

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Minutes of Special Meeting of Friday, March 27, 2020

10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Video Conference

### Present:

Murphy, Steven (Chair)  
Bliemel, Michael  
Crawford, Greg  
Davidson, Catherine  
Desaulniers, Jean-Paul  
Gaber, Hossam  
Habibi, Sarah  
Heydari, Shahram  
Hogue, Jessica  
Hossein Nejad, Mehdi  
Jacobs, Les  
Jones, Ferdinand  
Kay, Robin  
Kishawy, Hossam  
Livingston, Lori  
Lloyd, Meghann  
Mahmoud, Qusay  
Marques, Olga  
McCabe, Janet  
Mostaghim, Amir  
Murphy, Bernadette

Nugent, Kimberly  
Partosoedarso, Elita  
Petrie, Olivia  
Pierce, Tess  
Rahnamayan,  
Shahryar  
Rinaldi, Jen  
Roy, Langis  
Scott, Hannah  
Shon, Phillip  
Stoett, Peter  
Stokes, Joe  
Tokuhiro, Akira  
Woolridge, Lyndsay  
Wu, Terry

### Staff:

Dinwoodie,  
Becky  
Foy, Cheryl  
MacIsaac, Brad  
McCartney,  
Kimberley  
Molinaro, Nichole  
O'Halloran, Niall

### Regrets:

Hossein Nejad, Mehdi  
Jacobs, Les  
Kay, Robin  
Khalid, Osama  
LeSage, Ann  
Liscano, Ramiro  
Mohany, Atef  
Naumkin, Fedor  
Taylor, Noreen  
Williams, Alyssa

## 1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

## 2. Agenda

*Upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford and seconded by P. Stoett, the Agenda was approved as presented.*

## 3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair thanked the Council members for taking time to participate in the special meeting. The pandemic is ramping up and he hopes everyone is keeping healthy. Another meeting will be scheduled for the following week to deal with delegating authority to the Steering Committee by amending its Terms of Reference. More special meetings might be required as the university continues to respond to the pandemic and urgent decisions might have to be reached. The Chair responded to questions from Academic Council. He reiterated the need for Council to be prepared in the event that reaching quorum becomes an issue.

## 4. Provost's Remarks

The Provost echoed the Chair's comments about being appreciative for everyone making time to participate in the special meeting. She encouraged members to develop a sort of routine to help deal with the pandemic response and encouraged everyone to get outside.

## 5. Temporary Amendment to University Grading Policy

L. Livingston presented the updated grading policy proposal for consideration. She advised that they have heard students' concerns about the transition to online learning and want to help alleviate the stress of the semester. Council members had the following comments and questions:

- A member expressed support for the proposal as it addresses many concerns - likes that the option is given to the students.
- How would students exercise the option?
  - J. Stokes advised that students will complete an electronic form to exercise the option.
- Would there be any implications for the drop date? Would this apply to graduate courses, as well? Would this apply to the Spring/Summer term?
  - Yes, applies to grad courses.
  - The drop date had been extended to March 27. The proposal is that students who receive an F will automatically be withdrawn from the course.
  - For now, the amendment only applies to the Winter 2020 term. If a similar adjustment is needed for the Spring/Summer term, will seek further amendment by AC.
- Suggestion made that student's choice for pass/fail should be all or none.
- Will students still have option to appeal grades?
  - If a student receives an F grade and has the option to withdraw, anticipated that all students who receive an F would appeal; accordingly, the proposal is

being made to help ease the burden on staff. Students will always have the option to appeal.

- Is there a possibility of extending the date for selection beyond May 6? If a student is ill, could have implications on submitting the form on time.
  - Extensions could be considered on a case by case basis.
- Would these changes affect accreditation?
  - CEAB has indicated that the switch to an online format would not affect accreditations – in times of crisis like this, the world rallies around common sense in dealing with the situation – other institutions are also moving to pass/fail grading without implications
  - with respect to the nursing program, this change in grading would not affect a student's progression through the program where a minimum standing must be met in order to advance in the program - would not pose an issue for the accrediting body – would be a greater concern if all students automatically passed
- What if student does not respond? Is the default keeping the letter grade?
  - If the student does not submit the required form, the letter grade will stand
  - L. Livingston clarified that this is a one time option
  - Clarified that could pass with at least D or above – F would be automatic withdrawal
- For courses that require 60% to pass, would a student need to get this to receive a pass?
  - Would be flagged in the student's file – would get a passing grade, but would be flagged as not having met the program progression requirement.
- Clarified that refunds are administrative in nature and will be included in student communications – not required to amend the motion to clarify that there will be no tuition refunds for withdrawal at this point.

B. Dinwoodie read out the motion, as amended.

*Upon a motion duly made by L. Livingston and seconded by H. Kishawy, Academic Council unanimously approved the following temporary amendment to the university's grading policy for the Winter 2020 term only, as follows:*

- *offer our students the choice of either accepting their final course grade OR credit recognition (PAS) as per our grading protocol;*
- *for undergraduate students, credit recognition (PAS) must meet the faculty minimum for degree or course progression requirements;*
- *for graduate students, a B- or better will be required to qualify for credit; and*
- *all "F" grades will automatically be given a retroactive withdrawal and students will receive a "W" notation on their transcript.*

**6. Termination**

*Upon a motion duly made, the meeting terminated at 11:00 a.m.*

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary