

March 24, 2020



Dear WSCC Community,

Over the last two weeks, I have marveled at the response from all members of the WSCC community to the national pandemic emergency. The speed and ease at which students, faculty, and staff have transitioned to the circumstances thrust upon us has been remarkable. The WSCC COVID-19 task force has met daily over the last several weeks to monitor the rapidly changing situation and adjust College strategies accordingly. The resolute persistence from the whole WSCC community in adjusting to changes has permitted the task force to focus on the pandemic response and not individual concerns.

Yesterday I read an article on adjustments a faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill made to his syllabus. As I read the article I thought the principles in the syllabus, which I am sharing below, replicate what the task force has been applying and what has been evidenced in practice throughout the whole WSCC community. I found it refreshing to see these principles so clearly articulated. I find when a principle is in writing it serves as a better reminder and guidepost.

**Adjusted Syllabus
Spring 2020
Brandon Bayne
UNC - Chapel Hill**

Principles

1. Nobody signed up for this.
 - Not for the sickness, not for the social distancing, not for the sudden end of our collective lives together on campus
 - Not for an online class, not for teaching remotely, not for learning from home, not for mastering new technologies, not for varied access to learning materials
2. The humane option is the best option.
 - We are going to prioritize supporting each other as humans
 - We are going to prioritize simple solutions that make sense for the most
 - We are going to prioritize sharing resources and communicating clearly
3. We cannot just do the same thing online.
 - Some assignments are no longer possible
 - Some expectations are no longer reasonable
 - Some objectives are no longer valuable
4. We will foster intellectual nourishment, social connection, and personal accommodation.
 - Accessible asynchronous content for diverse access, time zones, and contexts
 - Optional synchronous discussion to learn together and combat isolation
5. We will remain flexible and adjust to the situation.
 - Nobody knows where this is going and what we'll need to adapt
 - Everybody needs support and understanding in this unprecedented moment

I hope you find the same values I do in these principles and understand this reflects what I and the rest of the task force are applying in our daily decisions. We are facing tremendous uncertainty and there are a lot of questions that cannot be answered at this time. The WSCC community has already faced many challenges with admirable grit, more challenges and hard decisions are sure to be forthcoming. What I am sure of is that by working together and taking a humane, accommodating, and flexible approach we will collectively overcome any challenge.

Stay safe.

With warmest respect,

Scott Ward

Scott C. Ward
President