

Sarah Anderegg

From: Jonathan Eldridge
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2023 10:57 AM
To: Jonathan Eldridge
Subject: Spring 2023 Faculty Information & Updates, Volume I
Attachments: Deadline Dilemmas.pdf

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Dear College of Marin Faculty:

I look forward to seeing you during the many flex opportunities this coming week will afford us. As we gear up for the Spring 2023 semester, a few initial items:

1. I have attached a short article on the '**deadline dilemma**,' with a variety of thoughts on how to handle late work.
2. Library Guide for Convocation— <https://libguides.marin.edu/pn> . Our wonderful librarians have curated a series of resources relating to **Dr. Pedro Noguera, our Convocation speaker** this Wednesday the 18th. I encourage you to review this outstanding collection of materials, many of which may also be of use for you with your classes.
3. Request for **COMMunity Hour Faculty Event Hosts**. Please read the information below about how to engage in COMMunity Hour:

The COMMunity Hour Committee is building our calendar for the Spring semester, and we would like to include your event!

Funding is available!

COMMunity Hour occurs Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:40pm to 1:30pm during the academic year. During this hour, no classes are scheduled; it is a great time to hold events that are fun, interesting, rooted in social justice, and that bring the college community together. Events can be a social gathering, lecture/discussion, forum, skill building – anything that aligns with the college's mission and serves a good portion of the college community (students, staff and/or faculty). Faculty in the past have presented research, shared a certain skill, moderated discussions or a panel, led an activity, and/or partnered with the students in their classes.

If you have an event that you would like included on the COMMunity Hour Calendar, please email Mary Kesler mkesler@marin.edu with the following information:

Event Name:

Event Date (and time if extended outside of 12:40-1:30) - if possible, please give us your top 2 or 3 options:

Organizer name and contact info:

List additional collaborators and/or sponsors for this event:

Description of event for marketing purposes (3 or so sentences):

Target population:

Campus Location or Zoom link and call in phone number:

****If you would like to request funding, please complete a Funding Request Form at least 2 weeks before your event (note that funding is limited and not guaranteed).**

Please note: event hosts are responsible for booking a space (if necessary), providing a zoom link (if applicable), and providing needed supplies. The COMmunity Hour committee will advertise on the COMmunity Hour calendar, and work to ensure there are no major conflicts.

Feel free to reach out to Mary Kesler mkesler@marin.edu with any questions.

Do let me know if you need anything as we head into flex week. In recognition of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday on Monday, consider these words from Dr. King: **“Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction.”**

Thank you for all you do.

Jonathan



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The Deadline Dilemma

How Instructors Are Rethinking Late Work, by Becky Supiano for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

Professors have been more lenient about accepting late work since the pandemic hit, replacing punitive policies with broad flexibility. But with most professors back in the physical classroom this year, I wondered: Will pandemic-era approaches to late work persist? Here's what I learned.

While some instructors have gone back to their pre-pandemic policies, most professors I interviewed said the pandemic had made them think more carefully about how to formulate late-work policies that are sustainable for them and equitable for their students.

Regan Gurung, who teaches psychology at Oregon State University, said he and many of his colleagues were “implicitly flexible” before the pandemic. While flexible policies may not have been specifically outlined in his syllabus, he usually gave students extensions when requested — and assumed that if students needed one, they’d ask for it. But that approach puts first-generation students and other students from marginalized groups, who are [less likely to ask for accommodations](#), at a disadvantage: “Far too often, it’s been the student who is empowered or confident or socialized enough to know they can ask for an extension who gets it,” Gurung said.

That’s why Gurung, who is also associate vice provost and executive director of the university’s Center for Teaching and Learning, encourages faculty members to incorporate structure, including explicit policies on late work, into their courses: “Even though that seems to go in the face of providing flexibility, the data actually shows that structure is important for inclusive teaching.”

This term, he built a 24-hour buffer into all assignment deadlines in his own courses. And if students need extra time, they can fill out a Google form for a two-day extension.

I didn’t have room in the article to include one example of modified flexibility that I found particularly intriguing: Michael Ekstrand, an associate professor of computer science at Boise State University, gives students a certain number of late day passes that can be used for 24-hour extensions throughout the term. He also drops their assignment with the lowest score to offer some extra breathing room. Ekstrand said he’s tried a handful of approaches to late work throughout his eight years of teaching, but he always came back to this system. During the pandemic, he increased the allotment of late day passes from four to eight, but he didn’t have to change the structure. Now he’s dialed it in at six late passes.

He likes this system because it means he can keep his own deadlines, allowing him to grade in a predictable time frame and work through homework solutions with his class. It also sets a resource-based tone, not a punitive one. The goal, he said, is to accommodate a range of needs without requiring students to disclose more personal information than they want to share, or making him determine what is a valid excuse for an extension.

"Even when I did have a penalty system, I'd get requests for extensions without penalty, and I'd have to decide what's worth an extension and what isn't," he said. "And making those kinds of decisions doesn't feel pedagogically useful or necessary."

My reporting suggests that there's no one-size-fits-all solution to the deadline dilemma. I spoke with two professors who took a completely unstructured approach to deadline enforcement and reported great success. And two other professors said that instead of being lenient with late work, they restructured their courses to reward timeliness over perfection — either by breaking up larger projects into lower-stakes assignments, or by changing their point system for grading assignments.

Underlying the debate are considerations of class size and subject, as well as questions about how to formulate policies to meet course goals and accommodate student needs, which vary from institution to institution. What works for an English professor at a community college, for example, might not work for someone who teaches calculus to 400 students a semester. With so many professors reconsidering their approach to deadlines, there's an increasingly diverse middle ground between full flexibility and the traditional hard-deadline model.