

Special Meeting of Senate
Senate Chamber
Room E3-262 Engineering Building
MONDAY, March 16, 2020
9:00 a.m.

A G E N D A

I APPROVAL AUTHORITY IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION


Page 2

II ADJOURNMENT

Please call regrets to 204-474-6892 or send to shannon.coyston@umanitoba.ca.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 12, 2020
TO: Members, Senate
FROM: Jeff M. Leclerc, University Secretary 
SUBJECT: Approval Authority in an Emergency Situation

The University has been undertaking planning activities in order to ensure we are prepared to address the challenges of emergency situations such as the COVID-19 virus. One area that needs to be addressed is how key academic decisions would be made in such an emergency, such as if large parts of the University were shut down or public meetings are not safe or advisable.

Senate can delegate authority to a smaller group or individual to make academic decisions in an emergency. Having the ability to do so is important because, depending on the nature and severity of any given emergency, some decisions would have to be made quickly. Such decisions might include extending or modifying the academic schedule or granting academic accommodations for students in response to a particular emergency.

The terms of reference of the Senate Executive Committee provide that the Committee has the power "to deal with contingencies that arise between meetings of Senate," and Senate has delegated authority to the Senate Executive Committee in the past, including during the H1N1 pandemic, in 2009, and during labour disruptions.

In consultation with the President, the Vice-Presidents, and the Chair of the Academic Sub-Committee of the COVID-19 Advisory Committee, it is proposed that Senate authorize the Senate Executive Committee to make decisions in an emergency situation, as declared by the President. Senate is very large, with over 130 voting members. Having emergency powers delegated to the Executive Committee would enable a conference call meeting of committee members or the convening of an urgent meeting, if required. The proposed delegation of authority would be the following:

In the event of an emergency, as declared by the President, Senate authorizes the Senate Executive Committee to act for Senate in determining academic matters which require urgent resolution. Should the nature of the emergency warrant it, the authority to make decisions may be delegated by Senate Executive to the

Provost and Vice-President (Academic) These matters include, but are not limited to:

- a) Revisions to the academic schedule and the delay of the exam period and changes to other dates and deadlines;***
- b) The temporary modification or suspension of academic policies, such as the Final Examinations and Final Grades Policy, the Responsibility of Academic Staff to Students Policy, in response to the emergency;***
- c) Changes to assessment requirements;***
- d) Completion of course requirements;***
- e) Changes of requirements of continuing awards;***
- f) Approving academic accommodations for students affected by the emergency.***

Decisions made under this delegated authority should be confined to dealing with specific issues related to the emergency for the period of the emergency and for the period immediately after the emergency. Care must be taken to avoid making decisions that may have ongoing implications for the delivery of academic programs. Normal approval channels shall be restored by the President as soon as it is permissible and safe to do so. The Senate Executive Committee shall report any actions taken to Senate both by email and at the subsequent meeting of Senate following an emergency situation.