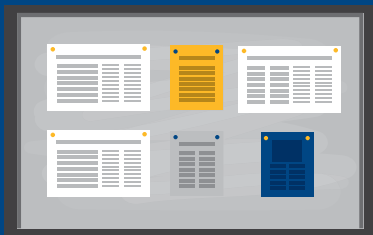


SPRING 2021 FACULTY/STAFF CONTINUITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT



**NORTH CAROLINA
AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL
STATE UNIVERSITY**

I. PROVOST'S STATEMENT

OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND CORE VALUES

We began the 2020-21 academic year by embracing the new normal under the theme “The Transformation Continues.” We opened with a renewed commitment to our core values: Responsibility, Excellence, Integrity, Inclusiveness and Learning. We emphasized and extended the discussion around core values of excellence and inclusion. Excellence is truly a state of mind, where we invoke the best of our knowledge, skills and abilities in support of student success. We must find ways to deliver excellence in such broad measure and diversity that every student is included; every student benefits. This inclusiveness sets us apart from so many other institutions. Inclusiveness is an action that opens the door for a climate where everyone can be great if they so desire. Thus, our practices around inclusive excellence must be intentional, especially now.

It is paramount that we approach 2021 with a renewed academic spirit reflecting what the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) describes as “inclusive excellence.” AAC&U characterizes inclusive excellence as an integration of diversity, equity, and academic quality with our institution’s mission. Be mindful of what this means. Recall our mission:

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University advances knowledge through scholarly exchange and transforms society with exceptional teaching, learning, discovery and community engagement. An 1890 land-grant doctoral research institution with a distinction in STEM and commitment to excellence in all disciplines, North Carolina A&T creates innovative solutions that address the challenges and economic needs of North Carolina, the nation and world.

A commitment to inclusive excellence means that each of us—faculty, staff and administration—will advance a climate where difference is celebrated, everyone is valued, everyone benefits from our best support and resources, and we provide academic excellence to such an extent that we achieve our mission of “exceptional teaching, learning, discovery and community engagement.” This is the promise we make to all of our students. It is a continuation of the promise made to those who came before us dating back to 1891, and those who are yet to come. Aggies matter, inclusive excellence matters, and academic quality, above all, matters. Sadly, barriers persist as the U.S. remains in a state of tension around respect for all persons, equity, diversity and social justice. Historically, our students and those who came before them struggled with many barriers. With a tenacious spirit and faith in a better tomorrow, our students continue to overcome barriers in pursuit of academic excellence.

So it is in this spirit that I provide more information in this guide to support academic excellence in Spring 2021. While challenges continue, we continue to rise to meet those challenges. As faculty and staff supporting teaching-learning inclusive excellence, I ask you again to rise to the occasion and continue to meet the expectations conducive to student success. Normal mindsets are no longer helpful. According to the great writer Maya Angelou, “If you’re always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be.” Make 2021 your time to show just how amazing you can be.

Let’s be amazing together!

Beryl C. McEwen, Ph.D.
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

II. | RETURNING TO CAMPUS

The Spring 2021 semester has a delayed start. Nine-month faculty officially return to campus on Jan. 19, and classes begin on Jan. 25. New Faculty Orientation is Jan. 6. New faculty should contact their department chairperson if they have other questions. The semester will end on May 10, which is when grades are due. The Spring 2021 Academic Calendar is located here:

<https://www.ncat.edu/registrar/academic-calendar-pdfs/spring-2021-academic-calendar.pdf>

Before the Spring 2021 semester begins, Facilities and other units will clean and sanitize campus spaces, including dining areas, and signage and social distancing markers will be refreshed. All employees are encouraged to stay healthy by getting flu shots (available at the Student Health Center now) and COVID-19 test (on campus or at another convenient location). Information about testing on campus is located here:

<https://www.ncat.edu/coronavirus/spring-2021/testing.php>

Two types of testing have been made available to students, exit testing for Fall 2020 and pre-entry testing for Spring 2021. Exit testing has been occurring since early November and will continue through the end of the semester. The goal is to ensure students are healthy before they return home. Re-entry testing will be required for all students wishing to live on campus in Spring 2021. A kit will be mailed to all students and results must be returned no later than Jan. 14.

More information about returning to campus in Spring 2021 can be found on the Aggies Care: Spring 2021 website located here: <https://www.ncat.edu/coronavirus/spring-2021/index.php>

III. | CONTINUITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Deans and department chairs have held meetings to prepare each college for returning in Spring 2021. Expectations of performance in support of continuity of teaching and learning should have been communicated consistently. Expect the dean and chair to conduct closing meetings this for Fall 2020 and opening meetings in the Spring of 2021, to ensure information specific to unit operations and student success are conveyed. Likewise, the colleges should have provided information about their own COVID-19 committees and building representatives, who can also help you.

Similar to last semester, some faculty will teach only Remote Learning or Distance Learning courses, and will not teach courses on campus. For more questions about teaching assignments, consult with the department chair. Classroom environments and scheduling will be similar to Fall 2020.

A. Student Population

Based on space analyses, number of classrooms, social distancing constraints and type of course, it was determined that we could service some of the student population with instruction on campus. Students are still registering and making determinations about where they wish to learn. This information will be provided as soon as we have near-final counts. Some students who choose to learn on campus will reside in university residence halls; however, some may reside in Greensboro and the surrounding areas and will commute to campus. Additionally, some students choosing all online courses may choose to reside on campus and/or use campus resources, such as Bluford Library, while others will remain in their hometowns or other locations.

III. CONTINUITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

B. Controlling COVID-19

All students are expected to follow these protocols:

<https://www.ncat.edu/coronavirus/aggies-care/protocols-for-students.php>

Faculty and staff should read the following information to understand how the Student Health Services operates when and if students test positive or require other COVID-19 related services.

COVID-19 Teaching-Learning Information for Faculty

This information applies only to students who are on campus or taking on-campus courses.

Students who develop symptoms of COVID-19 or who have been exposed to someone who has the illness should report to the Student Health Center for testing.

Those who are symptomatic will be isolated immediately awaiting test results.

- *If positive, they will be isolated for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or test date and at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.*
- *If the initial test is negative and coronavirus is still suspected, they will be retested and possibly isolated until 10 days from the onset of symptoms depending upon results and final diagnosis.*
- *Those students tested because of a significant exposure will be quarantined for 14 days from the date of last exposure, or for 10 days if they test positive.*

NOTE: Professors will not be notified by the Student Health Center if a student tests positive. This is information protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Those who are asymptomatic but were exposed will be quarantined immediately awaiting test results.

- *If positive they will be isolated for 10 days from test date.*
- *Those students tested because of a significant exposure will be quarantined for 14 days from the date of last exposure, or for 10 days if they test positive.*
- *Students will notify their professors if they test positive or are quarantined and develop a plan to ensure they can continue their academic progress. An attestation form will be provided to the student upon completion of their quarantine. Students who are living on campus or who are taking on-campus courses will be advised to share the attestation form with their professors.*

Students who enter a class without a face mask and refuse to wear one should be reported immediately to dean of students, Marc Williams, at 336-334-7791 (after 5 p.m., 202-270-3095). The Office of Accessibility Resources (OARs) should be contacted for any questions and arrangements to meet accommodations for students with disabilities.

Registration opened on Nov. 2, closes Nov. 30 and reopens Dec. 28. Each academic unit must have a plan to be accessible during this time via email, Zoom or phone. Please share your plan with the respective dean, who will then file the plan with the Office of the Provost.

III. CONTINUITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

C. Class Scheduling

Students may select and register for different modes of teaching and learning:

- a. On Campus (code M), with a meeting pattern (days/times)
- b. Remote Learning (Remote), with a meeting pattern (days/times)
- c. Distance Learning (DL), with no meeting pattern

Specific information about these course delivery modes can be found here along with a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) list:

https://www.ncat.edu/coronavirus/spring-2021/ncat_courseoverviewbilling_spring21.pdf

<https://www.ncat.edu/coronavirus/spring-2021/delivery-modes-billing-faq.php>

Classes will be scheduled in 2.5-hour blocks, Monday through Saturday, with each class meeting once per week. Faculty and staff supporting teaching and learning should use creative solutions to maintain high-quality teaching and learning to help students be successful. Many training sessions have been conducted by the Center for Teaching Excellence, Information Technology Training and Development and Distance Education and Extended Learning. Several of these sessions have been recorded for on-demand professional development. It is important that you take part in these professional development opportunities. Life-long learning is important for career success.

Faculty are strongly encouraged to be inclusive and creative when teaching. Excellence only happens when we move out of our comfort zone, try new activities in the classroom and engage students in ways that work for them. This is an opportunity to be transformative in how you teach. Students deserve highly engaging and contemporary teaching methods. At no point should an instructor use didactic instruction (lecture) for the entire 2.5 hours. This approach does not work for long class meetings.

It is also important to use Blackboard as an active tool to support learning management. Some best practices include:

1. Uploading your Spring 2021 syllabus a week before classes begin and including a welcome message to students. Consult your department for the information that should be included on your syllabus.
2. Uploading assignments and other information in a timely manner.
3. Entering grades frequently and providing other types of feedback to students. Students succeed when they receive feedback in a timely manner.
4. Schedule at least one hour each week for synchronous engagement with students, without mandatory attendance.

Deans and chairs will monitor and verify the consistent use of Blackboard by all faculty.

III. | CONTINUITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

D. Classroom Design

Classroom design will remain the same as Fall 2020. General classrooms will operate at 33% capacity, auditoriums at 20%, and laboratory spaces will vary based on room configuration and use. This capacity allows social distancing. Classrooms will be cleaned each day. Supplies will be provided in each classroom for those who desire to wipe down surfaces of learning stations. All faculty and students must wear face masks. Faculty and students cannot roam the classroom. Faculty are expected to minimize movement for two reasons:

- a. To maintain social distancing
- b. To ensure cameras and microphones can provide consistent viewing and recording

Seats that should not be used will be clearly marked or removed from the classrooms. Signage will be installed on floors, doors and/or walls to control the direction of traffic flow and to minimize the possibility of congregating.

We are asking faculty and staff to provide information to students in multiple ways including department announcements, classroom announcements and course syllabi. Please use this information on your communications and remind students regularly.

*Every member of our North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University community lives by the core values of responsibility, excellence, integrity, inclusiveness and learning. Responsibility requires all of us to align our behavior with the best available science and current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Members of the Aggie family are expected to act responsibly by wearing a face covering, covering mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, washing hands well and often, and adhering to the space buffers, assembly rules, hygiene actions and signage for prevention and control. Students who do not have a face mask or other infection control materials may get assistance by contacting **their department chair**, who will be working with building managers in each college. For more information, visit:*

<https://www.ncat.edu/coronavirus/>

Please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources (OARS) for information regarding accommodations for students at accessibilityresources@ncat.edu.

The webpage below has several links to helpful resources for teaching and learning, including the AggiesTeach website and training sessions through ITTD. It is also important to use departmental resources.

<https://www.ncat.edu/coronavirus/spring-2021/helpful-links.php>