

# Memo



## COVID Memo #2: Follow up to Academic Dean Memo

Dear Member,

Thank you for sending us your concerns and questions following the reception of Dean Gauvin's Memo (sent on Tuesday 24th March at 11pm). This document seeks to clarify statements and assist members in understanding the College directives. The information provided in this document is based on our current understanding of the situation after discussions with the College; obviously, as with everything at the moment, the information here is subject to change.

Just last night, the Ministry announced modifications to the RREC (*Règlement sur le régime des études collégiales*), which might impact the College's plans. We have attached the modifications to this email, but please note that the College has discretion in the implementation of these modifications and that teachers must follow College directives. However, we are advocating that teachers be included in these discussions. We are expecting an analysis from FNEEQ shortly and will follow up with another Memo with our interpretation of the Ministry's modifications.

### Scheduling

The College has stated that individual teachers are responsible for deciding when to resume their courses. It should be noted, however, that a teacher cannot begin without department approval for the course to transition online. Only once the department has made a decision regarding which courses/competencies can be delivered remotely can individual courses resume.

Once a course has been approved to go online, individual teachers should make modifications to their Course Outlines in line with the department and College guidelines and communicate the revised outline to students and the sector dean. Individual Course Outlines do not need to be approved by the department.

The College is suggesting that courses should be online by "the first scheduled class of the week of April 6" at the latest. If individual teachers, or departments, are unable to begin teaching online within this time-frame, we advise they discuss the matter with their sector deans.

Courses should not be condensed. There is a recognition that the semester will finish at a later date than originally planned; however, the College has suggested that courses should still fit into the remaining time-period. i.e. 7 weeks remain, so your course would end 7 weeks after you transition online.

That being said, some departments may want to discuss whether it would be of use to students to spread the course over a longer period of time to allow necessary adaptation for students and teachers. If departments decide this is a potential avenue, they should discuss the matter with their sector deans.

### **What to do if competencies/courses cannot be completed via distance education**

The College and sector deans have entrusted departments/programs to determine what can feasibly be accomplished using distance education. They have repeatedly assured us that they trust in the disciplinary expertise of teachers in determining which courses or portions of courses will have to be postponed.

At this point, there is no directive from the College to implement distance education for all courses. The College has also made it very clear that all competencies must be covered and properly assessed.

If this is not possible using distance education, the College will be working to find ways to make sure that the semester is completed, even if this involves postponement of courses.

### **Academic integrity and assessment**

The College has also clearly stated that academic integrity must be preserved; it is currently determining whether or not there are ways of conducting evaluations remotely while preserving academic integrity.

### **Will there be a final exam period?**

In many disciplines, the final exam constitutes a major component of assessing whether or not students have met course competencies.

Depending on the duration of the current health crisis, it may still be possible to hold an exam period.

It would be prudent for departments to wait for the situation to evolve before deciding whether or not to eliminate in-person exams. Postponing the exams may be a suitable solution, but a decision need not be taken precipitously. This would require teachers to inform students that the course evaluations could be modified at a future date.

### **Intellectual property**

Course material, whether or not it is posted online, belongs to the teacher who created it. (Clause 8-1.03 of the Collective Agreement).

### **For teachers unable to transition to distance education**

There are several reasons, such as health, technology or family obligations, for which a teacher might be incapable of teaching under these circumstances.

The College has asked any teacher in this situation to communicate with their sector dean. While the College is committed to finding solutions, it has reassured the Union that teachers will continue to be remunerated, even in the event that they cannot resume courses remotely.

The College is currently inventorizing all additional expenses incurred during the covid crisis, including any replacement costs associated with teachers who are unable to resume their regular course loads.

### **Measures put in place for students**

To date, we do not have a lot to report on this end. In the memo sent to students today, there is no mention of what accommodations, if any, will be put in place for students who are unable to complete the semester under these circumstances.

Many of you have expressed concern for those students who will inevitably be left behind. At this point, until a concerted plan is put in place, it is up to teachers to find ways to assist as many students as possible through measures such as flexible deadlines, removal of attendance policies or providing individual online meetings for students.

Many of you have already told us that you have polled your students to get a better idea of whether or not they will be ready to transition. This may help you to come up with simple solutions that may allow more students to be able to participate in your course.

### **Reimbursement for Required Equipment**

We recognize that in moving to some form of distance education, teachers might need to purchase technology or software that they would not otherwise have to purchase. The Union has asked the College if they have plans to reimburse teachers for additional expenses incurred as a result of the transition to distance education. We do not believe at this time, that it is realistic to assume that the College is in a position to purchase and distribute the material required for each teacher.

### **Additional Remuneration**

The College's current model is for classes to resume before April 6th, with the semester ending by May 24th at the latest. This currently falls within the period of availability for regular teachers, and so there would be no additional remuneration.

For Continuing Education teachers, the College has reassured the Union that any courses that extend beyond the end of the contract date would be additionally remunerated.