

# Memo



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## **COVID Memo #5: Redeployment, Leave Deadlines, Elsewhere in the Cegep Network, Announcements by Ministre Roberge, Summer School**

### **REDEPLOYMENT OF TEACHERS TO THE HEALTH SECTOR**

You may have heard from the press and our previous memos that there have been several ministerial orders (all available on the DTU website) regarding the redeployment of Cegep teachers and school board personnel into the Health Sector. The situation has moved incredibly quickly with conflicting and difficult to interpret directives. Below is a timeline of the last week's developments on redeployment:

**Saturday, 11 April 2020:** Ministerial order is signed that would allow for mandatory redeployment of teachers if the need arises

**Sunday, 12 April 2020:** The DTU is convened to a meeting with the College administration in which the process of recruitment for redeployment is explained:

- *The Regroupement des Collèges de Montréal (RCM)* would be coordinating deployment with representatives of the Montreal Island Hospital Centres (CIUSSS);
- At the time, the hospitals requested a list of all employees trained in Nursing, Diagnostic Imaging, Radiation Oncology, Biomedical Laboratory, Physiotherapy and Social Services;
- Teaching was to be prioritized, those teaching full-time would not be considered available for redeployment;
- The list was to be produced for Monday 13 April 2020

**Monday, 13 April 2020:** It becomes clear that the deadline for the production of personnel lists is unrealistic. At Dawson, it involved contacting hundreds of teachers individually to verify information. Most, if not all colleges are unable to meet the deadline for submitting the list of names to the CIUSSS representatives.

**11:30am, Wednesday, 15 April 2020:** College administrations are convened to an emergency meeting by the Ministry of Education in which they are ordered to produce a list of all employees as well as all second- and third-year students in Nursing, Diagnostic Imaging and Social Services. Colleges are told that due to the urgency of the situation, this process would supersede the previous information gathering process coordinated by the RCM and the Montreal CIUSSSs. However, the RCM and CIUSSS agree to work together to produce, in a separate process, a list of all locations requiring assistance with the hope of gathering volunteers from the Colleges.

**2:30pm, Wednesday, 15 April 2020:** Dawson College sends the requested information to the Ministry of Education

**Morning, Thursday, 16 April 2020:** A new Ministerial Order is issued targeting students in certain programs of which Nursing, Diagnostic Imaging, Radiation-Oncology and Social Services are offered at Dawson. This order states that:

“The professional orders governing these professions must grant temporary licenses to any student with the equivalent of one semester or less to complete in their program allowing them to practice in their fields for the duration of the public health emergency”

**Afternoon, Thursday 16, April 2020:** The Ministry of Education decides that managing the list of employees that it had ordered be sent the previous day was impossible. It abandons the project and states that it will be operating on a voluntary basis.

It then turns its attention to students and orders Colleges to send a letter (an excerpt is quoted below) to second- and third-year students recruiting them to work in the health sector:

*À vous qui bâtissez le Québec de demain, je fais appel à vos services et à votre sens du devoir afin de venir en aide à ceux qui ont bâti le Québec d'aujourd'hui.*

*Le réseau de la santé a besoin de vous. Je vous demande donc, si vous êtes en mesure de le faire, de prêter main-forte au personnel infirmier et aux préposés aux bénéficiaires qui œuvrent dans le réseau de la santé, et plus particulièrement dans les centres d'hébergement et de soins de longue durée (CHSLD).*

The Ministry also suggests that courses may have to be suspended temporarily in order to facilitate graduating students from certain programs to enter the workforce.

According to certain reports, College administrations respond with frustration and emotion and point to a completely disorganized leadership within the Ministry of Education.

**Friday, 17 April 2020:** The DTU is convened to a meeting with the Dawson administration where we are told that:

For teacher recruits:

- The RCM and Montreal Island CIUSSS in the meantime have continued to work on a process for recruiting volunteers and filling shifts in target locations.
- For the time being, only teachers from the originally targeted areas will be given the opportunity to volunteer (Nursing, Diagnostic Imaging, Radiation Oncology, Physiotherapy, Biomedical Laboratory, Social Services)
- A list of all locations requiring assistance will be produced on a weekly basis and sent to the teachers from target disciplines
- **If needs are met, it is expected that redeployment will remain voluntary**

### For student recruits (at Dawson):

- Courses will not be suspended, for 2nd and 3rd years the students will be told that they are being asked to volunteer but that their schooling remains a priority;
- All third-year Diagnostic Imaging and Nursing students who have met the program competencies (according to teacher assessment) will graduate immediately;
- **For students, all work in the health sector will be on a voluntary basis**

### **LEAVE APPLICATIONS AND DEADLINES**

While it might seem strange to be planning for the Fall, several teachers have contacted us regarding applications for various leaves (e.g. Sabbatical, Professional Development, Voluntary Workload Reduction).

Given the current state of uncertainty, both in terms of the impact of the health crisis on next semester's staffing as well as individuals' circumstances, the Union has asked the College to be more flexible with deadlines. However, the College has refused this request and appears to be attempting to institute hard, non-contractual deadlines, in particular for Professional Development Leaves.

For the purposes of clarity, the deadlines for leaves are as follows:

**April 15:** Personal Leaves

**May 15:** Voluntary Workload Reduction

Note: there are **no contractual deadlines** for Professional Development Leaves or Sabbaticals. However, it facilitates staffing if requests are made as early as possible, and the College has the right to refuse a leave request if it is not given enough time to find a replacement.

### **ELSEWHERE IN THE CEGEP NETWORK**

We thought members might find it interesting to know how the situation and decisions taken at Dawson compare with other Cegeps within the network. The FNEEQ recently conducted a survey to gain a better understanding of the different responses across the network.

Although the majority of Cegeps restarted courses on April 6, in several cases the move to online classes was gradual with a week or more being used to provide training to teachers and students in the online teaching platforms being used. By contrast, Dawson required teachers to resume their classes online by April 9th, with many starting as early as March 30th, which left insufficient time for many teachers and students to familiarize themselves with online platforms. During the first week of online teaching there were troubling reports of zoom-crashing experienced by several teachers; the College responded promptly and have implemented security measures to mitigate the issue.

At the vast majority of Cegeps, there is no requirement for synchronous teaching as part of the move to putting courses online. This contrasts with Dawson where the administration has given the directive that at least 25% of course time be delivered synchronously.

At a number of Cegeps, the administrations have decided to provide additional remuneration to Continuing Education teachers in recognition of the non-contractual duties they are undertaking in the process of moving their courses online. At Dawson, we have formally requested that the administration provide additional remuneration to Continuing Education teachers; however, the College is waiting for the Ministry to take a decision on whether it will fund such additional pay. Dawson has stated that it will not provide additional remuneration unless it is approved and funded by the ministry. This, despite the College having a much healthier operating budget than other cegeps who have taken the decision to provide additional remuneration whether or not they are reimbursed by the ministry.

At least one Cegep that we know of has implemented an EQ/IN (Equivalency/Incomplete) grading system in all of its courses. At Dawson, departments have been asked to determine whether it is possible to evaluate the level of attainment of competencies and, in cases where it is not considered possible, to request an EQ/IN grading scheme be approved by the Academic Dean.

### **MEETING SUMMARY (MINISTRE ROBERGE AND UNION REPRESENTATIVES)**

This Friday, April 17th, FNEEQ representatives participated in a meeting with Education Minister Roberge. He made the following declarations:

- In higher education, schools will not be reopened before the summer
- For primary and secondary schools, scenarios are being discussed that would involve re-opening before the end of the school year, if authorized by public health authorities
- Summer school in cegeps and universities can take place online
- It is too early to make any decisions regarding the Fall semester, all options are on the table
- No R-scores will be issued for the Winter 2020 Semester; however, teachers may still continue to issue numerical grades if they choose to do so
- There is a hope that university research laboratories could begin to reopen on a gradual basis within the next few weeks
- Attempts will be made to further facilitate access to schools in order to collect equipment and material necessary for teaching

## **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Most of the francophone cegeps within the Montreal area that usually offer a Summer School - notably Rosemont, de Maisonneuve, Montmorency, Édouard-Montpetit, and Ahuntsic - have cancelled their Summer School offerings. At Dawson, the administration is still in discussions about whether to hold Summer School. There is some indication that the College is considering offering Summer School entirely online and focusing on the needs of graduating students i.e. those students who need to complete just one or two courses in order to be able to graduate. However, the College has suggested that it is considering whether to open up Summer School to graduating students from other Colleges.

The Union has several concerns about the possibility of an all-online and potentially expanded Summer School. While Dawson teachers have accepted the need to move to online teaching in an effort to salvage the current semester, the results of the faculty survey conducted by the DTU reveal legitimate concerns about setting a precedent for online teaching. We recognize the very real need that many non-permanent and Continuing Education teachers have for Summer School work as well as the desire of our teachers to support students in their paths to graduation. However, we have reservations about the College potentially using the current public health crisis as an opportunity to grow Summer School. Any expansion of Summer School threatens to take course offerings from the regular semesters and further exacerbates the precarious position of Continuing Education teachers, who already work without fair remuneration and benefits.

Should the College decide to proceed with a full online Summer School, the DTU will continue to emphasise that this be understood as a temporary measure undertaken in response to the exceptional circumstances while advocating for better support to teachers and students.

We will also continue to argue that non-permanent teachers should not be penalized for being unable to take on online summer courses due to personal circumstances related to the health crisis.