



McGill

School of
Communication Sciences
and Disorders

École des
sciences de la
communication humaine



April 16, 2020

Dear Students,

I am hoping that you were all able to have some rest and sunshine over the long weekend notwithstanding the upcoming exam period. I know that I personally benefited from time with my family, baking and watching tv. I didn't know that I had time to stop until I did. However, we are now back in the thick of it and must continue our efforts to work our way through to solutions even as the situation remains uncertain.

I am writing with an update, summarizing decisions from the April 14 Faculty Meeting. These decisions were taken subsequent to (1) the survey of year 2 students' views on telehealth and equity in the placement dates for the final internship; (2) Kelly's communications with year 2 students; and (3) Lauren and Sophie's communications with clinical educators in Quebec and across Canada. In short, we found that you are somewhat undecided on these issues but in general it appears that most students would like to experience their preferred and planned internships although openness to telehealth as an option increases with more information. Conversations with the clinical educators revealed variation in their views and capabilities as well. Some are equipped to supervise by telehealth while others are not. Some anticipate that they might be able to begin supervising students in the clinic some time during the summer whereas others will definitely not be able to do this before the fall term. Overall however we are pleased to see that CEs remain committed to helping you finish your program.

None of us are comfortable with inequities in access to good quality clinical placements or disparities across students in time of access to the labour market. At the same time, it doesn't seem fair to deny one student the opportunity to begin their internship because another is waiting for their preferred place to open up. Given that the course of the epidemic and the associated public policies may vary from one province to the next, it seems likely that the opportunities to integrate students into clinical practice sites will vary across students as well. Therefore, **the faculty voted to place year 2 students in their final internship asynchronously, that is, place each student as the planned site or alternate site re-opens.** Currently, we have no information that helps us estimate when the first internship might be initiated. The clinical education team will continue to negotiate with each of you and the clinical educators to ensure that each of you starts your internship as soon as possible.

Regarding the first year class, the spring practicum will be postponed to the winter term as previously announced. We will hold town hall meetings with the first and second year classes separately to answer your questions about the contingency plans for each class and any other topics you may wish to discuss. Andreea Mandache will contact you to organize a date and time at the end of April. The first year class will meet with me, Linda Polka, Karsten



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Steinhauer, Kelly Root and Sophie Vaillancourt. The second year class will meet with me, Kelly Root and Lauren Tittley.

One final decision of note that was taken yesterday pertains to the satisfactory/unsatisfactory option. We opted to not permit students to request satisfactory/unsatisfactory grades in our program as the criteria for conversion to these grades are not consistent with our standards for passing the program.

Thank you all for responding to our requests for information and writing to us so eloquently with your concerns and experiences.

I look forward to talking with you in a few weeks time,

Susan

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