

**Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on COVID Academic Planning and Policies (“Committee”)
MINUTES**

Meeting of January 21st, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. TEAMS Conferencing Application

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

Senate Recap

The Committee debriefed following the 19 January meeting of Senate, where an extensive discussion among Senators was held regarding COVID’s continued effects on our academic activities. Senators expressed a range of views concerning the return to campus activities next Monday 24 January. The Senate discussion also underscored that the Committee’s work has been and will remain valuable to Senate. It will be important to plan carefully for the Open Discussion the Committee will host, planned to occur at the February meeting of Senate. At Senate, the monthly updates of the Committee’s work were found to be too infrequent to know what was happening in real time. Senators were directed to the minutes available on our website. The importance of ensuring that our Committee’s meeting minutes are prepared and uploaded in a timely fashion is understood.

Return to Campus & Support for Students

The Committee acknowledged the anxiety that remains concerning the return to campus for in-person teaching as of 24 January. A main point of concern, mainly among undergraduate students, appears to be the goal of securing a guarantee that lectures will either be recorded or offered online synchronously via Zoom or other appropriate technology. Many instructors will likely adopt one of these modalities in the coming term to accommodate students who miss class on account of illness. Some instructors, however, have concerns about doing so, notably in relation to protecting the privacy of their lectures. The possibility of class attendance dropping by adopting this method was also discussed. The University is not in a position to require instructors to record their lectures or offer their classes online synchronously; instructors have been encouraged to record their lectures since the start of the pandemic in March 2020.

Return to Campus & Support for Instructors

While communications regarding supports for instructors wanting to adopt online synchronous teaching have been issued through multiple channels, many instructors still seem to be unaware of the supports to which they may avail themselves. Multiple MROs have been sent pertaining to these supports, as have communications sent directly to Chairs/Directors. Chairs/Directors' will are being asked to help share/reinforcing messaging to instructors about teaching supports this term.

Throughout the pandemic, TLS has had robust supports in place for instructors. Pursuant to demand for more targeted support related to teaching in the 2022 Winter term, a drop-in session for instructors was organized for today (January 21, 2022). A disappointingly low number of people (6) registered for this event and just two people attended.

Communications

Chris Buddle, in collaboration with Media Relations, has developed [a video, *Community Perspectives on the Return to Campus*](#), which aims to help prepare the McGill community for the Winter 2022 resumption of on-campus life beginning the week of January 24th. This video is meant to complement the MROs issued throughout the week, which have provided updates to our community about safety and academic life including once we return to more fulsome on-campus teaching as of next week. The video features a range of McGill community members, including faculty, staff, students, and leadership.

Planning for February 2022 Senate Open Discussion

Subject to approval by the Senate Steering Committee, our Committee will host an Open Discussion (OD) at the February meeting of Senate. The Committee discussed how best to frame the OD to ensure that the discussion is constructive to our activities and allows a multitude of voices within Senate to be heard.

The Committee was of the view that, during the OD, we should offer a brief presentation on our work to-date. We will then invite Senators to engage with us in discussion after they have had a chance to work in small groups in breakout rooms. These groups should be set up in advance to ensure that there is representation from students, staff, and faculty in each.

Potential questions that the groups would be asked to consider include:

- Given what we know so far about the Winter 2022 term at McGill, what adjustments to academic activities might be needed between now and the end of term, and should these be considered by the Ad Hoc Committee?
- What measures put in place pursuant to the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations ought Senate to recommend we continue for the next academic year?
 - E.g.: 20% remote teaching option for instructors, provided this aligns with course/program delivery requirements; additional supports for instructors who want to teach online, and in the classroom, synchronously.