



Office of the President

St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864 8212 Fax: 709 864 2059
president@mun.ca www.mun.ca

January 28, 2022

Dr. Josh Lepawsky, President
MUNFA

Email: munfa.pres@mun.ca

Dear Dr. Lepawsky,

Re: Ongoing Concerns with MUNL's Pandemic Response

Thank you for your letter of Wednesday, January 26, 2022, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your concerns. I will address the points as presented in your correspondence:

1. Any individuals who are immunocompromised or have other health-related concerns should access the [Workplace Accommodation Policy](#) and submit their request. We are working diligently to process these requests and recognize that individuals may have to wait to see their health care provider to gather supporting documentation. Pending receipt of the supporting documentation, ASMs will be permitted to continue teaching remotely. We have been successful in providing workplace accommodations thus facilitating ASMs delivering their courses on campus.
2. We are appreciative of the commitment from faculty as we work through the pandemic. Academic staff are not required to deliver equivalent course experiences in multiple modalities and faculty are best positioned to determine how to assist students most judiciously. Making slides prepared for class available to students, audio recording portions of lectures, asking if students would volunteer to take notes and make them available to others are some measures that could be considered to assist students. To support instructors in the return to class next week, CITL has drafted (Insert Link) [a resource on addressing informal accommodation requests](#) from students experiencing short-term absences.

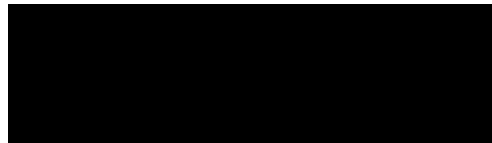
We have suggested students contact Administrative Heads if accommodations are not readily identifiable as the Head may be able to offer additional suggestions to determine an outcome acceptable to the faculty member that meets a student's needs.

3. We certainly understand that there is a level of anxiety surrounding Memorial's return to campus next week. I can assure you that our [campus recovery plan](#) for return to campus in the fall semester was approved by Public Health and our decision to return to campus on January 31, 2022, was made in consultation with Public Health. As a post-secondary institution, Memorial University is deemed to be essential with respect to Public Health.
4. In the event that instructors contract COVID-19 and/or develop symptoms, it is important to regularly check Public Health direction regarding isolation. For example, if an individual spent time with someone with COVID-19 and both were wearing masks, the individual would not be considered a close contact. In order to fully understand the current advice regarding isolation protocols consulting the [Government of Newfoundland and Labrador flowchart](#) is recommended for reference. It is important to note that academic units have instructional continuity plans.

5. Individual instructors will be provided with N95 masks upon request. We have previously advised the university community that masks are available at locations throughout campus. Instructors should contact their Head to request an N95 mask. I have included references to our advice and availability of masks; [Frequently Asked Questions | COVID-19 | Memorial University of Newfoundland \(mun.ca\)](#), <https://www.facebook.com/MemorialUniversity/photos/a.468941663148380/6354472324595255/>, <https://www.mun.ca/covid19/faqs/frequently-asked-questions.php#Masks> As well, we have provided information regarding teaching with a mask, https://citl.mun.ca/TeachingSupport/instructionalcontinuity/Teaching_with_a_Mask.pdf
6. As previously indicated, a ventilation audit has been ongoing and I am pleased to say that the results are [now available online](#). If there is a continued requirement for the working group, we will give further consideration to your request to participate.

Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador takes guidance from health professionals of our province and will continue to stay in close contact with them during the remainder of the semester. We are working closely with our colleagues in Atlantic Canada and note that the majority of Atlantic Canadian Universities are returning to campus on January 31 as well, or have already returned to campus. We continue to monitor the situation daily.

Sincerely,



Vianne Timmons, OC, Ph.D.
President and Vice-Chancellor

- c. Dr. Florentine Strzelczyk, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Mr. Greg McDougall, Chief Risk Officer
Mr. Geoff Williams, Director, Faculty Relations