

## **Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on COVID Academic Planning and Policies MINUTES**

Meeting of November 19, 2021 at 8:30a.m. TEAMS Conferencing Application

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

Regrets: Elyse Cragg (communications)

Guest: Marie Cousineau

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### **Communications update**

Prof. Buddle informed the Committee there has been one incoming question sent to the [Covidahoc@mcgill.ca](mailto:Covidahoc@mcgill.ca) email address. This question and others that we receive will be used as a base to create the FAQ section within the [Ad Hoc website](#). Prof Buddle will draft a response and send to the committee for their approval before responding to the email query.

### **Senate presentations**

It was agreed that Committee members will take turns presenting monthly reports at future Senate meetings. This will underscore that our Committee's purpose as tied to collegial governance.

### **Accommodations for Academic Staff**

Marie Cousineau, Legal Counsel (Labour and Employment) from the Department of Legal Services shared with the Committee the existing process for accommodation requests to provide a better understanding on how these are granted.

Accommodation requests are processed by the Disability Management Team (DMT) which specializes on the medical aspect of short-term and long-term leaves within the Benefits Division of the Central Human Resources Department. They have been granted the mandate of processing accommodation requests given their specialization and extensive experience in medical report interpretation.

A form was created specifically for COVID-19 related accommodations to be filled out by the treating physician, which upon review if information provided is insufficient, the Disability Management Team (DMT) will request additional information via a questionnaire. When a decision is pending, an accommodation is granted in the interim. The duration of this process may vary depending on steps

required to adequately assess the request. There may be an added layer of verification which involves the consultation of an external medical opinion to ensure due diligence.

Once the decision to grant an accommodation is rendered, the Disability Management Team (DMT) will inform the employee and Faculty or Department. The accommodation will come in different forms as it is the responsibility of the Faculty or Department to determine, based on the work environment and its needs in terms of teaching or research and tasks of the employee. Accommodations are granted per term and are reviewed to reassess for the upcoming terms.

To ensure the objective analysis of COVID-19 related accommodation requests, the Disability Management Team will refer to the following INSPQ guidelines:

Maladies chroniques : [COVID-19 \(SRAS-CoV-2\) : avis scientifique intérimaire pour la protection des travailleurs avec maladies chroniques \(inspq.qc.ca\)](https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/2914-travailleurs-avec-maladies-chroniques)

Travailleurs immunosupprimés: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/2914-travailleurs-immunosupprimees.pdf>

Travailleuses enceintes: [COVID-19 \(SRAS-CoV-2\) : Recommandations intérimaires sur les mesures de prévention en milieu de travail pour les travailleuses enceintes ou qui allaitent \(inspq.qc.ca\)](https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/2914-travailleuses-enceintes-ou-qui-allaitent.pdf)

CNESST documentation : <https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/fr/prevention-securite/coronavirus-covid-19/questions-reponses-covid-19>

Since June 1, 2021 the following number of requests (showing status) were submitted by academic staff for COVID-19 accommodations:

Status of request	Faculty
Accepted	10
Declined	*
Pending	*
Made request for information but did not present request for accommodation	9

\*fewer than five

Employees belonging to the age group of 70 and over automatically have access to measures put in place to protect them, that is, they are eligible for accommodations. Accommodations for this age group without a medical component are not processed by the Disability Management Team (DMT) as they are processed by the Faculty or Department.

The Committee proposed to pursue different methods of communications to raise awareness on existing accommodation processes.

The Committee will look at various ways to address the challenge of COVID-related anxieties on the part of instructors that might inhibit them from coming to campus and might adversely affect their teaching. The Committee undertook to look at this particular question over the coming week, and at its next meeting.