

Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on COVID Academic Planning and Policies
MINUTES

Meeting of December 3rd, 2021 at 8:30a.m. TEAMS Conferencing Application

Present: Chris Buddle (Co-Chair)
Angela Campbell (Co-Chair)
Jennifer Chen
Nancy Czettel
Claire Downie
Rebecca Fuhrer
Petra Rohrbach
Daniel Weinstock
Laura Winer
Elyse Cragg (communications)
Gillian Nycum (resource person)
Paola Colapelle (secretary)

Guest: Christopher Manfredi

Accommodations for Academic Staff

The Committee was joined by Provost Christopher Manfredi for a listening session and to gather further thoughts on recommendations for COVID accommodations for Academic Staff during the W22 term.

The members articulated that although the mandate of this Committee falls within the limits of Academic Planning it remains cognizant of the need to avoid excluding issues that touch on academic life from its considerations, even if they fall more squarely in the domain of HR. The Committee underscored that its recommendations are not a proposal for a policy but rather solutions for the present pandemic context. There is a need to recognize vulnerability and for a simplified, streamlined process for reviewing accommodation applications.

The Committee recognized that a one-size-fits-all approach to accommodations is not possible and that different academic staff members will have different requirements for their work, therefore accommodations will look differently in different cases. The Committee recognizes that it has a responsibility to the students when considering pedagogical accommodations.

Provost Manfredi will be seeking input from the Vice-Principal Beauchamp and the Deans to discuss the Human Resources implications of the proposed recommendations and will provide an update to this Committee. The aim is to have a decision before the end of the calendar year.

Long-term Student accommodations

Prof. Buddle suggested that an invitation be extended to the Dean of Students and Representatives of the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) at next week's meeting to hold a discussion on the framework on accommodations for student with chronic and long-term issues related to COVID, as we look towards the Winter term.

Mandate and Communications

In the coming weeks, Committee members will discuss different strategies on how to approach various stakeholders within the university. It was suggested that the present format of weekly meetings could be converted to a combination of roadshows with Faculties to strengthen communications, and occasional weekly meetings for the remaining part of the AY2021/22.

Prof. Buddle will explore the possibility of holding a joint meeting with the Recovery and Operations Resumption (ROR) Committee to offer a better understanding of the present situation and to prepare for potential upcoming changes brought on by the recent increase in rate of infections and the OMICRON variant.