

23 August 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Annually, I send out a reminder to faculty and staff reminding them to have a plan for maintaining [continuity of instruction](#) in their courses and services in the event of a significant disruption. While COVID-19 remains a threat to instructional continuity, there are other types of disruptions for which it is important to be prepared such as loss of power, weather-related closing, family emergency, illness, or campus evacuation. Individual faculty readiness is critical; however, it is equally important that you ensure departments and your college will be able to maintain continuity of overall operations. As you prepare to support both instructional and operational continuity, please consider the following points:

1. Academic departments and colleges should look at the totality of their degree programs and consider how to maintain a level of instruction sufficient to permit RIT to award course credit to students even in the face of severe disruption.
2. Associate deans and department chairs should also work with their faculty to develop alternative means to deliver course content, communicate with students, and manage student assignments. The Innovative Learning Institute (ILI) has resources on [continuity of instruction](#) that provide faculty with ideas for developing a continuity of instruction plan. College CATS can also assist.
3. Associate deans and department heads should also consider how a disruption may impact labs, studios, and other related academic facilities and activities. Consider conducting a **business continuity review** at the operational level. For example, if an IT lab, science lab/stockroom, or an entire facility was impacted by a flood or fire, how would you continue providing services? Where would you relocate the affected services? How long could you sustain being off-line? Chris Denninger, director of Threat Assessment and Emergency Preparedness, is available to help you think through questions like these. He can be reached at [cgdcps@rit.edu](mailto:cgdcps@rit.edu) or by phone at 475-6620.
4. Classrooms should be checked to ensure emergency procedures, including basic evacuation procedures, are available. If emergency procedures are not posted in your

classroom, please contact the appropriate building manager. For more information about classroom emergency preparedness, please visit [emergency preparedness](#).

5. If a significant event impacts the delivery of courses, the campus will turn to associate deans and department chairs for their leadership in managing these issues. **I strongly encourage associate deans and department chairs to ensure that they have accurate contact information for every faculty and staff member in their areas** and work with them to develop plans that address the instructional continuity needs of their programs and college services.
6. Department chairs should also include part-time and adjunct faculty in continuity of instruction discussions and provide them with support in developing their own continuity plans.

Academic continuity is a critical responsibility for all of us and the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us all more than we ever wanted to know about the topic. Please take that learning into your approach to instructional continuity overall. Thank you for taking the time now to be prepared.

Sincerely,

Ellen Granberg, Ph.D.  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs