

March 16, 2020

First, I hope you are all safe and healthy and taking reasonable precautions to stay that way. This virus can even affect those in your age group, so act like the highly intelligent people I know you to be and stay safe.

I wanted to check in with you as you are making the physical and mental transition to being away from campus as we deal with keeping each other as safe, healthy and sane as we can. I know this is all scary. I can't help with the virus at the door, but as far as getting through the term, not to worry. I have been teaching on-line for a long time and I will get you through this.

To help with that, I am planning to be in our new [virtual Blackboard classroom](#) this Thursday from 1:00 to 2:00 New York time. I will be in the room (though perhaps not every minute) to help walk you through being in the room, using the microphone, chatting, etc. This invitation is not a requirement, but rather an opportunity for you to try out the room, see how it works, talk or type to me with any questions you have (including about the projects, which will go forward) and, hopefully, ease your mind and experience overall, as you see that this pivot is not going to be an extreme adjustment. This will be applicable to all your on-line classes, so I think it would be a good use of your time to pop in for a little while. No need to stay the whole time.

We had discussed setting up a contact list for the class. Anyone who wants to be on that list should email me the information you want included and I will circulate a list around Thursday.

I have two more suggestions from my on-line students of how to adapt to a virtual classroom setting:

1. The thing that has helped me the most is a good old fashioned planner. Not a digital one, but a tangible, paper planner. I choose the ones that either break down the day hour by hour, or have large spaces for me to write out what needs to get done that day. If I can see it and it's written in ink, then it must be done!
2. I would say behave like you are physically in class. Go to class/lecture. Pay attention and listen. Try not to side chat with classmates during class/lecture. Keep the same study and homework schedule and hours.

Again, do not panic. You will survive both the virus and the move to on-line learning. You are, however involuntarily, pioneers in moving legal education out of the brick and mortar age and into the 21st century. Try to view this as the adventure that it is. I will try to keep things fun.

Please remember to send your questions, feedback and concerns to lawpreparedness@law.syr.edu. The College's team is tracking questions, exploring and troubleshooting responses, and updating our evolving Law Preparedness page on the College of Law's response to concerns and impacts around COVID-19. Visit that page often for information and resources in support of our journey together.

Stay in touch, let me know that you are ok, and let me know if I can be of help or if you just need someone to hear you.

All the best,
Howard Leib