COVID-19 Supplement No. 1 to
UAB ACADEMIC CONTINUITY PLAN
March 24, 2020

From time to time we will be supplementing the Academic Continuity Plan (“Plan”) that was first issued on March 13, 2020, to reflect current developments in managing the disruption of academic operations at UAB during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Principles set forth in the Plan remain in place:

- Health and safety of students, faculty, and staff remain paramount.
- Students should have reasonable means of completing their academic work.
- Transparency is important.
- Academic integrity standards should not be reduced.
- Privacy standards should continue to be met.
- It is presumed that instructors will be actively teaching, albeit remotely.

The following changes have already been announced to academic operations since the March 13, 2020 release of the Plan:

- **Limited Business Operations.** The University has gone to [Limited Business Operations](#) for Workforce A and Workforce F (faculty).
- **Lab Operations.** Limited Business Operations have affected several academic operations, including research laboratory operations. Please check the [website for the Office of Research Business Continuity Plan](#) for how research has been affected, including how to handle mentored research by undergraduate students, graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows.
- **Clinical Learning Activities.** With some exceptions for students who are active parts of certain health care teams, the schools have cancelled all clinical learning activities. Schools will continually assess this situation and reintroduce or modify any clinical curricula based on national and local guidance. Students desiring to do internships should be cautioned about the risks and discouraged from any internships where “social distancing” measures might not be in place.
- **Professional Proficiency Examinations.** Several external organizations have postponed professional proficiency examinations and testing.
- **Commencement.** In-person commencements were cancelled by the University of Alabama System for all three System campuses. We are all very disappointed that we cannot celebrate in person with our students, but please check the [UAB Commencement website](#) for alternatives to in-person commencement exercises. We will provide the opportunity for students to participate in a future in-person ceremony. Schools with separate commencement exercises will make their own arrangements as to alternatives to in-person exercises.

The [remote teaching resources webpage](#) referenced in the Plan has been continuously updated. Please check that site periodically for the latest description of resources available to faculty to continue the semester when it re-starts on March 25.
The following decisions on academic operations are being announced here:

**Grading**

Effective immediately, all students in Spring 2020 courses that have not yet been completed (7-week courses were completed before Spring break) will be given the option to elect a Pass/Fail grading system. This includes courses that were to have been delivered entirely online even before the current disruption. In some circumstances instructors or programs may not be able to use the P/F system. We encourage faculty and programs to be as flexible as possible. Deans (or their designate) must approve cases where P/F is not possible and every effort must be made to communicate this information to students. For the Spring 2020 semester, any student election to use the Pass/Fail system will have to be made on or before the last day of classes, which is April 24, 2020. Pass/Fail grades may not later be changed to letter grades.

Students will be given the option of receiving a Pass grade for any course (on a course-by-course basis), by using a system to be developed in BlazerNet, that will include instructions for exercising this option. Students, faculty, and advisors will receive further information about this as soon as possible.

A Pass grade will not count toward students’ grade point averages (for purposes of scholarships and otherwise), but all courses with a Pass grade will count towards curricular, major, continuation, semester hours, and graduation requirements. Any election to use the Pass/Fail system could affect eligibility for Dean’s List and other academic achievement designations based solely on performance during the Spring 2020 semester. The University will include a designation on students’ transcripts, indicating the extraordinary circumstances encountered in the present semester.

For Spring 2020 course work, all students who otherwise would be given an Incomplete grade will be given until the last day of the Fall 2020 semester classes to complete their work (normal rules would give until the last day of the Summer semester classes).

**Note:** Medical students already have a form of Pass/Fail grading, and there are currently no plans to modify this system.

**Promotion and Tenure**

Promotion and tenure processes for the current academic year, which have already begun and for which dossiers have already been submitted, will continue, with current deadlines still applicable. For all other tenure-earning faculty, beginning October 1, 2020, the University is automatically extending by one year the tenure-earning period. It will be possible to opt out of this extension. The method and deadline for opting out will be announced at a later date. If no opt-out notice is given, then tenure clocks will automatically be extended by one year. Departments and schools should make appropriate adjustments to pre-tenure reviews as a result of this change.

**IDEA Evaluations**
We will have IDEA course evaluations (or equivalent evaluations in professional schools) for the Spring 2020 semester, and faculty will be asked to set up their surveys. The normal timetable for setting up and distributing these surveys for the Spring 2020 semester will be delayed somewhat. We would like faculty to get feedback on their courses, whether or not related to any switch to an online-only format. However, chairs and others doing annual evaluations or promotion and tenure-related reviews are instructed not to include the Spring 2020 evaluations in these processes unless expressly requested by a particular faculty member for a particular course.