



SUBJECT	Preparations/Support for Transitioning Online Learning and General Campus Safety
SUBMITTED TO	Board of Governors
MEETING DATE	July 27, 2020
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	For information only - No action requested
LEAD EXECUTIVE	Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver
SUPPORTED BY	Ainsley Carry, Vice-President Students Marcia Buchholz, Vice-President Human Resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to questions raised by Professor Kindler regarding COVID-19, the attached Q & A was developed.

APPENDICES

1. Response to COVID-19 Questions

COVID-19 Questions

Campus capacity for implementing safe face-to-face instruction

1. *What is the limit on the total number of people on campus (present at the same time) that we can reasonably expect to be able to maintain safe social distancing throughout the day?*

- This is very difficult to answer. Public health authorities have not determined this number. A Provincial Health Officer Order is in effect for Mass Gathering Events that involve one time gatherings. One-time gatherings indoors or in confined outdoor spaces must be less than 50 people (and must allow for social distancing) for events such as social gatherings, dinners, ceremonies, but no limits have been specifically been set to campus capacity.

2. *How/Will the University ensure that only the number of individuals that can safely interact within the existing physical space be allowed to work/attend face-to-face classes on campus in the Fall?*

- Very few classes are being offered on campus in the fall and they will be very small sections that will be scheduled to meet in rooms that have 3 times the occupancy limit that we would normally use for such sections. A copy of the Learning Spaces Safety Plan can be found [here](#) and outlines all general teaching spaces that will be used to support any in-person academic teaching for WT1.
- UBC will keep the 'walk on the right' protocol both on sidewalks and within the public realm like Main Mall. This will give people enough space to walk single file and allow for passing within the safe physical distancing guidelines and it is an easy guideline to follow since we drive on the right. Signs will also be installed around campus to inform and reiterate the messaging and intended function of the spaces.
- All required Safety Plans will provide detail on the occupancy for spaces that are to be used for face to face classes in the Fall.

3. *How are these numbers calculated and how do they relate to the decisions on the number of face-to-face courses and the number of students allowed to reside on campus in the Fall of 2020?*

- The number of face-to-face sections has been determined by Faculties and is very few low. There are sufficient general teaching spaces to accommodate all on-campus course offerings.
- For Student Housing, planning is continuing to determine housing demand. Student Housing and Community Services has worked with WSBC and Vancouver Coastal Health to determine any limitation associated with shared units and has determined that 100% of the housing inventory can be made available if demand warrants.
- Current demand is trending at approximately 50% occupancy across the system (UBCV & O). This is composed of approximately 20% occupancy of our 1st year housing, 50% of upper year / graduate student winter session housing and approximately 80% occupancy of year round housing.
- Over 4300 housing offers were sent out between July 9 and 13; the yield rate of these offers will be understood by July 25.
- As detailed in the [UBC Framework document](#), a process has been put in place to develop and approve COVID-19 safety plans for buildings, classrooms, residences, retail venues, recreation facilities, as well as outdoor circulation spaces. These plans follow the guidelines put forward by the province and WorkSafeBC and give the community the confidence and comfort necessary to allow them to slowly return to campus for work or study.

Colleagues are reporting that the conversations in their departments/Faculties tend to focus on instructional settings/classrooms (which all agree possibly can be managed for a limited number of courses), and not sufficiently on the critically important “transitions”. Some of the specific questions colleagues are asking are: How will the flow of students/faculty/staff be managed at the entrances to the campus (bus loop/parkades); entrances/exits of the buildings/classrooms/labs; in the hallways; in informal learning places; in open areas like Main Mall, etc. ? What will happen to students during longer breaks between classes, especially in inclement weather? How will safe access to the bathrooms be managed for so many people? What is the capacity of food services to serve lunch – with the social distancing in place – for those working and studying on campus within the lunch hour?

- UBC is a public campus and is open to guests who may not be a student, faculty or staff member, or resident. There are many entry points to the campus as well as various modes of travel to campus including by car, bus, bike, on foot, etc. It is not physically possible to guard every entrance and limit entry to campus like a primary or secondary school might. We do know the campus will not be returning to 100% of its typical daily population this fall. This is important to consider when thinking about what the campus will look like and how it will operate. There is a plan for outdoor signage to remind the campus community about directions for walking and social distancing. There are Safety Plans in place that detail, with the appropriate signage movement within buildings, classrooms, residences, retail venues, recreation facilities, as well as outdoor circulation spaces. [UBC’s COVID-19 Safety Planning Framework](#) provides details on UBC’s approach to meeting the guidelines put forward by the province and WorkSafeBC and give the community the confidence and comfort necessary to allow them to slowly return to campus for work or study.

“Safe” residential capacity

4. *How will the University determine the “safe” number of students to live on campus in the Fall?*

- We need to be cautious how the word “safe” is used. UBC cannot guarantee safety, but we can mitigate risks. The only number that is 100% safe is zero students, faculty, and staff at UBC.

As previously noted, we have obtained advice from public health authorities indicating, with proper protocols and communication, 100% of our housing inventory is occupiable; however demand is tracking at approximately 50% occupancy.

5. *Is the University considering the impact of increasing the number of students residing on campus on the UNA community, in the context of the Covid 19 social distancing requirements/occupancy restrictions?*

- As part of our planning, we are working closely with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training and with other post-secondary institutions within BC to ensure plans are aligned with health and safety guidelines from the Province of BC, Vancouver Coastal Health and WorkSafeBC. The safety of residents and the broader community is our number one priority.
- In light of the decision to conduct classes primarily online, UBC expects demand for 1st year and upper year / graduate housing to be lower this year; currently trending at approximately 50% occupancy
- UBC knows that many 1st year students will either need to or wish to live on campus this fall and will do everything possible to allow this to occur. UBC will make 1650 single rooms available at Orchard Commons and two buildings at Totem Park residence for 1st year residences, and will react as needed if demand exceeds this capacity. Totem Park and Place Vanier Residences are expected to remain closed during the fall term due to low demand.

- For our upper year and graduate students, 9500 beds will be available as usual for them. Student Housing and Community Services (SHCS) sent 3300 winter session student housing offers between July 9 and 13; yield rate of these offers will be understood by July 25.
- Year Round Housing contract terms is May 1 to April 30. Occupancy of these approximately 5000 spaces peaked at 95%; approximately 30-40 cancellations are being received weekly with current occupancy at 89%. Expected occupancy in September, optimistically, will remain high at 80-85%.
- As UBC plans for new students to arrive on campus, the university will follow Provincial health guidelines on self-isolation. At present it is necessary for anyone coming from out of the country and residing in a shared unit to have a separate space to self-isolate for 14 days before moving into their shared space. SHCS is setting aside self-isolation spaces within residence and has partnered with four off-campus hotels to support self-isolation needs.

Some colleagues worry that the University may be tempted to put “profits first” and will fill the dorms with students who do not need to be on campus (particularly 1st and 2nd year, where most of the classes could be reasonably taught on line) putting the whole community at an additional avoidable risk.

- Although the majority of classes for first year students have been converted to online options, some students (approx. 5,000) have nowhere else to live. They live year-round in 12-month contracts. For these students, UBC is their ‘home’.
- There will be other students that ‘require’ access to campus for a variety of reasons (e.g., students who live in areas with no internet connection, students who are homeless, students who live in abusive households, students who live in distant time zones, students who require support services such as counseling and accessibility services). Therefore, students have been informed about which classes are online and will be informed that “*although your classes may be offered online, if based on personal circumstances it is essential that your live on campus, we will work with you to find suitable housing.*” The notion that allowing students to live on campus is based on “profits first” is unsupported by anything that has been communicated by the university. There are many reasons why students feel it is essential that they live on campus and we will be supportive when those requests emerge.

There are also significant community concerns about the insufficient capacity of the existing support infrastructure (restaurants/cafes/ food stores/pharmacies/banking services/recreation etc.) to safely serve significant numbers of students living in the dorms as well as the permanent residents of the UNA (and those who have to work on campus), in the context of the Covid-triggered requirements/restrictions. This concern is particularly acute among seniors/vulnerable community members who worry they will no longer have reasonable access to services they consider essential without compromising their safety.

- We would be happy to discuss these concerns and explore options such as ensuring leaseholder businesses hold seniors’ hours.

First year students

6. *Is it wise to bring first year students to campus (except in programs such as music where face to face instruction can be absolutely required and reasonably easily implemented, even with the Covid 19 restrictions?)*

- There are no plans to “bring first year students to campus” – students will decide on their own where they need to study. Our role is to support those needs and ensure we are following public health guidelines. First year students always have a choice to live/study from home or live/study on campus or off campus. This remains their choice as long as spaces remain available as per advice from public health authorities. As mentioned, there are many reasons why a student may find it essential that they live on campus or be on campus to study.

7. *Would it make more sense to have the first year (or at least first term) fully on-line and then offer a high quality on campus experience starting in year 2 (or in January)?*

- Students will be notified about the range and limitation of support services and entertainment on campus. The choice to study from Vancouver or somewhere else in the world remains theirs as long as space is available and provided in accordance with public health guidelines. Opinions about students’ level of maturity are subjective and cannot be applied as a policy position. It is unreasonable to assume all first-year students lack maturity.

Concerns focus on the relative lack of maturity of these students and chances that they will struggle with the social distancing rules increasing the risk for the whole community (especially beyond instructional hours); the impact of combined stress of the high school-to-university transition/being away from home for the first time and Covid on students’ mental health; and the high expectations of the “first year experience” that UBC will not be able to deliver on in September 2020 with the Covid 19 rules in place.

Face masks

8. *Will the University require students and those working on campus to wear non-medical masks/face coverings in the Fall?*

- The University will continue to follow guidance and direction provided by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and information available through our Medical Health Officer and Vancouver Coastal Health. At this time there is no mandatory requirement for students and those working on campus to wear non-medical masks/face coverings.

9. *Will the masks be provided to students, staff and faculty?*

- The University will continue to follow guidance and direction provided by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and information available through our Medical Health Officer and Vancouver Coastal Health. At this time, there is no institutional initiative to provide non-medical masks to students, staff and faculty.

10. *Will visitors to campus be required to wear masks?*

- The University will continue to follow guidance and direction provided by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and information available through our Medical Health Officer and Vancouver Coastal Health. At this time there is no mandatory requirement for visitors to wear non-surgical masks when on campus.

Many colleagues have shared with me their concern that the University has not endorsed so far the use of non-medical masks on campus. In the light of Dr. Theresa Tam's recent recommendation that non-medical face masks should be worn whenever social distancing rules may be difficult to ensure (which colleagues believe will for sure be the case on our campus) the current University guidelines posted on the UBC SRS website seem out of date. While everyone I spoke to agrees that social distancing will remain critical and will need to be enforced as much as possible, many colleagues believe that the wearing of masks will be necessary to increase the level of protection to an acceptable level. With the growing number of jurisdictions in Canada and internationally relying on the use of non-medical masks as one of key measures in their infection mitigation efforts, the expectations that students should not present on campus without wearing a mask have now become much stronger. Some colleagues (especially older faculty) explicitly mentioned that they will not be comfortable returning to campus/engage in face-to-face teaching unless the non-medical masks' use is required on campus.

- The University will continue to follow guidance and direction provided by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and information available through our Medical Health Officer and Vancouver Coastal Health
- Non-medical masks are not classed as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cannot be considered as part of workplace safety planning. UBC employees are permitted to use non-medical masks while at work, provided they do not prevent workers from carrying out their duties in a safe way. If using a non-medical mask at work it is important to [understand the limitations and risk associated with them](#).

Moving instruction on-line

11. *Is the University realistic about the quality of on-line instruction given the very limited time to transition the courses?*

- We believe we can support faculty to develop high quality instruction, despite the short runway to prepare. We start from a position of strength:
 - Significant support resources already in place in local and central learning support units including CTLT centrally and Faculty-based units like ArtsISIT and Science's Skylight (and strong uptake of those resources through workshops and consultations)
 - Strong network of expert peers across many departments, through online learning experts and / or Educational Leadership capacity.
 - Agile and scalable programs to add additional capacity to support faculties at the local level e.g. expansion of the Learning Tech Rover program to create 'Academic Continuity Rovers' – undergraduate co-op students as front-line support resources working directly with faculty members, coordinated and trained centrally (through an ongoing Learning Technology Hub program) and deployed through faculty learning support units as needed. 15 new Academic Continuity Rovers have been funded starting May 1 to support Summer Term 1 and 2 course development and delivery as well as planning for the Fall. Commitment to support at least through to the end of December. This is in addition to the existing 13 Learning Technology Rovers.

- Repurposing existing resources to support Faculties to add additional local capacity – ‘block grant’ approach of \$2 million in TLEF funding this year that would normally have been dispersed on the basis of applications by individuals or teams for innovations or enhancements in teaching and learning broadly construed. Most faculties have already received this funding. Very recently, in mid-July, \$3 million in new central funding has been made available for allocation across the Faculties at UBC Vancouver to address specific needs in building and teaching courses online.
- Bridging modules are complete for incoming UBC students in key curricular areas to support student readiness, confidence and resilience entering first year (‘Academic Essentials’). Over 8,000 incoming students have already enrolled. Integrated planning with VPS Orientation planning (Jumpstart). In-kind support for curriculum / LT design from Extended Learning, costs for faculty honoraria for development and undergraduate TA costs for delivery / facilitation (\$150,000)
- Faculties are considering ways to virtualize learning activities that may need additional software other than the enterprise systems we currently have to meet the needs of most lecture-based courses. These discussions are on-going and costs are not yet fully determined, but as an example there may be a need to acquire a license for software that can support virtualization of a wide range of lab-based classes.
- Approximately \$500,000 in AV upgrades underway including Mediasite for Forestry and Law, Video cameras/connections in Sauder, Document Cameras in Science and Sauder, and zoom licensing for all faculty and staff. Ten classrooms across campus have been designated and set up for recording, with the ability to scale up based on demand. A technician from UBC IT Audio Visual will be available for support.

Initial indicators show high Faculty & TA engagement in seeking support, training and consultation:

- More than 100 faculty and staff have contributed to the Guiding Principles for Fall 2020 Course Adaptations, currently posted on the front page of the Keep Teaching website. This document provides guidance and advice for online teaching generally, as well as specific suggestions for large classes, labs, experiential education, and more.
- CTLT’s *‘Remote Teaching Institute’* was originally conceived as a 1-week program starting April 20th. Over eight weeks, the CTLT hosted 78 workshops as part of the RTI, supporting over 2000 registrants.
- The *‘Online Teaching Program’* launched in mid-June. The program consists of a course with self-paced modules in Canvas, online workshops with experiential learning opportunities, and one-on-one consultation support with an educational consultant. Participants may choose to engage with all of these components, or just the ones that meet their needs. As of the week of July 13th, over 800 people have attended workshops.
- CTLT’s *‘TA institute’* held on May 25-29th had +500 TAs register to learn more about support for changed roles of TAs in the online environment. Another TA Institute is scheduled for July 20-24, and will likely be repeated in mid-late August.

12. *Will all faculty (in all Faculties) have the same access to the needed support?*

- CTLT has extended and expanded programs to meet demand, by redirecting staff efforts, and is committed to continuing to do so. Much of that support is described here: <https://academic.ubc.ca/covid-19-faculty-support>. This is in addition to Faculties that are augmenting local learning support resources and staff capacity as well.

13. *Will additional TA positions be funded to support quality of on-line instruction?*

- Yes, a number of faculties have hired GAAs, UTAs, or GTAs to support development of online courses, and some plan to hire additional TAs to support delivery of online courses in the Fall. Several faculties are using TLEF block grants plus their own \$ contributions to support these positions. Very recently, in mid-July, \$3 million in new central funding has been made available for allocation across the Faculties at UBC Vancouver to address specific needs in building and teaching courses online.

14. *Who/when will make the final decision which classes will be on line and which face-to-face?*

- Faculties have already communicated to students on specific programs which programs will take place fully online.
- At the course level, the Faculties have made this decision, based on the specific requirements of their programs and in accordance with public health guidelines. Associate Deans Academic collated these courses for their faculty and created a 'master list' for:
 - o Enrolment services / Facilities planning staff – for room bookings as part of controls on building occupancy, cleaning protocols etc.
 - o Academic advising units – to have full line of sight of which courses are available in person for students who are able to travel to campus / attend in person.
 - o Students

Faculty workloads

15. *If a class is designated as a face-to-face offering but there are students who are not willing/able to attend it in person, will the faculty member be required to teach both face-to-face and on-line? If so, how will this be reflected in his/her workload?*

- No, having a faculty member teach different students face to face and online in one class would not be practical, nor would it be expected. The key principle in our approach to instruction for the fall semester is to create opportunities for equitable participation by students regardless of whether they are remote or on campus. There are many ways to facilitate this, and this flexibility and choice features prominently in workshops and support offered through CTLT (in the form of 'here are options / things to think about' rather than directives.)

16. *Does the University have a consistent policy applicable cross all Faculties/Departments of recognizing the extra time/effort that faculty have to invest to switch to on-line teaching?*

- Workload varies from unit to unit, and many units have existing policies or practices with regard to how to recognize faculty work in both development of online course materials, and for teaching courses online. Faculties and units are also putting in place a variety of additional supports to develop courses and to assist with online teaching. Central support, from the CTLT and re-purposed TELF funding, is also available.

- We are developing a document (*Principles for Developing Online Courses/Adapting Courses for Online Teaching*) that will outline some consistent principles to be considered, recognizing that existing policies and practices do vary. Any perceived inequities should be brought to the attention of the Dean.

Communication

17. *When will the students know if they will be expected/required to come to campus in the Fall?*

- Faculties have communicated to students on specific programs which programs will take place fully online. The inventory of courses that intend to offer a face to face component (referenced above) will also support student decision making in this regard before they must register for courses.
- Communication about housing availability was sent to all students with a housing application in early June. From feedback received from students between July 8 and 13, 950 1st year housing offers and 3350 upper year winter session housing offers were sent; yield rate to be determined by July 25.

18. *Will the community be advised of any on-campus Covid cases?*

- No, Public Health may contact us for assistance in any contact tracing required for COVID cases but to protect the privacy of the individual this information cannot be made public. This is not a UBC policy but that of the provincial health authorities.
- If there was a significant outbreak, as Dr. Bonnie Henry does currently, there would be disclosure of an outbreak and the potential for exposure by Public Health.
- Under B.C.'s Public Health Act, the conditions under which health officials may request or disclose information are limited and specific. How information or records will be collected, used and disclosed is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection Act.

There has been a wide-spread dissatisfaction with the University not disclosing its Covid cases earlier this year. Given that in the case of more recent outbreaks the institutions where they occurred have been named (specific nursing homes, processing plants, etc.) there seems to be a growing expectation that the University will be transparent in the Fall about any on-campus Covid cases.

Potential outbreaks in the Fall/Mitigation measures

19. *Will all out of province students /faculty who will live/work/study on campus be required to self-quarantine for 14 days before arriving on campus? How will this process be managed/enforced?*

- Throughout the current COVID-19 global outbreak UBC has taken direction on infection prevention from Public Health. Currently there is not a requirement to self-quarantine when arriving from out of province. International arrivals are currently required to self-isolate for 14 days and UBC will continue to follow the direction of the Provincial Health Officer. UBC will continue to follow Public Health direction and implement a process if necessary.

20. *Will testing for Covid 19 be available on campus in the Fall? Who will be eligible to be tested/where the testing will take place?*

- Currently all on-site testing is controlled or mandated by Public Health. The University will follow the guidance and direction provided by the applicable authorities. In the event testing is made available, UBC will work with Vancouver Coastal Health to implement procedures.

21. Will the University ensure sufficient supply of the influenza vaccine for everyone who wants to be inoculated in the fall of 2020 (last fall the clinics were cancelled because the University did not secure enough vaccines)?

- UBC Safety and Risk Services and Student Health Services are awaiting direction from Vancouver Coastal Health about the regional fall influenza immunization program. UBC will work with Vancouver Coastal Health to provide immunization opportunities for the campus community.

22. Will international/out of province students/newly hired faculty have health insurance inclusive of the Covid 19 coverage (apparently most travel policies no longer cover Covid)?

- The out-of-country coverage under UBC’s extended health benefits plan with Sun Life continues to provide coverage for medical emergencies while travelling outside Canada. As a result of the travel restrictions announced by the Government, the following is not available under the out-of-country coverage/emergency travel assistance:
 - o Coverage of any expenses during and after a period of quarantine (directed by a doctor or public health official), *unless the member shows symptoms of or has tested positive for COVID-19.*
 - o Any request for extension of OOC coverage beyond the travel duration limit as set out in the contract (UBC travel duration limit is 365 days).
- For emergency medical expenses to be eligible for coverage, members must meet the definitions in our contract for “medical emergency” and “emergency services”. These definitions have not changed:

- Emergency - an acute illness or accidental injury that requires immediate, medically necessary treatment prescribed by a doctor.

- Emergency services - any reasonable medical services or supplies, including advice, treatment, medical procedures or surgery, required as a result of an emergency. When a person has a chronic condition, emergency services do not include treatment provided as part of an established treatment program that existed before they left their home province.

- Sun Life will treat a COVID 19 medical emergency in the same way as any other medical emergency outside Canada.
- All in province coverage under the extended health plan has remained the same with the exception of a 30-day limit for prescription drugs implemented due to COVID 19. Members can still receive reimbursement for their full prescription but not all at once. This restriction may be removed in the coming months as many pharmacies are removing the limit they dispense.
- For new residents to BC who are in the waiting period for MSP (Medical Services Plan) coverage and who are covered under the Sun Life Inpatient Plan, there has been no change to the level of coverage or limitations implemented as a result of COVID 19. The Inpatient plan provides coverage for physician and hospital services during the waiting period when a person is not covered for provincial health care.

Reputational risks

23. *What is the University's QA plan for the on-line instruction and how will it be communicated to the students/faculty and other stakeholders?*

- We are taking a multi-phased approach. All Faculties (as part of the TLEF block grant application) will be expected to articulate QA approaches to online courses and we are working with the Associate Deans Academic to share best practice (e.g. adaptations of the Quality Matters framework). We are also surveying students in ST1 and ST2 courses about their experiences with both the pedagogical aspects of courses and the technology / infrastructure issues they may have to participate. This feedback will shape on-going planning. Finally, the training for faculty and TAs offered through CTLT will support informed design of courses, by promoting effective and evidence-based learning strategies for online.

24. *What is the plan for setting up positive but realistic expectations for the Winter 1 term?*

- All of messaging to new and continuing students have contemplated setting clear expectations about the experience. Our messages focus on the facts based on what is known today. We also let students know that things may change in the near future. We have outlined modifications made to programs and services in light of public health guidance. For example, first-year students were recently notified that, "Although many of their classes will be offered online, if they wish to study on campus (for academic or personal needs) housing accommodations will be made as long as space is available." The message also informs students that, "Traditional programs and services will be curtailed or limited in accordance with public health guidelines." These reminders — availability of programs and services and curtailment based on public health guidelines — are integrated in all messaging about student services. New Student Orientation will occur online. Recreation facilities will be opened, but limited by capacity. Counseling Services will be available online. Clinical services are available via phone and face-to-face. Dining Services will be available, but seating capacity will be limited. Students are being informed of the reality of conditions on campus and allowed to make their own decisions about enrollment and on-campus living.

Several colleagues mentioned (and I tend to agree with them) that managing well students' expectations will be critical to our success. If we over-promise and under-deliver, the reputational damage may impact our enrollment well beyond the coming academic year.