

Faculty Colleagues

I hope everyone had a peaceful, productive, reinvigorating and restful summer. As we are approaching the start of the fall semester it is time for some important updates and reminders:

Textbook Access Program (non Law, EMBA, Grad Tax, or study abroad)

Students in credit-bearing undergraduate and graduate programs, except as noted above, are part of the textbook access program which provides students all of their required course materials for a fixed fee of \$20 per credit in which they are enrolled. Required materials must be entered into the [Barnes and Nobel College \(BNC\) system](#). Students can opt out of the program and purchase materials on their own. Students in the program should only obtain their required materials through the program, please do not ask them to print, purchase, or find materials on their own (unless it is at no cost). If you utilize digital materials for your course(s), the bookstore will email you instructions for how to add them to your Blackboard page so students can access them. Details on the program can be found [here](#) and all questions should be addressed to 610-519-4160 or coursematerials@villanova.edu.

New Advising Platform

As part of our strategic plan, on August 18 our new advising platform, Slate for Student Success, will launch replacing NoliLink and Ellucian's Advise, both which will cease to operate on September 15. Slate for Student Success will be available through MyNova. All student alerts and faculty feedback will now be entered and managed through the new system. Be on the lookout for a future email with more information. This platform will continually be improved and updated with new features over time. Only credit-bearing students will be in the system initially.

Artificial Intelligence

This past year a task force met and generated a [report](#) giving suggestions for the future of AI at Villanova. The report is in Fr. Peter's and Provost Maggitti's hands for feedback. While some items require significant investments, there are many action items in this report that do not. As you and your department continue to navigate the effects of AI on higher education, this report should give you direction and guidance for your plans. Remember it is up to you what type of AI you allow (or not) in your courses. However, spell and grammar check native to Villanova's Microsoft Office products (Word, PowerPoint, etc.) are not considered AI content generators and allowed by students at all times (unless the spelling and grammar are specific items you are grading and directions clearly stated to students in writing, i.e. drug names, foreign languages, etc.). Some software that historically focused on simple grammar and spelling, such as Grammarly, now offers text generation tools (alternative wording, content supplementation, etc.) that could interfere with Villanova's pedagogical aims. Faculty must be explicit in their syllabi and assignments about what tools and AI functionality are and are not allowed, keeping in mind that tools students may have been permitted to use in high school have likely developed new capabilities that could compromise student learning. Some great guidance and advice on AI in courses is [here](#).

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the [The Code of Academic Integrity](#), and for the Law School the [Academic Code of Conduct](#), before the start of the semester. Follow all procedures and be sure to report violations. Questions can be addressed to [Alice Dailey](#), Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Professor of English.

Lecture Capture Classrooms

Faculty assigned to [Lecture Capture Capable](#) classrooms outside the Law School, will receive an email prior to the start of the semester with directions on how to select your classes for automatic recordings. These recordings will remain private in the [MyMediasite](#) library of the lead professor. *Again, classes will not be automatically recorded. You will need to **opt in** to the recordings.*

Learning Management System (LMS) Update

This is the last academic year that all credit-bearing courses (except those previously identified) will be taught in Blackboard. Starting in summer of 2026 you will be using [Brightspace](#) and all faculty must meet the [foundational use requirements](#) in Brightspace for all their courses. In short, this policy requires in the LMS that faculty will have their syllabus, use the gradebook, post all digitally available material only in this location, and add due dates for assignments, exams, quizzes, readings, and other requirements. Trainings are now available and you can create your own sandboxes (empty courses) to start building. Previous blackboard courses have been transferred (and will be done after each of the coming semesters) and while all material is there, it may not function or be designed in an optimal way. Anything you build can be copied into any future course. Here is a [website](#) that shares links to workshops, documentation, timelines and other information. Any department wishing for a demonstration please email me.

Student Academic and Support Resources

Direct students to this comprehensive [website](#) for academic, experiential learning, financial, and well-being support. Familiarize yourself with the resources available to help them thrive.

New Virtual Desktop

University Technology Services is working to implement a modern, cloud-based virtual desktop (VDI) solution, Apporto, in time for the start of the semester. Apporto will replace Citrix for academic application hosting. The vdesktop.villanova.edu site will provide details about the transition and direct students and faculty (starting about August 11) to the appropriate environment based on their needs.

Thank you for your dedication to our students' success. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Randy Weinstein

Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning

Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering