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From: Office of the MSU Provost <provost@montana.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 8:04 AM
Subject: Welcome back Faculty!



Office of the Provost

Dear MSU Faculty,

Warm wishes to you and a heartfelt greeting as we look forward to the start of a new academic year. I hope you are doing well and that you had a chance this summer to relax and rejuvenate your mind, body and spirit. Montana State University would not be the same without you and we are thrilled to welcome you back for a fresh new year of learning, discovery and engagement.

Students continue to choose MSU because of our reputation for outstanding faculty instructors and because faculty and staff prioritize student learning and opportunities for student engagement. Thanks to you and all that you do for MSU, we are welcoming to campus this week one of the largest incoming classes of undergraduates AND one of the largest classes of new graduate students in MSU history. We are also welcoming back a resilient crop of continuing students who are brimming with promise and a thirst for learning. What an exciting semester this is going to be!

Following are several reminders as we enter the new academic year:

- MSU has a new updated schedule for Final Week, which can be found here: <https://www.montana.edu/registrar/Schedules.html>
As you put the finishing touches on your syllabi and lecture schedule for the semester, plan on using Final Week for instructional activities and inform your students that they should make end-of-semester travel plans accordingly. The Final Week period is counted as instructional time for financial aid, accreditation and other purposes.
- Winter Commencement will be on Friday, Dec. 17, the first time in recent memory the university has had commencement on a Friday. We believe this will greatly assist students and their families during the busy holiday travel season.
- The MSU [Center for Faculty Excellence website](#) provides a wealth of helpful information for faculty professional development, including language for a variety of topics you might [include in your syllabus](#). I encourage you to use this excellent resource, which is updated frequently.
- The Center for Faculty Excellence, CFE, will put on a series of workshops this fall on topics including: active learning, academic advising, grant writing and classroom management. The CFE website provides more information and a

schedule of [upcoming workshops](#) with links for registration. I encourage you to participate in at least one workshop this semester—it will be worth your time.

- The Registrar’s Office implemented new procedures for adding and dropping classes last March. Drop/Add procedures are detailed on the following webpage: <https://www.montana.edu/registrar/adddropcourse.html>
- Faculty are encouraged to submit early alert notifications for students who are not regularly attending class, having difficulty understanding course concepts, or who are not passing graded assignments, quizzes, or exams. The Early Alert Program administered through the Allen Yarnell Center for Student Success, can be found on this [webpage](#) <http://www.montana.edu/aycss/success/earlyalert.html>
- Several Faculty Handbook [policy revisions](#) went into effect over the summer for tenured and tenure-track faculty, notably the annual review, grievance and post tenure review sections of the [Faculty Handbook](#).
- The MSU Bookstore has implemented an updated system for students to purchase their textbooks as described [here](#). Students can initiate the process at the [Bookstore web page](#).

Along with the challenges of these past 18 months, there have been many accomplishments and successes. I recognize that you prioritized your students this past year in spite of your own personal and professional challenges. For that I am grateful and humbled. Your efforts have made a tremendous difference in the lives of students and their families who count on MSU to stay the course while so much else in their lives is disrupted.

Thanks to your dedication, we will continue to work together as we approach this new semester with vision, hope and resilience.

If there is anything our office can do to help, please let us know. Let’s have a great semester!

Best regards,



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