

Subject line: Important information regarding the University's transition from face-to-face instruction to learning from a distance

Members of the University community,

As you are aware, many at the University have been working to determine the most effective means for teaching staff to transition their coursework from face-to-face instruction to online or other modes of delivery at a distance for students when classes resume on Friday, March 20.

In preparation for that transition, **this update contains:**

- 1. Instructions and processes from Information Services to help teaching staff and students make the transition;**
- 2. Academic and resource information from the Registrar's Office to support teaching staff and students;**
- 3. Information about computer lab access and library services;**
- 4. Information about counselling services available to students, faculty and staff; and**
- 5. An estimated timeline on the availability of other information regarding things such as final exams, working off-site, and Human Resources processes for employees whose students are now home from the K-12 system.**

I encourage all teaching faculty, staff and students to read the following information:

- 1. Instructions and processes from Information Services to help teaching staff and students undertake the transition**

To assist instructors with the transition from face-to-face instruction to teaching at a distance, the University has prepared an instructor-focused website at <http://www.uregina.ca/remote-teaching>. At this site you will find information, recommendations, and resources to provide for an orderly transition to fully distance-delivered teaching and learning across the University. Instructors can employ whatever online tools are appropriate.

As a key step in this process, in addition to UR Courses, instructor and student portals have been implemented at the above website to provide a quick, consistent, and reliable method for instructors to communicate their approach to distance delivery with students on a course-by-course basis. You will find the portal, entitled "Class Notes Portal," in the top navigation bar.

Instructors are asked to visit the portal and familiarize themselves with it at their earliest convenience, so as to allow students to begin their preparations for the resumption of classes on Friday, March 20. Students will be directed to refer to the student portal to obtain direction for each of their enrolled courses as determined by the course instructor. **To allow sufficient time for instructors to populate the portal with their direction to students, the student portal will not go live to students until Thursday, March 19.**

In addition to the instructor portal, the University has implemented a system of Zoom virtual conference rooms for any instructors not already using Zoom, allowing students and instructors to meet virtually at the regularly scheduled days and times of courses. Neither instructors nor

students require Zoom accounts to use this system of virtual Zoom conference rooms. Instructors, at their discretion, may also use Zoom via a URCourses plug-in as described on the instructor website referenced above. Instructional videos demonstrating these methods are available on the website.

Further, on the instructor website you will also find reference material for each platform supported by the University, including Zoom, URCourses, file sharing systems, and network tools.

Once in the website, you will see contact information for Information Services staff should you encounter difficulty as you work through the transition process.

## 2. **Academic and resource information to support teaching staff and students**

### **a. Extension of Grade-of-W Withdrawal Deadline**

The University recognizes the impact that our decision to suspend classes from March 16-19 has on students, and the important decisions students need to make while they await further information. For this reason, the grade-of-W withdrawal deadline has been extended. The revised grade-of-W withdrawal deadline is now March 23 for all 202010 Part of Term (POT) 1 students. Students in other winter parts of term can view their revised grade-of-W withdrawal deadline in UR Self Service.

### **b. Deadlines and Procedures for Deferral Requests**

Deferral of course work should be made to your course instructor as would normally occur and prior to the due date of an assignment (please **see 2019-20 Academic Calendar pages 49 & 50**, and in particular, "Deferral of Course Work and Term Exams").

### **c. Deferral of Final Exam**

The deadline for making a request to defer a final exam will be extended from within 3 business days to within 10 calendar days of the scheduled exam date.

### **d. Maximum Length of Deferral**

For the Winter 2020 term, the maximum length of the deferral will be extended by 7 calendar days from May 31 to June 7, 2020.

### **e. Requirement to submit supporting documentation**

The requirement to submit supporting documentation, in cases of illness, has been waived. Students will still be required to complete an Undergraduate [Student Application For Deferral of Term Work/and or Final Exam](#) or a [Graduate Application for Deferral of Course Work and/or Final Exam](#) request form and a [Student Self Declaration of Illness](#) form.

### **f. Extension to Grade Submission Deadlines**

Given the change in the delivery format of courses, including changes to final assessments and evaluations, the University allow an additional 7 calendar days for grade submission beyond the current 5 business days. Please note that because some students will be waiting for grades for the purposes of determining eligibility to graduate (here or

at another institution), or to register for classes in future terms, every effort should be made to submit within the 5 days when possible.

### **3. Information about computer lab access and library services**

We recognize that not every student has the necessary computer and/or Internet access that may be required to access coursework remotely. For that reason, every effort is being made to have existing computer lab space available on campus for those students who normally use it. It should be noted that in all cases, the number of terminals available has been reduced to approximately one-half the normal capacity to ensure social distancing. All computer stations will be cleaned on a regular basis and students using them are asked to practise careful hygiene and create space between themselves and others using the locations and to facilitate sanitizing the equipment appropriately.

A number of common computer labs exist on the main campus, and their locations may be found here: <https://www.uregina.ca/is/common/ur/labs/locations.html>. Please note that not all labs may be open at all times, and that the number of operational terminals has been reduced to promote distancing between computer users. Please continue to check this webpage for updates.

In addition, the Dr. John Archer Library remains open, with some reductions in service and computer lab space. Updated information about the library's service, including computer access for students, may be found on the LibGuide page at: <https://uregina.libguides.com/covid-19>. Please refer to this page frequently for updates.

Students with ready computer/Internet access are asked whenever possible to refrain from using the computer labs (including the library terminals) so that students without such access may work on their course material.

### **4. Information about counselling services available for students, faculty and staff**

Supports are available to students, faculty, and staff who are experiencing difficulties with anxiety or stress. They are outlined on the University's COVID-19 FAQ page at: <https://www.uregina.ca/covid-19/faq.html>.

### **5. Estimated timeline on the availability of other information**

Assessing and dealing with the implications of COVID-19 for our University is not a straightforward process, and we will provide concise but comprehensive updates daily if possible. At present, we anticipate that updates including (but not necessarily limited to) the following subjects will be available in the coming days:

#### **a. Final exam procedures – Tuesday, March 17**

**b. Working off-site/remotely and Human Resource processes for employees whose children are now home from the K-12 school system** – by end-of-day Wednesday, March 18

I want to take this opportunity once again to thank all students, faculty and staff for your patience and your support for each other during this unprecedented situation. This is a challenging time. It is heartening to see how all units across the University are pulling together to ensure the continuity of classes for our students.

Sincerely,

Thomas Chase  
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)