

Subject line: Update for faculty and staff

Faculty and staff,

Thank you for your continuing patience as the University works through the implications that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on our operations. As you know, rapidly changing events in the province are affecting us – as individuals, as families and as an institution – on a daily basis. We are doing our utmost to adapt to them and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on our University, while keeping everyone’s health and safety and our students’ academic progress as our top priorities.

To that end, **this update contains information regarding:**

- 1. Asking the public not to come to our campuses unless absolutely necessary;**
- 2. Arrangements for faculty and staff to work remotely;**
- 3. The administration of final examinations; and**
- 4. The transition from face-to-face to online and other modes of distance teaching.**

**1. Asking the public not to come to our campuses unless absolutely necessary**

Please be advised that because all public events, programs and activities have been cancelled at the University of Regina, and all recreation facilities are currently closed, **the University is asking the public to avoid coming to our campuses unless absolutely necessary.** Students, faculty and staff (and those who by necessity must drop them off and pick them up) will continue to be able to access our grounds and buildings, as will contractors, delivery personnel and other outside support workers.

**2. Arrangements for faculty and staff to work remotely**

The University remains open, albeit with some services reduced. To maximize social distancing for employees in light of the COVID-19 threat while also ensuring that priority services and operations are maintained, today the University developed guidelines for faculty and staff for working remotely effective Wednesday March 18, and guidelines for staffing actions effective today, March 17. These guidelines, which may be found [here](#), have been shared with management teams. Employees wishing to discuss options and processes for working remotely should speak with their immediate supervisor.

**3. Information for instructors about mid-term and final examinations**

There will be no **in-person** exams (mid-term and final) for the remainder of the Winter 2020 term. The University recognizes the impact this will have on faculty and students. To mitigate this impact, we have developed recommended exam options for instructors, and guiding principles to take into account when considering them.

**Options:**

1. A project or an assignment as part of course evaluations to replace in-person final exam requirements;
2. A take-home exam as the exam requirement;
3. A final grade based on completed coursework components, with weighting adjusted as appropriate;
4. In Faculties where licensure and accreditation requirements may exist, an online exam using specialized software if feasible and as necessary. Please note that teaching staff in other Faculties may engage in online exams but the University does not have the resources or capacity to support them; or
5. A timed exam in UR Courses that is available for distribution at a specific time and closed at a specific time.

Should instructors believe that an exam option not listed may work best in the context of their individual classes, we request that they discuss that option with their Department Head, Associate Dean, Dean or Director as appropriate.

**Principles:**

1. There will be no in-person exams. Individual Department Heads, Associate Deans and Directors will work with their teaching staff to determine the best approach to move forward.
  2. Whenever possible, an option should be chosen that has minimal stress impact on teaching staff and students.
  3. Where an option is chosen that requires scheduling, the current date and time slot assigned to the class in the final exam schedule will be used. There will be no changes to the final exam schedule.
  4. Where an option is chosen for a final take-home exam, assignment or project, the due date will be the date of the scheduled final exam.
  5. Some students may not have access to a computer and/or appropriate Internet capabilities, and this possibility should be factored into the consideration of options. If teaching staff are contacted by students who have limited computer access, alternatives should be reasonably provided to avoid the need for students to request a deferral.
  6. Considering the disruptions, stress and/or significant changes to routine (including potential caregiving responsibilities) that students and teaching staff are experiencing, options that provide both with maximum flexibility, while balancing academic integrity with compassion and reasonableness, are recommended.
4. **Link to the March 16 update regarding the transition from face-to-face to online and other modes of distance teaching**

As noted yesterday, Information Services has prepared an instructor-focused website to help teaching staff transition to fully distance-delivered teaching and learning. The website includes a portal by which instructors can quickly and consistently communicate their approach to distance delivery with students. In the event that some instructors have not yet seen this website, or the information from the Registrar's Office that was communicated yesterday regarding items such as deferrals, you may read that update [here](#).

Thank you again to everyone for your patience, understanding, and tireless efforts as we work together during these challenging circumstances. I know that our students appreciate everything you are doing for them.

Sincerely,

Thomas Chase  
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)