

UPDATE TRUSTEE

OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY NEWS



for Our BOARD of TRUSTEES

Dear Board Members,

Greetings to all on this our Virtual Alumni Weekend. Through the use of several technological innovations, the campus has been busier than anyone would have ever expected. In a series of dialogues with students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni, we have identified several ways to lessen the stress of the sudden and unexpected disruption of campus life resulting from the CoronaVirus pandemic. Please note the following 4 adjustments intended to facilitate the success of our students and to ease the load of our faculty, both of whom are demonstrating an exceptional amount of patience with sudden change and inspiring dedication to the Oakwood mission.

Adjustment 1: Spring Semester 2020 Undergraduate Interim Grading Policy

The COVID-19 disruption presents many challenges for learners, Oakwood University's administration and faculty are aware of the concerns raised with the abrupt transition from face-to-face course delivery to that of a virtual classroom. With consideration given to the difficulties posed by the pandemic and in an effort to reduce barriers to student success an interim grading policy has been developed.

With the needs of learners at its foundation, an A-B-C-D grading policy for all traditional undergraduate and LEAP students will be applied for the Spring 2020 semester. It is important to emphasize that this policy applies only to undergraduate learners enrolled in the Spring 2020 semester. This policy does not apply to graduate students enrolled in OU graduate programs.

The scale for the Spring 2020 A-B-C-D grading policy are as follows

(There are no policy exceptions):

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage (%)	Grade Point Value Per Hour
A	85-100	4.0
B	70-84	3.0
C	50-69	2.0
D	0-49	1.0
FA*	Failure due to absences	0

*FA letter grade will be administered to students who were not engaged in the course at the midterm. However, an FA can also be administered at the discretion of the instructor because the student's engagement may have changed since midterm, even before COVID-19.

Adjustment 2: Synchronous Classes

Similarly in light of the time zone differences and other challenges students may be facing, in classes that are broadcast live, the instructor will record the interactive class sessions so that the recordings will be available for students who are unable to participate. Students will not be penalized for not being in real time attendance.

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Any student who has additional questions or concerns regarding instructional matters and/or grading methodologies is encouraged to confer first with the instructor of the class and, if deemed necessary, with the instructor's department chair. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily at the first two levels, the student should confer with the Dean of the School. If no resolution occurs, at any of these levels, the third level of resolution is with the Assistant Provost. Please call 256-726-7000 if you have any questions.

Adjustment 3: New Commencement Date identified

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 virus pandemic and work to further minimize health risks to our faculty, staff and students. On March 15, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommended that "for the next eight weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States."

Graduation weekend activities were originally scheduled to begin in four weeks culminating in commencement on May 9, 2020. However, the difficult decision has been made to postpone our Spring Commencement exercises until the weekend of July 29-August 1, 2020. We understand the disappointment many will feel. Commencement is a time of great celebration for our graduates, their family, and friends, who travel great distances to share in the joy of the occasion. This decision was made with consideration of the great risk holding the event would pose to many supporters of our graduates, who are among the most vulnerable populations. Postponing the ceremony does not affect the conferral of degrees. This date is subject to change depending on the spread of COVID-19 in the U.S. and the State of Alabama.

Adjustment 4: New 2020-2021 Fall Thanksgiving/Christmas Break Voted

The Fall Semester of 2020 will provide Oakwood University students a new Thanksgiving/Christmas break period similar to the former quarter system under which many of us attended Oakwood. Beginning on November 24, 2020, the Thanksgiving break will extend 5 weeks through the Christmas Holidays, with school resuming in January. Please see the calendar below:

The Fall Semester 2020 academic calendar has been amended. No adjustments have been made to the Spring 2021 academic calendar.

Instruction Begins – Monday, August 10, 2020

Instruction Ends – Friday, November 20, 2020

Final Exams – Sunday, November 22, 2020 – Tuesday, November 24, 2020

Departure/Travel Day – Wednesday, November 25, 2020

Once again, we thank you for your support of Oakwood University. And please join us on Inside Oakwood at 8:30 CST on 90.1FM WJOU for real time updates and inspiration from the campus of Oakwood University. Until then, we remain . . .



Yours in Service

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Leslie M. Pollard". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Leslie Pollard, Ph.D, D.Min, MBA
President