

# Moving Forward Together

**Bennington College - Provost and Dean's  
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PM

**TO:** Students, faculty, and staff  
**FR:** John Bullock, Acting Provost  
Laurie Kobik, Dean of Studies  
Oceana Wilson, Acting Dean of the College

Tomorrow morning marks a moment in the history of Bennington College that no one saw coming a mere five weeks ago: the shift to remote education that Isabel Roche announced on March 13 will commence. Faculty and students will work together — in the Benningtonian fashion of truly collaborative learning environments — to provide a rich education that challenges, inspires, and elevates. No one will be content with a pale imitation of what would have otherwise taken place in the classroom, studio, or lab. Instead, we are convinced that you will bring the genuine engagement and dialog — the hallmarks of Bennington classes — to the new mode of teaching we are launching.

As you are all well aware, Bennington is not alone in this situation — hundreds of colleges are shifting to remote delivery in a way that might bear a strong resemblance to what we are doing. But appearances can be deceiving. Bennington is not a typical liberal arts college. That's why we all choose to be here. We don't have major requirements like other colleges because we believe deeply that each student's interests, ambitions, and creativity is unique. Faculty, students, and staff approach education from a stance of mutual respect and admiration — we learn, experiment, create, and discover alongside one another. In the coming weeks, we will rely on each other and work as a team to make this endeavor a time to remember. We truly believe our shared commitment to the work, learning, and community, as well as our passion for Bennington's approach to education will serve as a model in this moment.

Make no mistake, however. There will be moments of frustration when things don't work as planned. There will be miscommunication. There will surely be quite a few mistakes along the way too, on everyone's part. Since the shift to remote learning and teaching became a real possibility a few weeks ago, we have asked everyone to keep their expectations in check, for themselves and others. We need to be

generous and focus on what has always been our primary objective: facilitating the growth of each and every one of our students through meaningful and close interactions with faculty and staff. If you haven't seen this, please review the [revised syllabus](#) for a religious studies class at UNC Chapel Hill. It beautifully captures what we may occasionally need to remind ourselves in the coming weeks.

We will all need support, guidance, and understanding and it is more important than ever that we turn to one another, and that we communicate clearly and often. We will rely on the *Bennington Bulletin*, *Academic Minute*, *Faculty Notes*, and *College Week* to communicate out all that we are thinking about to support one another. Please review these each week, as we are working hard to answer the many questions we all have in these established communications.

Best of luck in the coming days and weeks. Please help each other and ask for help when you need it.