



OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS  
**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN**

DILC Building, R. Magsaysay Avenue, UP Diliman, Quezon City 1101  
+632 9285107 or +632 9818500 local 2583 | [ovcaa.upd@up.edu.ph](mailto:ovcaa.upd@up.edu.ph)

MEMORANDUM NO. OVCAA-MTTP 20-055

TO : All Faculty

FROM :   
Ma. Theresa T. Payongayong, PhD  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT : Remote Learning Reminders in Response to Workload Concerns of Faculty and Students

DATE : 12 October 2020

---

Based on feedback our office has received from various sources – Deans, Heads of units, surveys of units, student representatives, anecdotal evidence from faculty, email from parents, LOA and dropping data – particularly concerning the heavy workload of our faculty and students this semester, here are some reminders and suggestions with regard to the remote implementation of our courses. May these reminders and suggestions guide our iterative process of planning and recalibrating our course content, requirements, and schedule as we approach the mid-semester, given the impact of remote learning on our individual and collective well-being.

1. Check-in with our students this week – conduct a short poll or survey, meet synchronously, open a discussion forum, send-out an email, etc. – to ask for informal feedback on how our courses are being implemented so far. We may focus on how they are coping in our course:
  - a. Have the students adjusted to our schedule?
  - b. Are the requirements so far deemed reasonable? What are the difficulties? What kinds of assistance do they need?
  - c. Are there changes in course coverage and/or requirements that we can collectively agree on as a class?
  
2. Based on student feedback, reconsider current workload of students and make the necessary adjustments related to course content, requirements, and schedule, if possible. These adjustments do not equate to lowering one's standards. Such adjustments concretize some of our guiding principles this academic year: compassion, flexibility, honor, and excellence. Kindly remember that covering more content or assigning too much work do not guarantee achievement of course



OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS  
**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN**

*DILC Building, R. Magsaysay Avenue, UP Diliman, Quezon City 1101*  
+632 9285107 or +632 9818500 local 2583 | [ovcaa.upd@up.edu.ph](mailto:ovcaa.upd@up.edu.ph)

objectives. They might, however, lead to more academic stress and poorer mental health outcomes that may hinder learning.

Some suggestions on what changes we can make may include the following:

- a. Explain, in case we have not done so, or reiterate what outcomes are being assessed by our requirements and walk them through why they are required. Help students identify the purpose of the class activities and submissions they have to turn in.
  - b. Reduce the number of requirements. We may also give students the opportunity to choose which requirements will be assessed (e.g., only 5 out of 10 activities will be graded or drop the lowest scores).
  - c. Be more flexible with deadlines (e.g., monthly due dates instead of weekly, so students have more room to adjust work pace; allow for submissions beyond the deadline without any deductions).
  - d. Lessen required reading materials (e.g., chapter instead of a whole book; engaging activities or discussions may take the place of very long assigned texts or lecture videos).
3. Remind students about our communication plan in class, including preferred mode of communication (e.g., email), response turnaround (e.g., will reply within 48 hours), and communication etiquette (e.g., send a message within “office hours” only).
  4. Consider giving our students—and consequently, ourselves – at most a week-off (e.g., week after mid-semester or October 23) where there will be no submissions or school work. Feel free to give it a name – a reading break, mental health break, catch-up week, breather, time-off, etc. It is understandable that given the number of weeks this semester, it may be difficult to find space for an additional break. But these are unprecedented times and a short time-off may give us and our students a much-needed relief from stress and mental health concerns that we might have been experiencing since March.

Our office is open to feedback, questions, and suggestions so please feel free to email us anytime ([ovcaa.upd@up.edu.ph](mailto:ovcaa.upd@up.edu.ph)). Please stay healthy and continue to take care of yourselves and each other. As always, thank you for your understanding.