeting link, anyone you share it with can join the meeting. It is recommended that students download the Zoom client on their computer and/or mobile device for best results, though they can join directly through a browser if they haven't done that. So sharing [the Zoom downloads link](#) and [ConferZoom tech support](#) information with your students should suffice.

If you plan to use your voice for live or recorded instruction, it's important to pay particular attention to the audio quality. Some computers have built-in mics that are quite good; others are not so great. If the environment where you'll be speaking is likely to have background noise, a headset mic (especially a noise-canceling mic) is a good idea. If you use a headset, be sure to practice with it to find the optimal placement for the microphone. If you acquire one of these on your own, ordering sooner than later is recommended as there could be quite a run on these devices given the number of folks working and learning from home now. [Amazon's #1 recommended noise-canceling headset mic](#) is currently unavailable, but similar products are still available. The style of a headset (large cushy earpieces vs. small foam earpieces) is a matter of preference, but those without experience often think that the larger ones seem like they would be comfortable, but for extended periods of use they actually become more uncomfortable than the smaller, lighter foam ones. Some faculty may be interested in a quality stand-alone USB microphone such as those designed for podcasting. The Blue line of microphones, from [Snowball ICE](#) through [Yeti](#), are recommended, but these are more expensive than basic headset mics. For one of these, consider adding a foam windscreen to reduce "pop."

For any external USB microphone/device, be sure you have the right connectors for your computer. (Newer Macs especially may not have a regular USB 2.0 port and you may need a dongle to connect the cable that comes with the device to your computer.)

Teaching while writing on a whiteboard is important to me. How can I do that online?

ConferZoom includes a whiteboard tool, but if you do not have a tablet computer/device, it can be awkward to use it well. ConferZoom also allows you to share your screen; faculty can present from any computer program or website, such as PowerPoint or Google Slides, and use annotation tools to mark up or draw on what is being shared. ConferZoom also allows you to use an external camera or device as the source for your screen sharing, including an iPhone or iPad. You could potentially use the camera of one of these to show you writing on paper! ConferZoom can be used both live and as a tool for capturing recordings. Other MiraCosta options for recorded video presentations include [Canvas Studio](#) and [Snagit](#).

I'm teaching a class that seems very difficult to move to remote instruction because the students are typically required to demonstrate specific skills in a specialized in-person environment (a science lab, a computer lab, an art studio, a music room, an auto shop, a design studio, a theater, a dance studio, etc.). How can I do this?

Two recommended starting points if you'd like to explore resources (both free and paid) for online labs are the Chronicle of Higher Ed article [How to Quickly \(and Safely\) Move a Lab Course Online](#) and the online spreadsheet [Online Resources for Science Labs](#). The Chancellor's Office is currently seeking to contract with a vendor specializing in assisting with virtual lab scenarios and simulations. Unfortunately, many virtual labs and simulations rely on Flash, an older technology that doesn't work on most smartphones, is not standard on most newer computers, and generally is not compliant with accessibility regulations. If you do use a Flash-based tool it's important to provide options for students who may not be able to use it.

It may be that you need to adjust some of the expectations for your course in the event that there is not an adequate way to have students perform hands-on skills through remote instruction.

We recognize that some disciplines contain content that require students to demonstrate specific skills. In some cases, there may be no way to transition to a remote or online delivery mode for those classes. That could result in allowing a student to receive an incomplete in the class, with the opportunity to return later to demonstrate a particular skill. However, this option should only be used as a last resort since it could have negative impacts on a student's ability to transfer in a timely fashion.

Faculty are encouraged to confer with their chairs and deans as they address these challenges.

**I have been using Canvas minimally or not at all for my classes. How do I get started?
What should a basic Canvas remote instruction class look like?**

Please review the [page describing ways to translate various in-class activities](#) to the online environment, especially the section at the bottom. A basic remote instruction class in Canvas probably consists of:

- A home page with the course and instructor information (i.e. the syllabus)

- Use of Inbox and/or Announcements to send out course content and assignments to students
- Use of Inbox to communicate with students individually, including receiving their assignments from them
- Creation of an open-ended Discussion that enables students to connect with one another for support
- Use of the Gradebook tool to provide feedback to students on their assignments and allow them to check on their class progress

One step up from this would be to create Pages in Canvas for sharing/organizing class content and to use Assignments for directing and collecting student work.

The section of the Instructional Continuity module on [preparing yourself to use Canvas](#) has numerous links to basic Canvas tutorials. You are also encouraged to work with [departmental mentors](#), and to attend online training offered in the 3/23-3/27 transition week.

I've been using Zoom for a while but I'm not sure if I have the Basic version or the full-featured version available through ConferZoom. Is this important, and how can I tell?

The Basic version has limits on the length of time you can run your Zoom meetings (40 minutes), and does not allow you to record meetings to the cloud. It's important to have the full features of ConferZoom. Zoom has temporarily increased the user limit on meetings through Basic accounts to 100, so that is of less concern now.

To check: First, is your Zoom account created using your MiraCosta email address? If not, you should [request a ConferZoom account](#) using that email.

If you do have a Zoom account using your MiraCosta email but aren't sure if it is pro-level through ConferZoom, log into Zoom through a web browser (via the Sign In button at upper right on <http://conferzoom.org>). Click Profile on the left. In your account details, check "User Type" - if it says Basic, you should submit a request to ConferZoom to upgrade. If it says "Licensed" you are set.

I put in a request several days ago for a ConferZoom account and still haven't heard back. What should I do?

First, follow the directions in the question above - if you are able to log in and it shows you have a Licensed account, you are set. If you cannot log in, or your account is at Basic level, ConferZoom recommends that you [submit another account request](#). Patience may be needed.

You may also be able to get by with the Basic account temporarily as long as you observe the 40 minute time limits. You will not be able to use the ConferZoom integration within Canvas, but you can still share Zoom meeting links with students on a Canvas page, via email, etc. You will not have an option to record to the cloud, so files of meeting recordings will be placed on your

computer and you'll need to upload them to a video server such as Canvas Studio in order to make them available to your students.

Can I use something that is not an official MiraCosta-supported technology for online instruction?

In short, yes, but. Yes: many faculty use tools like Google docs, Flipgrid, Kahoot, and Padlet as well as Open Educational Resources and publisher tools to enhance their online instruction. But: while it may be tempting to adopt new tools that sound interesting during the pivot to remote instruction, given that we are all facing new challenges, adding unfamiliar tools may not be the best idea. Some tools may come with challenges such as accessibility, authentication, and FERPA compliance, as well as a lack of tech support for you and your students. This may be time for sticking with the basics, but if you identify a resource that you're confident will enhance teaching and learning, then, by all means, proceed with caution.

If I really don't want to set up a full Canvas class, can I teach remotely using basic tools like email and phone calls?

You probably could come close to running a class via email and phone, but one challenge will be sharing feedback on student work and current class grades. FERPA is generally interpreted as prohibiting transmission of this kind of information over email or phone. The Canvas gradebook is the best method of providing feedback and class grades to students. If you still wish to use email as your primary means of communicating with students, using the Canvas Inbox to manage email to classes is also highly recommended, both for your and your students' ease in managing the messages.

I need to see my students' handwritten work in order to assess their problem-solving processes, correct use of specialized notation, etc. How can I do this with remote instruction?

Students can submit pictures of handwritten work through Canvas. There are multiple ways to approach this; consider what you think will work best for you and your students:

- Students can directly add photos to a submission in Canvas when using the Rich Content Editor from a device with a camera.
- You could have students upload photo/scan files to the assignment.
- You could have students add multiple photos/scans to a document (e.g. Word or Google doc) and then turn in that single document.
- You could have students save images somewhere online (such as Google Drive or Dropbox) and have them just turn in a link to the image.

Depending on how you wish to provide feedback to students, some of these options may work better than others. It's recommended that you experiment a bit and/or connect with a colleague to figure out the option that you think best for you and your students.

I have never given online exams before. How does this work? And am I required to give my tests un-proctored now?

Canvas has a Quizzes tool which can be used to facilitate online exams. You may want to review a [MiraCosta support article](#) with lots of ideas for enhancing academic integrity and increasing the security of exams run through Canvas. MiraCosta also has access (through spring 2020) to an online browser lockdown and proctoring tool called Proctorio. Proctorio requires faculty and students to use the Chrome browser with a special Proctorio extension installed in it. [Read more about Proctorio](#) if you're interested. Note that the proctoring features of Proctorio would require students to have a webcam and microphone, which would certainly be problematic to assume.

If you are translating a paper-based exam into Canvas, you may find it easier to do this as a Canvas Quiz with one question into which students upload a picture (or pictures) of their handwritten work for the entire exam. Doing this as a Quiz rather than Assignment will still allow you to use features such as limiting the time from when students access the exam until they turn it in.

How can I connect and share ideas with other faculty?

First and foremost, most MiraCosta departments are actively engaging with and supporting one another. Many departments are using email and departmental Canvas sites to stay connected. Many faculty have volunteered to provide support to their disciplinary colleagues - if you're not sure who that might be in your department, check out the [Faculty Support spreadsheet](#).

The C³ Teaching and Learning Center and Online Education also have created a Google doc for faculty to connect, ask questions, share resources and teaching ideas, and lifehacks for staying sane during this unprecedented time. [Check it out and add your 2 cents!](#)

What if I have a student in my class who was receiving DSPS accommodation support?

It is critical that you [connect with DSPS](#) to make a plan for continuing support of that student. It's also critical that you carefully create and share resources that are accessible to all students. Please review the [Special Considerations for Students with Disabilities](#) document prepared by MiraCosta DSPS.

What if I have international students in my class?

As classes and services move online, the International Office continues to support the 160 international students enrolled at MiraCosta with the F-1 visa. Faculty may be interested in the **temporary regulations** approved by the Department of Homeland Security to **support international students** facing new challenges due to COVID10.

- First rule change **allows international students to keep their visa status while studying online**. Typically international students are required to take most of their courses in-person.
- **International students must continue full-time enrollment**. Excused Withdrawal (EW) with refund, Withdrawals with a W and Withdrawal with no record and a Refund *can impact the visa status of international students*. Faculty can refer international

students to the Pass/No Pass grade option or to the [International Office](#) to get help and support to keep their visa in good standing.

- International students **are allowed to travel home or remain in the United States** to study online. As of the end of March, 18 international students have returned to their home country while continuing spring classes. Your international students are studying in multiple time zones (up to a day ahead of California PDT).
- Questions or concerns: call or email Mia Scavone, 760.795.6896, msscavone@miracosta.edu.

Student Support Resources/Services Availability

Will the Academic Proctoring Center be open for testing?

No, the Academic Proctoring Center, like all campus-based offices, will be closed to students. See the discussion earlier in the FAQs about options for increasing security of exams offered through Canvas, including using Proctorio.

How will students have access to library resources, tutoring, counseling, supplemental instruction, and other support resources?

Academic support services, including tutoring, counseling, and supplemental instruction are gearing up to provide online and remote services to students. Many of these services already have online and phone support options which will be strengthened; others will be setting up new services. Online access to tech support, library resources, online tutoring, online writing center support, career coaching, and counseling is already available through the Student Support Hub in Canvas. Information for students about accessing other services will be continuously updated on the [COVID FAQ page for students](#).

I have students who were dependent on the physical textbook reserves in the library.

How can I ensure they continue to have access to our class readings?

A: Please see the Library's faculty reserve page for options:

<https://library.miracosta.edu/faculty/reserves>

What if my students do not have sufficient access to technology to access and complete online classwork?

The MiraCosta CARE team is working to provide students with the latest information about low-cost options for technology and internet access. Refer students to the [CARE section of the COVID FAQ for students](#).

What else should I know and share with my students about student support service continuity?

The college is striving to provide as much continuity across all student support areas as possible. It's important that faculty encourage students to reach out for support and not feel that this switch to remote instruction means that students are "on their own." As always, access to several live online academic support areas is available through the Canvas Student Support

Hub (click Student Support on the lower left main Canvas menu). In addition the [COVID FAQ page for students](#) is being continuously updated with information on remote access to many other college support services.

Will the online service of the Writing Center continue?

Of course! Students can [upload papers from the Writing Center website](#) and be given a time/day to expect feedback.

How can students interact with the Writing Center in real time?

The Writing Center has created a virtual drop-in center, much as we have on campus. You can get feedback as needed and write in our space, just like always. Our online location is <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/91424140885> and hours are available on the [Writing Center website](#).

Can CLC students still meet with Jeff and Sarah?

Yes. The best resource is to send them to the [Writing Center's CLC web page](#)

Is the Career Center available to support students remotely?

Yes. Students may drop-in online to have synchronous conversations with Career Peers and career center staff through the Online Student Support Hub in Canvas, through Cranium Café on the [Career Center's web page](#), or by calling 760.795.6772 during the Career Center's regular hours, posted on the [Career Center's web page](#). Students may meet with career counselors and staff through Zoom and are advised to arrange an appointment by contacting the Career Center through any of the above means. Students may activate and access their Job and Internship Network ([JAIN](#)) profiles and request an asynchronous resume review through [JAIN](#). Additional answers to student questions are available at the top of the [Career Center's web page](#).

Can the Career Center help students who have lost their jobs?

Yes. In addition to the many jobs posted on the District's Job and Internship Network, JAIN, which are accessible to all students who activate their JAIN profile using their SURF ID and password, the members of the Career Center team posted [immediate employment opportunities available at local companies](#) that students may access without activating or accessing their JAIN profiles.

Is the Career Center available to guest lecture/present in my online class?

Yes. Career Center team members are honoring presentations already scheduled with faculty and are available to develop and present on a wide variety of topics related to career exploration and employment readiness. To request a presentation, [submit this form](#).

Are internships and co-ops continuing?

Yes. All internship students, faculty, and supervisors received an email from Internship Coordinator Mike Green or Faculty Director Donna Davis detailing options and processes for the current semester; faculty teaching internship or co-op classes who have additional questions

may email [Mike](#) or [Donna](#). They are collaborating with Rick Cassoni and Nate Scharff on the CASCADE internship project and with Advancing San Diego to implement new remote internships and with [CIWEA](#) and [NACE](#) to help employers implement best practices for remote internships.

Facilities and Technology Access

Can I use my office? Can I use a classroom I was assigned to at a day/time when I would have been teaching there?

We are making all efforts to minimize person-to-person contact to prevent the spread of Covid-19, and in light of the Governor's stay-at-home order, employees are asked not to come to campus. However, access to the District will remain open for those employees with keys IF crucial needs exist to maintain the continuity of instruction or services. Please make sure you inform your dean if you plan on coming into any MiraCosta sites.

Furthermore, when on site, please practice:

- Social distancing to ensure a six feet separation between you and another individual.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Given this, employees may, if absolutely necessary, access their office to obtain needed items or perform crucial duties that cannot be performed remotely. Labs may also be accessed on a limited basis to conduct video sessions.

How do I get access to software and technology resources that usually require me to be on campus?

As stated in the previous answer, faculty may come to campus for crucial duties. There are also ways that faculty can get access at home to some software and to the H drive, and you may also be able to take home technology and some office equipment from your campus office. See the [MiraCosta Remote Work Resources site](#) for details.

I do not have up-to-date technology for use at home. Can I take my desktop computer from my office home, or get a laptop from the college for use during this time?

The college is aware of this need. See the [MiraCosta Remote Work Resources site](#) which includes directions for how to submit a request through the Help Desk in the Portal.

Can I get a college printer for use at home?

AMS is trying hard not to deploy printers. Most printers today include wireless connectivity that makes them vulnerable to being hacked. Also, printing of confidential data (FERPA, HIPPA, PCI, Copyright, etc. protected) and having that at home creates more compliance challenges.

Since we are all working remotely and all our students are remote, sharing files electronically is preferable to paper. We do have a way to do this securely already in place.

AIS recommends printing only to PDF and storing in your MiraCosta College Microsoft OneDrive. This way the items can be easily accessed and shared via a secure email link to control access. If later, these items do need to be printed, then the user can go into the office and print them in bulk securely.