Dear Colleagues,

We hope this note finds everyone safe and well. We write on behalf of the ARC to remind everyone of several of the changes relevant to this semester, particularly with regard to the week after Thanksgiving. Members of the ARC have received a number of questions, and we hope to clear up any confusion that you may have.

**Thanksgiving Week and the Week After Thanksgiving:** The last day of instruction for this semester is Friday, November 20. The Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week (November 23rd and 24th) and the week after Thanksgiving (November 30th-December 1st) have been designated as independent study days. Wednesday through Friday (November 25th-27th) of Thanksgiving week are holidays. The goal is to make it possible for students who wish to travel home to choose not to return to campus until the Spring semester. No required class meetings or new assignments can occur during these independent study days. Previously assigned work (e.g. problem sets, final papers, etc.) that would normally be due in the last week of a semester may be due on Thursday or Friday, December 3rd-4th. No tests may be given during the independent study days. Instructors who wish may remotely hold a review session during the week after Thanksgiving. Attendance for such a review may not be required and no new material that will be covered on a final exam may be presented.

**Final Exams:** The final exam period runs from December 9th-16th. All final exams will be conducted remotely, either as a traditional take home exam or using online test taking tools such as those provided in Canvas for example. The ARC encourages instructors to give take home exams this Fall. As is normal, final exams may be due either at the end of the scheduled final exam period for a class or at the end of the final exam period. Since a potentially long period of time will elapse between the end of instruction and the end of the final exam period, the ARC encourages instructors to make take home exams available as soon as possible after the last day of instruction so that students can take them early if they desire. Take home finals should be made available no later than December 7.

**Proctoring of Midterms and Finals:** Rice University operates on a student honor code. As part of this, tests (midterms and finals) are not proctored (exceptions have been granted for certain professional masters programs). These policies remain in effect. Instructors should not attempt to proctor midterms or final exams. Canvas offers tools to create timed tests as would normally be the case in a class meeting, and these tools can be used if desired. If you need assistance with Canvas tools, please contact teaching@rice.edu.

**Class attendance:** The major guiding principle for Rice in this semester is personal choice with regard to how instructors and students engage in class. For this reason, instructors may not require students to attend class in person unless that class has previously been granted an exemption from dual delivery by the Provost. For students who reside 4 or fewer time zones away from the Central Time Zone, instructors may require synchronous attendance, either in person or on zoom, but in-person attendance may not be required. This policy also applies to days in which midterms are given.

**Election Day and the day after:** Election day will be a regular class day; however, no assignments can be due that day and all instructional material covered on that day must be available asynchronously. This is required because of uncertainties around the ability of members of our community to be able to vote in
a safe and timely manner. In addition, because of these uncertainties and potential disturbance to the normal schedule, the day after the election will also have limitations: November 4 will be a regular class day and classes will meet as scheduled; however, we encourage instructors to be as flexible as possible for their plans for that day and consider not having assignments or midterms due that day.

**Class Recordings:** Zoom recordings of classes are only available to students registered for the class. Students cannot download class recordings to their computers - only the owner of the recordings can download them. The recordings will be taken down two months after the semester is over. The ARC encourages instructors to leave these recordings up on the class Canvas page so that students may access them as needed to review and better learn the material.

On behalf of the ARC, we wish to thank you again for all that you are doing to make this semester a success for our students. If you have any questions or concerns about the points above, please contact Chris at cmj@rice.edu or Reggie at provost@rice.edu.

Warmly,
Reginald DesRoches, Provost
Christopher Johns-Krull, ARC Chair