POSC 386 Video Message, March 23, 2020

Hello everybody! Welcome back to the semester! I am glad we are in business again, and I am excited about the discussions that we’ll have on Canvas over the next couple of weeks and about the insights that we will gain together.

I suspect that with the developing health situation, you are as much on edge as faculty are. Add to this some uncertainty about how the online learning technology holds up once 22,000 JMU students all log on. So, please, be patient with us professors as we try to make classes work for you. I promise to be patient with you as well. Please do not hesitate to contact me if anything does not work out, or if you need help with anything, if I can do anything to support you. Or if just want to say “hello.” I’ve now created a Zoom room to contact me and a Calendly page to help you schedule a meeting with me. More information is on Canvas and on the updated syllabus.

Talking about which: You can find the updated syllabus on Canvas. Check out pages 9 and 10; they contain the updated information. In short: The course topics for the next six weeks have been slightly streamlined. The exams remain roughly the same, but I’ve replaced the short-answer portion with an open-book essay. Let me know about any questions.

This week, we’ll have two projects or course topics:

First, I’ve posted an introduction to online learning. This will introduce you to basic practices to assure your success in the online learning world. Even if you are not new to online learning, I think that you can use a little refresher. I usually do. A few activities are graded (I count them under the in-class prep category), so make sure you do them!

Second, we will continue our investigation of stories and court cases about how far governors and presidents (and others) can go and restrict citizen rights in emergency situations. Two people (as of Sunday afternoon) have posted really interesting points. Take a look and contribute as well! As a suggestion, once a number of people have posted something and you don’t find new points to make, you can post sources—newspaper and similar articles, or law review articles—about the points that others have made.

All learning materials and activities are on Canvas, in the Modules. If you have any questions, let me know. I’m glad we’re all back. Let’s make this semester work out!