Dear colleagues:

As we approach the Wednesday March 18th deadline to communicate course changes to students, there are a number of important resources and information to review and share with your department. In particular, please see the information below about academic advising and academic policies.

All of these academic updates for chairs, instructors, and staff will be shared on the Provost’s website shortly.

Student FAQs are currently available at: [https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/covid-19/#tab-1](https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/covid-19/#tab-1)

Please share this link with your students.

Academic Advising

As of 4:30pm on March 16th, 2020, in-person academic advising in Faculty Offices has concluded until further notice. Students are still encouraged to contact academic advisors by email or other means. Faculty advising offices will provide information directly to students about the process for phone, video-conferencing, or email communications, as appropriate and determined within the Faculty Associate Dean’s Office.

In line with this, as of 4:30pm on March 16th, 2020, in-person academic advising in Departmental Offices should also be concluded until further notice. Academic advising should continue in alternate formats including email, phone, or another format as decided by your Department. Please provide information for students about advising options on your webpage or other forum. Please also see the information below on individual academic policies.

Academic advisors should be provided with the means to work from home by email, phone, or other means. Contact your Faculty for information on connectivity tools and best practices. Please ensure that communication to students about remote advising is clear with emails, Avenue to Learn notices, website information, and notes on office doors.

Support for changes to instructional and assessment

- Information on resources to support instructional continuity and alternative delivery of assessments is available at the Instructional Continuity webpage hosted by the MacPherson Institute with frequently asked questions being continually updated.

- The MacPherson Institute is going virtual.

- Virtual drop-in consultations are available by MacPherson Institute staff:
  - Tuesday, March 17th, 1:00 – 3:00pm
  - Wednesday, March 18th, 10:00-12noon and 1:00 – 3:00pm
  - Thursday, March 19th, 1:00 – 3:00pm
  - [Join via this link](https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/covid-19/#tab-1)
Course Continuity Training:
  o Tuesday, March 17th, 2:00-5:00pm, offered through Microsoft Teams (code ue5dgv2, join Fireball Academy: TET2020)
  o Email Christa Morrison at morric17@mcmaster.ca or message Christa on Microsoft Teams for help with joining

Technology-enhanced training:
  o Thursday, March 19th, 9:00-11:00am, offered through Microsoft Teams (code ffb08wl, join DeGroote TET)
  o Email Christa Morrison at morric17@mcmaster.ca or message Christa on Microsoft Teams for help with joining

The Faculty of Engineering has also posted online teaching resources.

Departmental champions have been invited to help support and direct instructors to resources on campus, including the MacPherson Institute website and the consultations.

IT Continuity
The ability to use online teaching and learning tools will depend upon stable connectivity for instructors, academic advisors, and students. Please see the following information for IT Continuity.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)
Please direct students to your Faculty Home page for information about MSAFs and missed academic work. The first MSAF submitted online through the Mosaic Student Center will occur as normally. Students needing any additional or extended absence reporting should continue to contact their Academic Advisors in their Faculty’s Associate Dean’s Office for support and advising. No medical documentation will be required for Winter 2020.

1) For relief for missed academic work worth 24% or less of the final grade resulting from medical or personal situations lasting up to 3 calendar days in duration, please use the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) located in the Mosaic Student Center.
2) For medical or personal situations lasting more than three calendar days, and/or for missed academic work worth 25% or more of the final grade, and/or for any request for relief in a term where the MSAF has been used previously in that term and/or for missed exams, students must report to the Office of the Associate Dean of their Faculty by email to discuss their situation. No Supporting Documentation is required in the Winter 2020 term. If warranted, the Faculty Office will approve the absence, and the instructor will determine appropriate relief.

SAS Accommodations
SAS continues to remain available to the campus community and are transitioning to service delivery by phone, video-conferencing and email. They are in the process of contacting all instructors who have students who are registered with SAS with further information and Tips for Accessibility When Moving to Online Learning.

Due Date Restrictions
There is an Assessment Ban in place from Thursday, April 2 to Saturday, April 11 (see McMaster Undergraduate Calendar). This applies to any tests, quizzes, exams and take-home exams worth more than 10%. Assessment dates should not be re-scheduled into the Assessment Ban period without discussion with the Associate Dean’s office.
Grade submission deadlines
Currently, there are no changes to the grade submission deadlines and processes for the Winter 2020 term.

Student Evaluation of Teaching
End-of-term student evaluation of teaching processes have been cancelled for the Winter 2020 term.

Deferred exams
As usual, if students have missed an examination because of compelling medical or personal reasons, they must fill out the Petition for Special Consideration, a Request for Deferred Examination (Form B), and normally submit the form within five working days of the missed examination. Students will need to contact their Faculty office to obtain this form. For the Winter 2020 term, no supporting documentation will be required.

Course withdrawal options
The last day for withdrawal without failure by default was Friday March 13th.
Students may request a Late Withdrawal, without petition, no later than the last day of classes in the relevant Term. However, it is important to note that requests for Late Withdrawal cannot be made in courses for which the final exam (or equivalent) has been attempted or completed. Students should contact their Faculty Advising Office by email for further information.

Registration for Spring and Summer terms
As of now, registration for Spring and Summer 2020 terms will continue as expected. Students, especially those in three semester programs, should enroll in courses as they would normally. Registration opened Monday March 16th, 2020. Spring term runs from Monday May 4th to Friday June 19th, 2020. Departments and instructors are advised to anticipate the possibility that Spring courses may need to be offered in an online format instead of in-person. We will provide an update on this information know more.

Thank you for your attention to this information.

Sincerely,
Kim Dej, Acting Vice-Provost, Faculty