



**BENTLEY**  
UNIVERSITY

August 2, 2021

Faculty,

We really need your support here. For the past few months, we've discussed the excitement of being on campus and having only in-person classes. We have been monitoring information coming out from different countries and the impact on our international students, and new issues continue to arise. In the past two weeks, alone, we have had to reevaluate our plans for the fall, as evolving information about the Delta variant of COVID-19 has presented complications to our initial assumptions. Additionally, last week, the White House announced that the US will not be lifting existing travel restrictions, which adds to the difficulty for many of our international students to return to campus.

We have a solution for our first-year international students who cannot come to campus this fall, which is to provide pre-populated, fully synchronous schedules that are sensitive to their respective time zones. Faculty who are teaching the pre-populated courses have already been contacted and have agreed to help with this plan.

For our continuing students, the situation is much more nuanced. At this point, we need to move to a plan where we will allow our international students who cannot get back into the country to join your classes via hybrid technology. While we still anticipate that the vast majority of students will be on campus in the fall, most of our courses have international students enrolled who face complications returning. **Therefore, all faculty should anticipate offering their courses in the hybrid modality in the fall and be trained to do so.** Unlike the past 18 months, this will be a situation where the majority of your students will be physically in class, and a smaller number of international students may need to participate remotely.

We should note: while the hybrid modality serves as an important recourse for international students, we will likely need to employ the hybrid option for our students who require medical accommodations, or for those who may contract COVID-19 and have to quarantine in the fall. The Deans will send follow-up guidance on how to respond to student requests to participate in courses remotely. Please know that we are discouraging remote student participation for any reason outside of supporting international students or accommodating medical needs.



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We wanted to inform you of this update ASAP. By tomorrow, you will receive information from Academic Technology about training sessions on the hybrid technology. These sessions will be crucial for those of you who are not familiar with the classroom technology, and for those of you who would like a refresher. Our instructional designers are also compiling an on-demand video that outlines best practices on hybrid teaching. That video should be shared within the next two weeks, and the instructional designers will host office hours to address any specific questions.

Additionally, we will hold two, one-hour virtual meetings to discuss details and field any questions you might have after reading this announcement. We will record those meetings, in case you are unable to attend either time. Please see below for additional details on those two open meetings:

- Wednesday, August 4 at 1:00pm
- Thursday, August 12 at 2:00pm (during the Provost's Office Hour)

Finally, we will be notifying our international students of this important update later today. Please see below for the email that will be sent to our continuing international students.

We think we can all agree that we would much prefer to have conditions that would allow for all of our students to be back on campus. We hope we can also agree that we need to live our Bentley values and not abandon our international students who are unable to return to campus due to the pandemic. We appreciate your supporting our international students with this new plan, and with additional preparations.

Much thanks,

Donna Maria Blancero, Provost and Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs  
Mystica Alexander, Associate Provost for Research and Faculty  
Cathy Carlson, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education  
Rick Oches, Dean of Arts and Sciences  
Bill Read, Dean of Business



Dear International Students,

We hope you have been able to enjoy a safe, healthy summer. We have been thinking about you, particularly as we move forward with preparations for the Fall 2021 semester. We are reaching out today to share some important information related to your academic experience during the fall, and to ask for your assistance.

We recognize that the impacts of COVID-19 continue to disrupt much of our lives, and that you face distinct challenges depending on your current address. For some, we realize that you may be unable to have your visas processed before classes begin in September. For others, current travel restrictions may prevent you from physically returning to Bentley's campus. Please know that we are prepared to support you and provide options so that you may continue to make progress toward your degree completion.

All continuing international students who are unable to return to Bentley's campus in the fall will be able to remain enrolled in their current course schedule and participate in their courses remotely. Specifically, courses will be offered in a hybrid modality, in which most students are physically present in class while a few participate remotely.

To help with our preparations, we need to determine whether or not you will physically be on Bentley's campus in the fall. **Please complete the following brief form by Monday, August 9 to declare your intentions.** If you do not complete the form by that time, we will assume that you are not planning to return to campus in the fall.

Please [click here](#) to access the form.

While we will notify faculty which students in their sections plan to complete their coursework remotely this fall, we also ask that you contact your instructors to make sure you have the appropriate information to access your classes before they begin on September 7.

Note that, for visa purposes, international students must return to the US by September 7. If you have been in continuous F-1 status since March 9, 2020, you can maintain your F-1 status while studying remotely. If you were not in F-1 status in March 2020, you will not have F-1 status until you enter the US. If you are having issues with securing an F-1 visa, feel free



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to notify our colleagues in the Center for International Students and Scholars (CISS) using [this form](#), or contact their office at [GA\\_CISS@bentley.edu](mailto:GA_CISS@bentley.edu).

Thank you for your assistance as we move forward with preparing for the fall. If you have any questions about your courses, please contact the Office of Academic Services at [GA\\_Academic\\_Services@bentley.edu](mailto:GA_Academic_Services@bentley.edu).

Cordially,

Donna Maria Blancero, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Mystica Alexander, Associate Provost for Research and Faculty  
Cathy Carlson, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education  
Rick Oches, Dean of Arts and Sciences  
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