

## Guiding Principles for our Teaching and Learning Community

This is a unique time in the history of Yale University. Amid multiple national crises, instructors and students have the opportunity to continue our commitments to education, the creation and preservation of knowledge, and service to our communities. Students and instructors will return to fall classes under pandemic restrictions and ongoing uncertainty, and will benefit from reaffirming established responsibilities and in some cases articulating new ones to one another; and to the University’s mission. In this new milieu, inequities may arise. Access to technology is not uniform, and neither is technological know-how. Teaching and learning through screens, chats, email, and other technically-mediated atmospheres asks students and instructors to relate in fundamentally different ways. Further, instructors and students, not to mention college deans and other community members and people close to them, may have health concerns and additional familial responsibilities. The hybrid teaching and learning environment, which will be operating in the context of these possible additional stresses, brings new challenges as well as opportunities.

The following principles, which derive in large part from existing university policies, lay out the responsibilities of students and instructors under partial or full remote learning during the pandemic.

**Above all, we want to affirm that we are a community that cares for and attends to one another and is responsive to this unique situation.**

Instructors	Students
<i>Learning Together</i>	
Universities create communities of learning in which we all are taught by one another's diverse experiences, knowledge, and expertise. This requires an inclusive environment that supports intellectual exchange along with the principles of mutual respect. Conduct that erodes or degrades the principle of mutual respect is unwelcome.	
<i>Promote Communication and Transparency</i>	
Open communication is vital to building and maintaining a sense of community, particularly in predominantly online classes. A positively impactful connection between instructors, teaching fellows, and students in a remote environment depends on frequent and transparent communication between all constituents of a course.	
Instructors have a responsibility to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make clear the responsibilities and expectations of students and teaching fellows or trainees throughout the course. Repetition is preferable to unintended exclusion</li> <li>• Respond in a timely manner to questions, acknowledging all communications from students even if the immediate message is that further information will have to be forthcoming</li> </ul>	Students have a responsibility to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain, to the extent possible, consistent communication with the instructor, teaching fellows, and fellow students</li> <li>• Openly and swiftly communicate to instructors or residential college deans any difficulties with their ability to complete required work for the course</li> <li>• In order to preserve open communication in a course, respect</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and use multiple lines of communication as part of their course design and be sure that students understand the use of communication methods in that design</li> </ul>	<p>classmates' privacy and not share their contributions outside of class.</p>
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*Practice Patience, Compassion and Flexibility*

Individual circumstances can diverge widely within a large, complex community under the circumstances of the pandemic. There will be different reasons students and instructors need to request flexibility in meeting deadlines and fulfilling assignments. Consideration of these requests should respect the individual and attempt to respond to their individual needs. The objective is to create an educational environment in which everyone can fully participate. No one with a role in a course should be expected to take on inordinate levels of responsibility. During this period, students and instructors should be patient with each other and flexible in their expectations. A heightened sense of understanding should accompany our interactions.

<p>Instructors have a responsibility to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that flexible requirements may be helpful for different individuals</li> <li>• Relay to all students that they will not be stigmatized or their work devalued by asking for flexibility</li> <li>• Respect the privacy and dignity of those needing flexibility</li> </ul>	<p>Students have a responsibility to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with university resources to anticipate and make known to instructors any difficulties that they are having in meeting course requirements</li> <li>• Be conscious of the possibility and flexible in accepting that other students or the instructor may need non-standard approaches to teaching and learning</li> <li>• Maintain an empathetic attitude toward others</li> </ul>
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*Produce Equity & Accessibility*

Yale should have an inclusive culture, built upon a sense of belonging for everyone. To achieve this, we should actively invite and honor the contributions of every member of our community. By inclusion we mean that every matriculated student and every instructor receive equality of opportunity, fair treatment, and equitable access to resources and information.

<p>Instructors have a responsibility to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open channels of communication in order to understand equity and accessibility issues affecting the students and trainees or teaching fellows in their courses</li> <li>• Acknowledge that equity and accessibility issues among students may be exacerbated or may newly develop during the current situation</li> <li>• Cultivate a learning environment where all of their students can thrive, and where inequities do not influence success</li> </ul>	<p>Students have a responsibility to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively communicate to instructors about individual circumstances pertaining to equity and accessibility that may affect their ability to learn in the current environment</li> <li>• Acknowledge that equity and accessibility issues among students may be exacerbated or may newly develop during the current situation</li> <li>• Participate in cultivating a learning environment that enables all students to thrive, by taking an active role in supporting peers with equity or accessibility issues</li> </ul>
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*Protect Academic Integrity*

All members of our community have an expectation of honesty in intellectual exchange. Under the new conditions, students may have reasons to consider cutting corners, cheating, plagiarizing, or otherwise compromising the trust that upholds the intellectual community. It is vital that all involved interrupt this tendency and address the underlying issues, whether potential dishonesty stems from confusion about the boundaries, anxiety about performance, or other limitations brought on by the pandemic.

Instructors have a responsibility to...

- Make clear the opportunities and restrictions around collaborative work expected in their courses, with special emphasis on what is allowed in the new virtual environment
- Facilitate an environment which feels secure for exchange of ideas
- Maintain expected confidentiality regarding discussions of coursework and academic progress

Students have a responsibility to...

- Collaborate on work product and graded assignments only when explicitly permitted by the instructor(s)
- Ensure that course materials are not made available to persons not enrolled in the course
- Adhere to the intellectual integrity policies of Yale College and the GSAS

*Use Technology with Intention & Care*

All members of our community are learning how to use new tools and technology. These tools create possibility but also create new responsibilities: as a community, we must commit to using technology responsibly, respecting those with whom we share the online learning environment and responding with patience and cooperation as others learn.

Instructors have a responsibility to...

- Maintain online learning tools and materials, ensuring maximum accessibility
- Make clear their policies related to online learning, including recording policies and expectations for Zoom participation
- Take the lead on coordinating the online teaching team, including teaching fellows and technology assistants
- Be mindful and accepting of students' varied access to connectivity and technology

Students have a responsibility to...

- Refuse to engage in or enable any kind of harassment or disruption made possible by the technology
- Refrain from recording class interactions without explicit permission from their instructors *and* their peers, and refrain from distributing any recording they are allowed to make
- Participate in class attentively and with intention, avoiding simultaneous use of other devices, platforms, or apps
- Communicate with instructors if their access to connectivity or technology changes