

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

between

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

and the

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY FACULTY ASSOCIATION

RE: WINTER 2022 RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

On behalf of Wilfrid Laurier University

Whereas WLUFA LOU #07 (FT), #18 (CTF), which set out the parameters for the period of Academic Disruption declared under Policy 2.5 due to COVID-19 for the period of January 4th, 2022, through to January 28th, 2022, expires on January 28, 2022; and

Whereas the University continues to monitor and abide by public health guidelines and requirements to ensure the safe return of all faculty, staff, and students; and

Whereas in-person learning will be phased-in at weekly intervals, beginning no sooner than January 31, 2022, and with a goal to have returned to fully in-person delivery no later than February 28, 2022; and

Whereas, with the exception of the January 31st return date, a minimum of two weeks advance notice will be provided to individual faculty prior to their return to in-person instruction date.

The Parties agree to the following for Winter 2022:


1. Student Evaluations of Teaching for Winter 2022 will occur as per normal; however, Faculty (FT and CTF) may elect whether or not to have them submitted to their Official File through direction to their Dean's Office. Evaluation committees will not use omitted evaluations as a factor in future assessments. Members who choose not to include evaluations in their Official File will have a standardized note placed in their Official File reminding evaluation committees of this duty in their assessment.
2. Courses that are returned to in-person instruction that need to pivot to remote at the direction of the University, will remain remote for the remainder of term unless there is a significant in-person pedagogical need, and the faculty member agrees.

3. For in-person courses, regular in-person engagement with students is required. However, instructors may teach a selection of course components remotely and are encouraged to utilize institutionally supported eLearning technologies, as long as the course learning objectives and accessibility requirements are met. Any remote synchronous components must be delivered at the scheduled course time.
4. Faculty may elect to hold all office hours remotely, even while course instruction is in-person.
5. Where possible, and in accordance with public health guidelines, mid-term and final assessments may continue to be provided in-person, at the request of the instructor, even if course delivery is remote.
6. Live technical support will be provided for any remote assessments reported through the assessment survey distributed by eLearning.
7. Requests for workplace accommodation regarding Family Status and/or medical reasons will be triaged by Faculty Relations and adjudicated in collaboration with Human Resources in a fair, consistent, and expedient manner in accordance with the university's Employment Accommodation Policy. The University shall exercise empathy and compassion when considering such accommodation requests.
8. Safety protocols will be communicated clearly and promptly and at least one week before the resumption of classes. These protocols will include the availability of N95 masks and rapid at-home antigen testing for faculty, at no cost, and enhanced mask enforcement protocols for the student community.
9. The University's "Infection Prevention for In-Person Teaching and Instruction" protocol will continue to contain the stipulation that: "It is not the responsibility of faculty to implement or enforce the University's COVID health and safety protocols. Any student engaging in unsafe behaviours in the classroom may be prompted to correct that behaviour by the faculty member, but only if the faculty member feels that in doing so they will not be endangering the safety of themselves or their students. If the faculty member feels the student's behavior has created an unsafe environment, the faculty member may ask the student to leave the class, or they may immediately dismiss the class and leave the classroom. Any escalation should be referred to Special Constable Services."
10. Instructors will communicate any changes to course outlines, including changes to the evaluation scheme, methodology, assessments, lab and tutorial attendance, testing and final exams, to students promptly.
11. Student absences due to COVID-19 will continue to be treated as per existing practices for student illness.

12. Provisions for the 2021-2022 Travel Funds for full-time faculty and librarians, and PER funds in Articles 28.7.6 (CTF CA) and 38.2.2 (FT CA) remain as per LOU #7 (FT) and #18 (CTF).

The Parties further agree to meet weekly during the month of February to discuss public health guidelines and the changing pandemic realities.

On behalf of WLU



Date: January 19, 2022

Deborah MacLatchy, President

On behalf of WLU Faculty Association



Date: January 19, 2022

Rob Kristofferson, President, WLUFA