



Memorandum

To: Members of the Faculty of Science

From: Joe Apaloo, Dean of Science

Date: July 21, 2023

RE: Responsibilities, Academic Regulations and Guidelines
for the **2023-2024 Academic Year**

What follows is a summary of some important academic regulations and guidelines. For further elaboration on any of these items, please consult the current **Collective Agreement** or the online **Academic Calendar**.

As a reminder, and as communicated to Faculty by the AVP's office in a memo dated June 12, 2023, the last week of classes in the Fall term of the 2023-24 academic year will have a unique teaching schedule. Specifically, on Monday, December 4, regularly scheduled classes will occur. On Tuesday, December 5, the Monday schedule of classes and labs will be offered again. The normal "Tuesday schedule" of classes and labs will not be offered on December 5. On Wednesday, December 6, the normal Friday schedule of classes and labs will be offered. No Wednesday classes or labs will take place. Please be sure to highlight this information in your course syllabi and draw your students' attention to this scheduling at the start and towards the end of the term.

1. **ABSENCE OF FACULTY MEMBER**: You are responsible for holding classes and conducting laboratories at all scheduled times for those courses which you have been assigned. If you are ill or away from the University for a good reason, you must seek permission from the Chair before cancelling classes, with the exception of emergencies. Regardless of the circumstances, the Chair must be informed as soon as possible whenever a class (or lab or tutorial) will be or has been cancelled. Faculty members must email their classes with notification of the cancellation, in advance, wherever possible. Extended absences (more than two days) must be arranged beforehand with the Department Chair and the Dean, and arrangements may need to be made for a temporary substitute.
2. **STUDENT/OFFICE HOURS FOR FACULTY MEMBERS**: Faculty shall be available for consultation with students for at least two hours per week for each three-hour credit course to a required maximum of six hours per week at stated times between 8:15 am and 5:15 pm Monday through Friday. These hours shall be spread over a minimum of three workdays. Office hours should be posted on your course Moodle site and on your office door.
3. **COURSE SYLLABI**: On the first day of classes students must be provided with a course syllabus detailing the material to be covered, the due dates of major assignments, and the grading scheme to be used in the course. **Faculty members are strongly encouraged to provide their syllabi through Moodle and refrain from distributing hard copies.** Major assignments' due dates must be adhered to, and for

the sake of equity, extensions granted only for compelling reasons. It is important that the grading scheme identified for the students at the beginning of the course not be arbitrarily changed. Each year a number of grade reviews/appeals use the fact that the instructor changed the grading scheme as the basis for their appeal.

Faculty members shall provide the Department Chair, Program Coordinator or School Director with electronic course syllabi, including methods of instruction and forms of evaluation, including examination and assignment due dates, no later than one (1) week **before** the start of courses in the Academic Term in which the course is being offered. The Chair/Coordinator/Director shall review the course syllabi for adherence to academic regulations and departmental norms prior to the start of classes each term. It is expected that the course Syllabus Template, and if applicable the Supplementary Statements, approved for the Faculty of Science will be used in preparing course syllabi for submission to Chairs/Coordinators/Director. Copies of the approved course syllabi shall be forwarded to the Dean.

Faculty members are encouraged to add information in their course syllabi regarding copyright and intellectual property of their course materials. StFX has developed the following draft language for inclusion where appropriate.

These course materials are designed for use in Course XXX at StFX University and are the property of the instructor, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Copying this material for distribution, online posting, or selling of this material to third parties without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright Law and is strictly prohibited.

Faculty members are also encouraged to add a line in all their course syllabi informing students that they are responsible for understanding and adhering to all academic regulations that are outlined in Chapter 3 of the academic calendar.

At the May 9, 2023, Senate meeting the following motion was passed: Each course syllabus must contain a clear statement of the acceptable use of artificial intelligence aids for each given assignment, essay, assessment, examination, etc. which is graded for evaluative purposes so that the student is aware of the requirements. If no such statement is offered, then it will be understood that artificial intelligence aids are not permitted.

4. **LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:** StFX uses Moodle as its official course Learning Management System (LMS). All faculty members are strongly encouraged to use Moodle to manage course resources including the posting of course syllabi, lecture materials, assignment instructions, and announcements. Moodle has the capacity to manage course assignments.
5. **STATEMENT ON EQUITABLE LEARNING:** Creating an inclusive classroom environment contributes to effective learning, so course instructors may wish to consider including a statement in their syllabi about the importance of making our classrooms respectful and equitable. Including a statement like the one below in your course syllabus signals to your class that you are committed to creating a safe and equitable learning environment for all students.

“Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe, and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space – both real and virtual – that fosters and

promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination, and respect for diversity”.

Please feel free to contact the Human Rights and Equity Advisor, Megan Fogarty if you have questions or concerns about equity in the classroom or in the StFX Community in general. Megan can be contacted by email at mfogarty@stfx.ca or by telephone at 902-867-5306.

6. **MID-TERM GRADES:** October and February mid-term grades, accounting for at least 20% of a final grade, must be entered in Banner Self-service; October grades for full year courses must be entered in Moodle or communicated to students in a confidential manner at least one week prior to the deadline for dropping courses without academic penalty. For courses in which such a graded assessment is not practical, the instructor(s) must obtain an exception from the Dean. **First term mid-term grades** must be entered in Banner for all courses at all levels by **October 25, 2023**. **Second term midterm grades** must be entered in Banner for all courses at all levels by **March 1, 2024**.
7. **COURSE DROP DATES:** The drop date for first-term, three-credit courses is **November 1, 2023**. The last day to drop full year courses is **January 15, 2024**. The last day to drop second-term, three-credit courses is **March 8, 2024**. A course discontinued but not dropped is treated as a failure and will affect a student's end-of-year average. **In such cases, you will be requested to provide a grade-to-date indicating what the student has earned in the course up to that point.** Please inform students who are considering dropping your course about drop dates, and the procedure to be followed in dropping a course, **including the necessity to drop the course online through Banner. It is important to impress upon students that permission to drop or change a course after the course change deadline can only be granted by the Dean's office and that informing the professor, or merely ceasing to attend class is not sufficient. You should never tell a student that they can or should drop a course after the course drop deadline.**
8. **DUPLICATION OF PRINTED COURSE MATERIAL:** It is strongly recommended that course material be posted on Moodle. **For information in regard to copyrights or the StFX Copyright Policies, please visit <https://www.mystfx.ca/library/campus-copyright>** Questions can be directed to copyright@stfx.ca.

You are encouraged to post any necessary class materials on the course Moodle page and inform students via a Moodle announcement that materials are available for them to download and bring to class.
9. **STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND ATTENDANCE:** Please report any students who are repeatedly delinquent in assignments or attendance from in-person or online classes or laboratories to Rita Myatt of the Office of the Assistant Vice-President, Academic Affairs at ada@stfx.ca. This is particularly important for first year students. You should do this even if you think the student has dropped the course, but you have not been notified of it. Faculty members are required to report any student who has, without excuse, missed three or more hours of class instruction. This may be done by sending an email to Rita Myatt at ada@stfx.ca with the student's name, ID number, course and course number. The Assistant Vice-President, Academic Affairs' Office will send a letter of warning to the student requiring them to meet with the Faculty member. Please continue to report students who continue to miss class. Prompt responses in this area can often help improve a student's performance.

Faculty are reminded that students who show any symptoms associated with flu-like illnesses will be expected to remain at home and may therefore be absent from class. Reasonable accommodations must be made for assignments/quizzes/papers/midterms/tests that are missed due to illness.

Faculty are encouraged to support student learning by posting course materials online, via Moodle. Regardless of the reason for student absence, it is good practice to follow up with students to ensure they are managing the course material and their studies.

10. **HOLIDAYS: Fall Term:** The University will be closed on **September 29th** in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The University will be closed on Thanksgiving Monday, **October 9th**. The Fall Study break will commence on **November 6**. Classes will resume on **November 13**. **Winter Term:** The Winter Study break will commence on **February 19**. Classes will resume on **February 26**. The University will be closed on Good Friday **March 29**.
11. **GRADING SYSTEM:** The list below indicates some important signposts along the grading scale.
 - 80 - First Class Honours
 - 75 - Honours
 - 50 - Clear pass
12. **EXAMINATIONS:**
 - a) No written tests/exams (excluding lab exams) worth 10% or more of a student's final grade should take place during the last 7 teaching days prior to the last day of classes of the academic term. **In the first term this means no tests or exams worth 10% or more can be scheduled after November 27, 2023. For the second term, the date would be March 27, 2024. Final exams, if employed, ARE NOT scheduled in this period.**
 - b) All final examinations must be held during the formal examination period, as scheduled by the Registrar, at the times indicated in the December and April Exam Schedules. The December exam schedule will be posted on September 29, 2023, and the April exam schedule will be posted on January 31, 2024. In no instances may a final examination be held during class time instead of the time block scheduled by the Registrar (9 am, 2 pm, or 7 pm). In particular, examinations **will not** be rescheduled to accommodate airline travel arrangements.
 - c) Faculty who wish to hold an on-line exam for in-person classes are permitted to do so provided students are notified of the exam format on the first day of class and information pertaining to final exam format is clearly stated in the course syllabus. On-line exams for in-person courses must be scheduled by the Registrar's office. The ability to hold an on-line exam in a computer lab will be limited by the number of requests the Registrar's office receives. Faculty who wish to hold an on-line exam for an in-person class will not be permitted to use invigilation software, therefore attention must be directed to designing an exam that upholds academic integrity in other ways. Faculty are strongly encouraged to utilize the guidance and resources about online exams shared by the StFX Teaching and Learning Centre (<https://www.mystfx.ca/faculty-development/faculty-development/teaching-and-learning-centre/resources-support>).

- d) Take-home examinations may not be distributed before 1:00pm on the last day of classes for the term and are to be due no sooner than 7 days, and no later than 10 days, after distribution. Take-home exams must not be due after the last day of the examination period. Any changes to the format of the exam referenced in the course syllabus must be made, and communicated [to students], prior to the last day to change courses for the term.
 - e) At least 25% of the final grade in six-credit or three-credit 100 or 200-level courses should be based on December, April, or mid-term, summative assignments, such as exams, essays, projects, portfolios, or other appropriate forms of summative assessment.
 - f) Students have the right to review their assessments with their professor should they choose.
 - g) **All course material that is not returned to students must be kept for at least one year after the course end date.**
13. **RESCHEDULED CLASSES, LAB EXAMS, TESTS, OR CLASS PROJECTS**: When a mandatory class test, quiz, lab exam or class project is scheduled outside normal class hours, provision shall always be made to enable students to attend scheduled classes and laboratories in their other courses. This should be kept in mind both for your information and also so that you may bring it to the attention of students who may tell you that they are unable to attend your class because of a requirement for another course.
14. **MISSING A FINAL EXAM**: Students who are unable to write an examination in December or April at the time scheduled by the Registrar's office due to illness or due to a serious, unexpected circumstance **must notify the Office of the Assistant Vice-President, Academic Affairs within 48 hours of the scheduled exam time at ada@stfx.ca**. The student will be assigned a grade of "IN" and will be required to write the exam on an alternate date. (The Exam Deferral form will be sent to you by email to be filled in and returned to the Registrar's Office upon completion of the make-up examination).
15. **MEDICAL NOTES**
Students are NOT required to provide medical documentation for missed assessments. Faculty are required to provide reasonable accommodation for students due to medical or extenuating circumstances when warranted. Such requests do not require Deans' approval and are handled by faculty members.
16. **FINAL GRADES**: **It is essential that grades are reported according to the deadlines specified in the University Calendar**: December grades in full year courses and final grades in first-term courses are due at **9:00 am, January 3, 2024**. For full-year, and second-term courses final grades are due at **9:00 am, April 29, 2024**, for graduating students, and at **9:00 am, May 6, 2024**, for continuing students.
17. **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY** – The Academic Integrity Policy may be found on the Registrar's website at: <https://www.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/academic-integrity>
Please draw your students' attention to Appendix 2, Section 2.6 which reads "Possesses and/or uses unauthorized aids or obtains unauthorized assistance, including but not limited to copying, using a translation service, online aids, bot, any unauthorized computer hardware, software, including computer programs, Apps, widgets, or other electronic retrieval systems or face-to-face assistance for any graded assessments (e.g.,

quizzes, assignments, tests, and examinations)". This means that students do not need to be caught USING a device like a cell phone or smart watch (for example) during a test or exam to be in violation of the policy. **Simply having the unauthorized device on their person during the test or exam is a violation of the policy.**

Respectfully Submitted