

**December 2020**

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| **Thinking about Spring – General Updates and Information** |
| * Classes are scheduled to begin on Monday, January 25, 2021. Our plan remains to follow the current spring semester calendar and modalities.
* Depending on the prevalence of the virus, we all need to remain aware that RIT may need to move to fully online instruction at either the start of the semester or at a point during the semester.
* The period of online instruction will depend on the circumstances which prompted the decision.
* To help prepare, below is information for your consideration as you plan for spring semester.
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| **Thinking about Spring – What to Consider** |
| * Please be sure you have a plan for your courses in the event RIT needs to open online. This plan should extend through at least the first two weeks of classes but should also include a plan in the event online instruction has to be extended.
* If there is support that you need in order to accomplish this longer period of remote learning, please let your department chair know. Assistance can also be obtained through the ILI.
* As we did in the fall, we will again identify courses that create extra challenges in pivoting to online during an extended period and your college will work with you to develop workaround strategies as needed. Your dean’s office has already begun to work with your department chair to identify these courses.
* Please review the [AA Roadmap](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1icxzP7V4OSTpBCoSe-FaHml18KGrWQdZ/view) for conditions under which certain courses may be considered for an exception. We will work again with the Monroe County Department of Public Health to authorize any exceptions that fit within the Governor’s guidelines. Please note, however, if RIT is mandated to close or students cannot return to campus, there will be no course exceptions. It is important that you plan for that possibility.
* Work with your department chair/school director to document your contingency plan for covering your classes in the event of an unexpected illness during spring semester.
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| **Thinking about Spring - Stay Safe and Up-to-date** |
| * **Check your email** **regularly** as well as the [RIT Ready Website](http://www.rit.edu/ready) and the [RIT COVID-19 Alert Levels](https://www.rit.edu/ready/rit-covid-19-alert-levels) for ongoing updates and announcements.
* It is strongly recommended that you do not travel over the break. If you choose to travel at any point, you are required to follow the [NYS Travel Guidelines](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory) before circulating on campus.
* Although vaccines are approved, it is expected to take several months for them to be widely distributed. Please continue to wear a mask, wash your hands and watch your distance as these protocols are still our best defense against COVID-19 and will help us to be able to start spring semester as planned.
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| **Resources Available** |
| Please see below for resources available to you if you need additional support:* [**Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19**](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html)
* [**Faculty Course Technology Support**](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/tls/quick-help)
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| **Thinking About Spring – Provost’s Closing Thoughts** |

As noted above, our plan is to start spring semester following our current academic calendar and modalities. Classrooms are among the safest spaces on campus and RIT will make every effort to avoid disrupting your course plans. However, we all have to be aware the decision may be imposed upon us or that case rates on campus may require we take a general pause in on campus activity, including in person instruction. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sue Provenzano, stp1031@rit.edu.

I thank you in advance for your ongoing efforts as we continue to battle COVID-19. I am grateful for your support of academic continuity, and faculty, staff and student success.

With appreciation and best wishes for a well-deserved break,

Ellen Granberg, Ph.D.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs