

March 23, 2020

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff:

It is my hope that you and your communities are managing well during this difficult health crisis. As you know, Sofia University responded to the coronavirus pandemic by moving the last two weeks of campus-based, winter-quarter courses to a combination of Zoom + Canvas delivery, and will shortly do the same for the MATP/PhD seminars and MACP intensives that begin in a few days. The Academic and Student Services teams are considering an appropriate and safe means of celebrating commencement in June, and we will have information for you in the next few weeks.

For the Spring 2020 quarter, I have determined that the university will continue with non-campus-based delivery of courses. This means that courses listed in the schedule as “residential” will make use of synchronous class time using Zoom and asynchronous instructional materials in the Canvas LMS. It is my expectation that faculty will provide equal time in the virtual synchronous classroom as they would if courses met on campus. However, I am aware that some courses are conducted in an 8-hour block during a weekend day. This may not be the best means of instruction in the virtual classroom. Therefore, I have asked the Registrar to confer with Program Chairs and Faculty about dividing long class periods, which are currently scheduled for alternating weeks, into weekly meetings for shorter periods. Given this, please be prepared to adjust your calendars accordingly. New schedules will be published shortly.

One final note: I know that international students may be concerned about compliance with visa requirements. I can assure all students that (a) attendance at synchronous virtual meetings will be required and recorded, and (b) the university is in contact with SEVP and has filed a plan to assure the government that the equivalent experience to a physical classroom is being offered. The newly formatted courses may be thought of as “virtual residential”; they are not 100% online.

Should you have any questions, please reach out to:
brandon.huiner@sofia.edu, Director of Compliance and Student Finance,
raisa.velazquez@sofia.edu, DSO
rosalie.cook@sofia.edu, Dean of Student Services

Thank you, and please stay safe.

Sincerely,

Stuart J. Sigman, Ph.D.
Provost and Chief Academic Officer



