

**Special Meeting of Senate  
Minutes  
Tuesday, February 15, 2022  
12:00 – 1:00 pm  
Alumni Hall and Via Zoom**

**Present:** G. Keefe (Chair), D. Sutton (Secretary to Senate), M. Arfken, R. Bissessur, M. Buote, T. Carroll, E. Côté, R. Dennis, L. Doiron, A. Doyle, N. Etkin, G. Evans, A-M. Fitzgerald, K. Gottschall-Pass, C. Lavoie, M. LeClair, B. Linkletter, J. MacDonald, A. MacKenzie, T. Mady, J. McIntyre, K. Mears, T. Miller, D. Moses, T. Ngo, W. Peters, J. Podger, R. Raiswell, C. Ryan, J. Spears, J. Stewart, B. Stoughtan, A. Trivett, J. VanLeeuwen, B. Waterman, S. Zavala

**Regrets:** A. Braithwaite, D. Coll, W. Montelpare, C. Murray, A. Zinck

**Recorder:** S. O'Connor, M. Arbing

President Keefe called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. and provided opening remarks.

**1. Updated Public Health Measures for Post-Secondary Education**

President Keefe opened by referring to the memo received from the Chief Public Health Office late Friday which was shared with Senators in preparation for this meeting. It allows the return to in-person teaching for classes of less than 100. He added that he understands the transition to in-person may cause some hardships and this may be a concern for international students, in particular.

He added that, to accommodate greater distancing, moderate-sized classes can be moved into larger spaces on campus that are freed up because of the 100 person limit. Many of these spaces have lecture-capture software, however, it is important that faculty know they are not required to deliver content in a number of different modalities (i.e., in-person, online, hybrid).

In the fall of 2021, there were certain cases of medical accommodation where faculty taught online. This can be in effect now (including new faculty members). For pedagogical merit exemptions (as discussed in past meetings) the application deadline was February 11, 2022. Some of those have already been granted and we will extend that deadline for applications to continue online to Thursday, February 17, 2022, at noon.

**MOTION: (K. Gottschall-Pass/M. LeClair) that in accordance with the updated winter 2022 Public Health Measures for PEI Post-Secondary Education, teaching and learning for the winter 2022 semester resume in-person for classes of 100 students or less on February 28, 2022.**

**In keeping with a student-focused teaching model and in line with dynamic CPHO guidance there may be extensions including:**

- **Extensions to online teaching for individual courses beyond February 27, based on medical accommodation or pedagogical principles.**

**(K. Mears, B. Waterman voted against; L. Doiron abstained.) CARRIED.**

M. LeClair stated that, while students are empathetic to the anxieties that students and professors may feel from this motion, the Student Union is very much in support of the motion. The UPEI Student Union has reached out to the campus mental health coordinator to show students mental health tools available on campus.

Vice President Academic and Research added that moving classes back to in-person will position UPEI to be in the same company as many other institutions in our region. She also mentioned that there would be 28 larger classes required to remain online.

B. Linkletter indicated support for returning to in person teaching and raised concerns about larger classes remaining online and our duty to accommodate students with respect to the delivery mode advertised. He questioned whether there is an appeal process for refunds for these courses.

President Keefe responded that a process is in place for this and that procedures are being interpreted liberally.

A. Trivett also supported return to in-person teaching and commented that he has heard concerns from faculty with regards to long-term ventilation renovations not being complete until mid-March. He also raised concerns regarding technology limitations.

L. Doiron voiced concern regarding international students who will not be able to be on-campus. The President and VP Academic and Research agreed to have a conversation with Mathematics & Computational Science faculty members regarding this.

A. MacKenzie voiced his approval of the motion. Feedback that they have received from mental health professionals indicates that one aspect to improving mental health of students is return to more routine in their day.

K. Mears asked that the application for medical/pedagogical accommodations be easily accessible.

N. Etkin asked a question on behalf of a guest: For classes over 100, is it possible to have some students in-person and stream online for the rest of the class? The president and VP Academic and Research commented that a process would have to be put in place for such a scenario to work. And in response to M. Buote's question regarding the use of hybrid technology, President Keefe indicated that while faculty can use hybrid delivery, it is not a requirement.

J. Stewart thanked the Senate for this motion deeming it a benefit to student mental health.

There were a number of questions regarding mandatory masks for professors. The president and VP Academic and Research agreed to provide clarification on this.

B. Waterman commented that a poll of his students showed 75-80% do not wish to return to in-person classes.

M. LeClair and A. MacKenzie reported that, in the UPEISU's polling of students, many of those who indicated a preference not to return to class cited non-COVID-19 concerns, such as work schedules/convenience.

B. Linkletter emphasized the importance of being in-person to the academic community.

L. Doiron reiterated that if a student cannot find a place to live, it is a serious issue.

N. Etkin asked if there are accommodations available in our residences, to which the president responded that administration can work with residence services on this.

All voted in favour of the motion with the exceptions noted above.

**2. Adjournment**

**Meeting adjourned at 12:51 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna Sutton  
Secretary of Senate