

Dear Faculty Members,

I know there will be much to navigate as you transition back into teaching, research, and service and that you will need to carefully prioritize your time and efforts through the initial days and weeks of your return to work. Timely access to information will be an important part of your ability to do so. In an attempt to minimize the number of emails you receive upon your return, please find below an overview of themed returned to work information that I hope will be helpful.

This email has also been posted at the Bargaining website (from the University's March 21 blog post), so that you can return to it at any time.

Access

Access to all electronic systems (email, Moodle, Bridge, etc.) is in the process of being reinstated, as is access to physical campus spaces and university assets. This process will take a number of hours and will be completed over the course of this evening (March 21, 2022). We do not anticipate any problems, but should you encounter any difficulties logging into your computer or accessing services on your computer please begin by restarting the computer. If this does not help, please contact the ITS Solutions Centre (403-329-2490, <https://its-help.uleth.ca> or help@uleth.ca).

Human Resources

Reinstatement of all salary, university paid benefits, and pension plan contributions and service is effective on the official return to work date. Human Resources and Financial Services will be working within the first day to reinstate approval queues for operating funds, payroll and research accounts. We anticipate a smooth transition, and no action is necessary from you, but please contact Human Resources at human.resources@uleth.ca if you become aware of any difficulties.

Teaching & Supervision

All teaching, instruction and supervision at the undergraduate and graduate level will resume on Wednesday, March 23, as per the days of the week and time of day provided in the academic timetable.

Please see the attached document, titled ***Faculty Information for Return to Teaching and Learning***. It contains important information about teaching related matters negotiated through the Return to Work Protocol, as well as additional considerations in support of students.

A return to learning date of March 23, 2022, has been communicated to students and faculty, but recognizing a commitment to collegial governance, the amended academic schedule for completion of the term will be addressed through GFC processes, as will any flexibility that may be afforded with respect to course grading. Members of GFC Executive and GFC are being contacted immediately once the reinstatement of electronic access is complete later this evening, and it is hoped these members will make themselves available for meetings scheduled on very short notice – such that we can provide timely and clear communication to students and faculty about timelines for completion of the Spring 2022 semester.

Sessional or Term Appointment with Contract End Date

If you are a sessional or term appointment, and adjustments to the academic schedule extend the term beyond your contract end date, it is our hope you will be available to complete the course given the flexibility provided through a number of the Return to Work Protocols (please see the attached document titled ***Faculty Information for Return to Teaching and Learning***). Beyond your contract end date, you will be paid on a per day prorated basis to the last day on which duties are expected of you in accordance with Article 11.03.1.c. If you are impacted your Dean's Office will be in touch with you in the coming days to discuss this matter with you directly.

Teaching Assistants

Should the re-arrangement of the academic schedule involve the addition of new teaching or examination days, the Board will make reasonable efforts (and subject to restrictions in other collective agreements) to continue providing the services of Teaching Assistants in any course where they were provided prior to the strike/lockout.

Until April 30th, supervisors should assign work to GAs as normal, keeping in mind the restrictions of the ULGSA Collective Agreement. HR and the SGS are working on a process in consultation with the ULGSA to determine grad student availability and provide GA support for courses should GA hours be required beyond that date.

Research

While many external deadlines and reporting schedules have been extended by funding agencies and partners, there may be some that require your immediate attention. And with summer rapidly approaching, internal competitions for student fellowships and research experiences are well underway. The internal deadlines for research funds and awards, such as the ULTF (travel fund) and CFI JELF expressions of interest have been extended to May 2. Applications to the Strategic Opportunities Fund are now due June 1. Many of you will also be pleased to see Mitacs GRI intern matches in your inboxes. More information about your matches is available at: <https://globalink.mitacs.ca/#/>. Research-related deadlines will be updated on uLethbridge webpages, so please check online for more information.

See the section below for information on research employees, including student employees.

Payment of Research Employees and Employees Supervised by UFLA Members

Within 10 days of the official return to work, and subject to the conditions of the Tri-Council Agency Guide on Financial Administration (TAGFA), there will be a return to normal processes with respect to the payment of research employees (including research and student employees) supervised by ULFA members. Human Resources will be in touch with you should you have such employees and will work with you on a post-strike review, for retroactive approval, of any hours and leaves (ie. sick leave, vacation leave where applicable) that were not approved by you directly (such that research employees could have uninterrupted pay throughout the strike). The negotiated Return to Work Protocol document provides direction should any concerns arise in this process.

Research Expenses

Financial Services may be in touch with you regarding student expense claims, lab supplies, or other research expenses incurred for a post-strike review and retroactive approval. The documents will be sent to you for review, approval and in some instances identification of applicable FOAP. The transactions will require a response by March 31, 2022 given year-end financial deadlines.

Graduate Studies Milestones & Admissions

The (re)scheduling of graduate student program milestones (comprehensive exams, oral defenses, etc.) will resume on the official return to work date. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) will be prioritizing support for students whose events (e.g. defences or other examinations) had to be rescheduled. These students will be receiving email from the graduate administrative staff to start that process.

If students were anticipating submitting a request for defence form or forms for other program requirements/milestones (e.g., transfer examination, thesis proposal defence, etc.) they should work through the process for getting approval and signatures from their examination committee as normal. SGS will be accommodating expedited timelines for scheduling defences and comprehensive examinations (with the support of the examination committee).

Students have been reassured that SGS will be flexible with the various deadlines and timelines that normally apply, and SGS will address any concerns on a case-by-case basis.

Admissions processes for thesis-based programs will begin as soon as possible. Offers of admission for these programs will be slightly delayed from normal timelines but SGS will be working with the Program Committees to get these out in early April. Discussions are ongoing about the possibility of extending upcoming admission deadlines (in particular the May 1 deadline).

If there are questions about other aspects of graduate programs we ask that you contact the relevant [Graduate Program Office](#).

Salary, Tenure, and Promotion Processes

All Academic Staff Collective Agreement timelines (excluding Schedule A) have been extended by the duration of the number of days of the labour disruption (40 days), including all deadlines/timelines related to ongoing salary, tenure and promotion processes. In the coming weeks, Deans' Offices will be working to communicate new timelines, reschedule hearings, etc. Should you have questions about your situation please contact your respective Dean's Office.

Library

Should you have library materials that became overdue during the work stoppage, these materials will now be due 14 days after ratification of the new collective agreement. You will not be subject to any fines accrued during the strike/lockout. No action is necessary on your part. You can review the status of your current loans by accessing your Library account at <https://darius.uleth.ca/patroninfo~S5/>. Should you have questions, please contact jesse.malinsky@uleth.ca.

Parking

ULFA Members who purchased annual parking passes will not have any payroll deduction for the months of March and April. This adjustment will be made automatically, so no action is necessary from you. If you have any questions or encounter a problem, please contact parking@uleth.ca.

Other

I understand that this email, and the attached document, do not represent an exhaustive list of all the matters that may be important to you as you transition back to work and will not answer all your questions. Do not hesitate to reach out to the dedicated staff in offices across campus who work to support teaching, research, and learning. Please be aware that they are likely to be receiving many emails and requests in the coming days, as academic staff return and understandably seek support, and so it may take them some time to respond. I ask that you show them patience.

The negotiated Return to Work Protocol document provides additional information and is available [here](#).

Finally, please know that the Provost's Office is also here to support you. If you are unsure about where to direct a particular question or concern please contact Michelle and/or me.

Sincerely,

Erasmus Okine, PhD., PAS, FICN
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Faculty Information for Return to Teaching and Learning March 21, 2022

The information below reflects information agreed upon as part of the negotiated Return to Work (RTW) Protocols, as well as policy information and suggestions you might consider as we all work to support students through the completion of the Spring 2022 term.

Spring 2022 Relaunch

Teaching, instruction, and supervising at the graduate and undergraduate level will resume on Wednesday, March 23 (24 hours after the official return to work date). (RTW #23)

It is understood that start dates for practica, internships, clinical placements, co-ops etc. may vary according to the type of placement. Instructors and Deans' Offices will work with participating students to reinstate experiential activities as quickly as possible after the start date.

A return to learning date of March 23, 2022, has been communicated to students and faculty, but recognizing a commitment to collegial governance, the amended academic schedule for completion of the term will be addressed through GFC processes, as will any flexibility that may be afforded with respect to course grading. Members of GFC Executive and GFC are being contacted immediately once the reinstatement of electronic access is complete later this evening, and it is hoped these members will make themselves available for meetings scheduled on very short notice – such that we can provide timely and clear communication to students and faculty about timelines for completion of the Spring 2022 semester.

Online vs In-person Learning

Teaching and instruction which resumes will align with the assurances made to students (RTW #24) in response to the timing of the strike that:

- Classes taught online before the strike will continue online for the remainder of this semester. Experiential courses that were already being delivered in-person prior to job action will be permitted to continue to do so at the conclusion of the strike, with special arrangements made by instructors for students who cannot return to Lethbridge so the students are not disadvantaged.
- Exams/evaluations for courses that were taught wholly online before the strike will be held online (there can be no requirement for in-person attendance).
- The Testing Centre will be open only for courses that were being taught in-person prior to the strike. A reasonable effort will be made to maintain prior arrangements.

Attendance/Expectations of Students During First 72 hours

No exams, assignments, or course evaluation components will be held or called due during the first 72 hours after the official return to work date. Where a course is permitted to continue with in-person learning, any student who resides outside of Lethbridge will be afforded flexibility by ULFA members with respect to in-person attendance for the first 72 hours after the official return to work date. (RTW #25)

Course Outline updates

Necessarily, original course outlines will be updated because of the strike and new dates and evaluation parameters will be permitted. To reduce confusion for students and instructors, we will adhere to existing policies where possible. However, flexibility will be allowed with respect to the *Assessment of Student Learning Policy* (concerning alteration of class schedules, course outlines, exams, tests, or any other attempt to facilitate completion of the academic year). As noted in the policy, changes made in emergent circumstances must not disadvantage students (Section 1.2.10). (RTW #29)

Relatedly, we encourage you to consult students in your course and as appropriate and possible incorporate student input and to provide updated course outline information as soon as possible after the return to classes. Where possible, we encourage some flexibility on how students can meet the core learning goals and requirements of the course, understanding that students will be balancing many matters (employment, housing, visas) as they endeavor to complete the semester on new timelines. To this end, we urge at the specific request of the ULSU faculty to consider not linking grades to attendance beyond April 30, 2022, except where necessary to meet practica or internship hours.

Practica, Internships, Clinical placements, Co-ops, External Course Projects, etc.

The start dates for practica, internships, clinical placements, co-ops etc. may vary according to the type of placement. Instructors are asked to work closely with your respective Dean's Office and external partners to support reinitiating these experiences for students in as timely a way as possible.

The feasibility of continuing with course projects with external organizations should be re-assessed in consultation with both the organizations and students.

Moodle

Your Moodle course will not have been impacted by the job action, and should appear to you and to students as it did when you last had access. Some instructors made their course invisible prior to the strike, and so we remind you to ensure that your course is now set to visible for students.

Teaching Centre

The Teaching Centre is here and ready to support all of your teaching needs. The quickest way to get help is to submit your help requests to teachingsupport@uleth.ca.

Testing Centre

The Testing Centre will be open only for courses that were being taught in-person prior to the strike. A reasonable effort will be made to maintain prior arrangements (RTW #24). To book your exam/quiz in the Testing Centre please contact the Teaching Centre @ teachingsupport@uleth.ca or fill out an exam booking request form @ <http://www.moodleanswers.com/index.php/contact-exam-booking-request>.

Accommodated Learning Centre

Exam supervision within the Accommodated Learning Centre will be open only for courses that were being taught in-person prior to the strike. A reasonable effort will be made to maintain prior

arrangements. Please provide accommodated students with information on upcoming exams, quizzes or timed assignments as soon as is possible. To successfully book exams, students will require date, time, duration and format/location (Moodle, paper as well as on campus, at home, etc.) If requested, please email paper exams as soon as they are available to exam.accommodations@uleth.ca. For questions or concerns, please contact dawn.vickers@uleth.ca.

Final exams and assignments

The academic schedule will be immediately addressed through GFC processes upon the return to work, such that an amended academic schedule can be provided. It may be that timelines for the term and the availability of a final exam period are impacted, and that this may impact the choices you make with respect to course assessments. More information will be provided as soon as the GFC process concludes.

Teaching Assistants

Should the re-arrangement of the academic schedule involve the addition of new teaching or examination days, the Board will make reasonable efforts (and subject to restrictions in other collective agreements) to continue providing the services of Teaching Assistants in any course where they were provided prior to the strike/lockout. (RTW #26)

Until April 30th, supervisors should assign work to GAs as normal, keeping in mind the restrictions of the ULGSA Collective Agreement. HR and the SGS are working on a process in consultation with the ULGSA to determine grad student availability and provide GA support for courses should GA hours be required beyond that date.

Incomplete Grades

As Faculty and Deans' Offices work with students to support them in completing the spring term, it is understood that greater flexibility is likely to be necessary. As a result, the 'Incomplete' designation may be used more broadly than usual, with the approval of both the instructor and the Dean's office. In considering this option, instructors should be cognizant of graduation considerations or external requirements within experiential components that may impact or preclude decisions regarding the use of incomplete grades.

Graduate program milestones

The (re)scheduling of graduate student program milestones (comprehensive exams, oral defenses, etc.) will resume on the official return to work date (RTW #30). The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) will be prioritizing support for students whose events (e.g. defences or other examinations) had to be rescheduled. These students will be receiving email from the graduate administrative staff to start that process.

If students were anticipating submitting a request for defence form or forms for other program requirements/milestones (e.g., transfer examination, thesis proposal defence, etc.) they should work through the process for getting approval and signatures from their examination committee as normal. SGS will be accommodating expedited timelines for scheduling defences and comprehensive examinations (with the support of the examination committee).

Students have been reassured that SGS will be flexible with the various deadlines and timelines that normally apply, and SGS will address any concerns on a case by case basis.

Course withdrawal

Once the amended academic schedule is addressed through GFC, a revised course withdrawal date will be identified and will correspond, as is consistent with normal practice, with the last date of the amended spring term.

Summer 2022 terms

The summer terms will continue, and registration will begin following the end of the strike. The new term dates will be communicated as quickly as possible after GFC has addressed an amended academic schedule.

Student Mental Health

If students are looking for mental health support, [Counselling Services](#) has **emergency appointments every day should a student be in crisis**. Additionally, they offer one-to-one counselling and a variety of [mental health resources](#). Students can contact counselling.services@uleth.ca or 403-317-2845 for an appointment. They can also be directed to the [mental health webinar](#).