
SPECIAL MEETING OF EXECUTIVE OF COUNCIL

Date: 30 March 2020
To: Executive of Council
From: Glenys Sylvestre, Executive Director, University Governance (University Secretary)
Re: Special Meeting of Executive of Council - 30 March 2020

A Special Meeting of Executive of Council has been scheduled for 30 March 2020, 1:30-2:15 p.m. via Zoom. As outlined in Section 4.6.1 of the Council Rules and Regulations, Special meetings of Executive of Council may occur at the call of the Chair or the University Secretary. Notice of such meetings shall be sent to Executive of Council members at least three days prior to the meeting, and only those items specified in the notice shall be considered at any such meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Approval of the Agenda**
2. **Remarks from the Chair**
3. **Items for Decision by Executive of Council**
 - 3.1 Revision to the Council Rules and Regulations, Appendix I, p. 2
 - 3.2 Changes to Withdrawal Date and Grading System for the Winter 2020 Term, Appendix II, pp. 3-6
4. **Adjournment**

REVISION TO THE COUNCIL RULES AND REGULATIONS

MOTION 1: To revise the Executive of Council section of the Council Rules and Regulations to allow members in attendance using web conferencing technology to vote on matters being considered by Executive of Council.

RATIONALE:

In light of the limitations to personal attendance at meetings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in order for academic governance activities to continue at the University of Regina, the following change is proposed to the Council Rules and Regulations to allow voting to occur when meetings are held using web conferencing technology:

| DETAILED ANALYSIS OF COUNCIL RULES AND REGULATIONS | |
|---|--|
| EXISTING PROVISION | PROPOSED PROVISION |
| <p>4.6.5 VOTING Members of Executive of Council must be present and in person to vote on any matters being considered by Executive of Council.</p> <p>Voting will normally be done by a show of hands at the call of the Chair.</p> | <p>4.6.5 VOTING Members of Executive of Council must be present and in person to vote on any matters being considered by Executive of Council. Voting will normally be done by a show of hands at the call of the Chair.</p> <p>In cases where the Chair calls a meeting indicating an option for remote attendance, web conferencing technology may be used to facilitate the attendance of, and voting by, members of Executive of Council.</p> |

CHANGES TO WITHDRAWAL DATE AND GRADING SYSTEM FOR THE WINTER 2020 TERM

INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on the students, faculty, and staff of the University. Not only has this disrupted our University; this disruption is being felt on a global scale. It has changed the pedagogy of class delivery in an effort to help students complete their studies and has impacted all of us on a personal level. Post-secondary students around the world are facing new pressures including social isolation, financial loss, and uncertainty, to name a few.

Universities across Canada are responding in a variety of ways to support students in completion and assessment of their current term studies. These responses have not been without controversy and potential longer-term impacts, but aim to recognize the exceptional and unprecedented situation that students are facing. A brief summary of some institutions' responses to student grading concerns can be found in Table 1 (attached).

The following recommendations recognize the hard work our faculties, federated colleges, and academic units have put into the changes they have made to the assessment and evaluation of students, while recognizing the extraordinary circumstances and need to provide additional flexibility/empowerment to students. A summary of the student impacts of the University of Regina recommendations can be found in Table 2 (attached).

Note that normal processes related to retroactive withdrawal for medical/compassionate reasons, deferral requests, grade appeals, etc. continue to be available to students, in cases where their individual circumstances may not be adequately recognized through enactment of these recommendations.

1. CHANGE TO 'GRADE OF W' WITHDRAWAL DATE FOR THE WINTER 2020 TERM

MOTION 1: To extend the 'Grade of W' withdrawal date to the last day of classes in the Winter 2020 term (9 April 2020).

RATIONALE:

Extending the 'Grade of W' withdrawal deadline to the last day of classes (9 April 2020) allows students to continue to assess their current situation in light of COVID 19 and determine how best to proceed with the remainder of the Winter 2020 term, including whether they will attempt their final examinations or final projects. This will help students avoid failing grades and negative GPA impact due to COVID 19-related difficulties.

Students who chose to withdraw from Winter 2020 courses after 31 January 2020 have not received any refund of tuition and fees assessed, in accordance with the 2019-2020 Academic Schedule. This consistency will be maintained for course withdrawals to 9 April 2020.

2. GRADING SYSTEM FOR THE WINTER 2020 TERM

MOTION 2: To create a new course grade: CRC (Credit – COVID 19).

MOTION 3: To permit students who have received a passing numerical grade in a course delivered in Winter 2020 term the choice to replace the grade with CRC (Credit – COVID 19).

RATIONALE:

CRC (Credit - COVID-19) will be used in cases where students have passed a course, but COVID 19-related stressors negatively impacted their expected academic performance (for example, a typically 80+ student receiving a minimally passing numerical grade).

CRC (Credit - COVID 19) is a passing grade and will be recognized as completion of University of Regina course (and related program) requirements, but will not impact GPA calculations.

The process for students to select this option will not further impact the work of course instructors, who will complete course delivery and enter numerical grades in the normal fashion. After students view their final grades, any further adjustments resulting from these recommendations will be managed through forms and processes developed by the Registrar's Office.

The deadline for students to select this option for any or all courses completed and passed in Winter 2020 term will be 31 May 2020, allowing them time to analyze and follow up with external bodies on potential impacts. Selection of this option will not result in a refund of tuition and fees.

Table 1 – Summary of Responses of Canadian PSIs

| Institution | Change to | Note |
|------------------------|--|---|
| University of Alberta | Credit/ No credit/ Incomplete | Exceptions must be identified by March 27; An online petition opposing the decision collected more than 12,000 signatures as reported by Global News on March 24 |
| University of Calgary | Credit Received/ Fail | Once students receive their final grades, which are expected to be released to students by May 12, they can exercise their choice: to accept their grade or choose CR/F, for each course. Courses with 'Credit Received' or 'Fail' will not be included in GPA calculations. CR grades will still count towards their degree completion requirements. A grade of 'D' and better will qualify for the 'Credit Received' notation for undergraduate courses. For graduate courses, a grade of 'B-' or better will qualify for the 'Credit Received' notation. Students will have until May 22 to indicate their choice. |
| McGill | Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory | Previously available but expanded access, May not be applicable to all students/programs |
| NAIT | Honours/Pass/ Fail | Differentiates "exceeded" and "met" expectations, Exceptions allowed for accreditation |
| University of Waterloo | Credit Received/ No Credit Received | Approved by Senate: Course instructors can elect to use CR or NCR in place of numeric grades. Students will be able to ask to convert numeric grades to CR or NCR for a specific period after the end of Winter Term |
| University of Toronto | Credit/No Credit | U of T has a credit/no credit policy where students can choose (by the first day of classes) to take the course for credit, or take the course without credit (they still receive a grade but it can't be applied as credit toward degree completion). In light of COVID 19, they are extending the deadline to make this decision from the first day of class to after a student receives a final grade. |

Table 2 – Student Impacts of University of Regina Recommendations

| Choice | Impact |
|---|--|
| Withdrawal without Academic Penalty (extension of deadline to last day of classes) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W grade on transcript. • Does not impact GPA. • Irreversible decision. • No refund of tuition and fees. • Course work completed prior to withdrawal is not recognized, but gives the student an option to focus on being successful in other courses, and/or to withdraw from all courses without failing grades of NP far later than the normal withdrawal date. • Does not impact an international student's ability to remain in Canada. |
| Credit – COVID 19 (passing grades only) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRC grade on transcript. • Does not impact GPA. • Irreversible decision. • No refund of tuition and fees. • Can be used in degree completion requirements. • Student is recognized for the work they have done and that they passed the course. • Visiting students will need to check with home institution if the grade will be recognized. • Students will need to verify the impact the decision it has on their eligibility for funding and financial awards. • Students who intend to apply for admission to another school (transfer, professional program, graduate program) will need to verify how the grade will be evaluated in that process. • Does not impact an international student's ability to remain in Canada. |