

George Brown College – Academic Policies and Guidelines

A Statement of Principles and Procedures Regarding Academic Issues During and Following A Disruption of Academic Programming – Page 1

Governing Principles

Academic Integrity

During and following any disruption of academic programming, the primary obligation of the College – to students, to employers and to the community – is to ensure the academic integrity of all programs. The College must ensure that students meet all the essential outcomes of any given program of studies.

Outcomes-based Learning

Student success is measured in terms of essential outcomes achieved by the student, not by the amount of material covered. The essential outcomes are defined in the program standards set by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and described in the curriculum (course) outline for each course.

Fairness to Students

During a disruption of academic programming, students who do not participate in academic activities because (a) they are unable to do so owing to the disruption or (b) they choose not to participate in campus activities due to a strike or a lock-out, are entitled to immunity from penalty and to reasonable accommodation.

Reasonable accommodation includes alternative access to materials that might have been covered in their absence, extensions of deadlines, alternative procedures for evaluation, appropriate opportunities for make-up and remediation and such other remedies as the Office of Academic Excellence and Student Success deems necessary and consistent with the principle of academic integrity. Such remedies shall not relieve the student of the responsibility of meeting the essential outcomes of his/her current semester nor of reasonable independent study and practice to ensure that learning prior to the disruption is not lost.

Student Success

During a disruption of academic programming, the College will do everything it can to maximize support for student learning and achievement of program outcomes.

Once the disruption is over, academic managers will work closely with faculty to develop specific plans for each course that will enable students to complete course requirements and demonstrate acquisition of the essential outcomes in a timely manner. Where the academic manager and the faculty are not able to come to an agreement on the plans for completing the semester the Vice-President Academic Excellence and Student Success will make the final decision.

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Timely Information

Students, faculty and staff have a right to be informed in a timely manner of rescheduled academic activities and procedures to address any academic consequences of the disruption.

Procedures

The goal of the procedures described here is to provide students with every reasonable opportunity to make up for missed learning and to demonstrate that they have achieved the essential outcomes for their semester. Remedies should include (a) giving full value to outcomes already achieved and demonstrated, (b) providing intensive support to prepare for college or external examinations and (c) where necessary, providing remediation and opportunities for make-up or supplementary examinations.

Student Success Strategies

During a disruption of academic programming, the College will put as many mechanisms in place as possible to support student learning. These mechanisms may include tutorial sessions, workshops on self-directed learning, portfolio development workshops, distribution of relevant learning materials, facilitation of peer tutoring and study groups, access to electronic learning systems, supervised access to labs and clinics and other related activities. Where students are engaged in such activities on College premises, academic managers will ensure that qualified supervisors are present to ensure the safety of the students and the appropriate use of college property.

While the College encourages students to take advantage of these supports, it is understood that (a) participation is not mandatory in any session or activity, (b) no new material will be taught and (c) no marks will be assigned for work done during these sessions.

Following a disruption of academic programming, faculty members will work with their respective Chair to agree on any learning activities or curriculum adjustments required to ensure students can meet the essential outcomes for their semester.

Such activities could include all or some of the following:

- classroom teaching
- tutorial sessions
- facilitated study groups
- portfolio development workshops
- revised deadlines
- extended lab or clinical hours where they can be accommodated
- electronic learning activities and
- other related activities.

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Where needed, the Office of Academic Excellence and Student Success can provide advice and support.

Alternative Methods for Evaluation

Faculty members, with approval from their Chair or Director, will also adjust evaluation methods as appropriate in order to assign students a final mark in each of their courses in a timely manner.

Adjusted methods, where required, may include all or some of the following:

- final grades based on work already completed
- a special written or field assignment
- a portfolio of student work
- a challenge exam
- a comprehensive exam (covering outcomes for one or more courses)
- take-home exams
- oral exams
- make-up exams
- supplementary exams
- recognition of learning outcomes acquired through volunteer or work activities during the labour disruption
- an on-line assignment or test
- a proctored test completed at a remote location.

Where needed, the Office of Academic Excellence and Student Success can provide advice and support.

Faculty members and Chairs will develop individual solutions for students who have prior commitments related to work, travel or other extenuating circumstances. Such solutions will be consistent with the principles stated above.

Note that the College's normal policy and procedures for appeal apply and students may have recourse to them where they feel there is merit.

Grading

Faculty members are responsible for assigning grades to their students. Following a disruption of academic programming, faculty members may modify their published evaluation procedure as per the recommendations above; this may in turn cause a change to the assignment of grades. Wherever possible, the College's standard grading procedures as approved by the Registrar's Office will be used. However two alternate options maybe considered. Both require permission of the Dean before they are implemented.

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1. *Pass/Fail* option may be used in limited cases where faculty members have sufficient evidence that students have/have not met the essential outcomes, but they do not have sufficient information to use the standard grading values.
2. *Aegrotat* standing may be used in exceptional cases (a) where students, for good reason, have not been able to complete the work required for evaluation and (b) where the faculty member is confident that the students are sufficiently prepared to proceed to graduation or to the next level of study.
3. *Standing Deferred* may be used if outcomes have to be postponed to a subsequent semester. This would be used where students will not have the opportunity to learn critical material and cannot reasonably do so in the time available.