Hello Everyone,

I’m sure you have been sorting through information about the BC Public Health Officer’s directives over returning/changing COVID restrictions this week. I wanted to send you this bulletin, not to add to the ‘info overload’, but as an attempt to narrow the focus to what most affects the faculty and our classrooms for those teaching now and those of us beginning in September.

Masks are now mandatory anywhere indoors on campuses, and there is a vaccine requirement for all campus indoor events, restaurants, gyms, and for on-campus housing. Read about the current restrictions for post-secondary from the Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training@  <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021AEST0053-001664>

Consultation between CNC, the FA, CUPE & the CNCSU:

Although the next meeting of this group, which is discussing COVID-related health & safety measures, has had this week’s meeting postponed while the current changes are being processed, the new restrictions mean more questions from the FA. The current situation will demand that CNC has a process in place for expediting individual department safety plans [i.e. for labs, shops, clinics]; and, the FA will also want to know how the plans will be vetted by the campus Occupational Health & Safety Committee.

COVID-related Workplace Accommodations:

Despite CNC circulating a request for accommodation form [contained in its August 24 notice], your right to a workplace accommodation must be more broadly defined than the medical/disability accommodation the cnc form is meant to address. Further, this form does not indicate an expedited process, something the FA has been requesting, instead it is the same form which has been used for many years for faculty when they apply for a medical accommodation. We believe that because of the repercussions of the pandemic, the Employer now requires a form and procedure that can expedite the process, one that can also address other grounds protected under the BC Human Rights Code. In the case of COVID-related situations, medical examples include: an individual suffering from a compromised immune condition or who has a family member who is medically compromised; or, an individual may have a medical condition that prevents her/him /them from being vaccinated. For anyone filling out the current form, please tic the box at “other” and use my name as your representative. The form does not apply to the Disability Management Committee representatives.

Individuals may also want to seek accommodation based on another protected ground. For example, religious identification in the case of those who identify with a religious doctrine that is opposed to vaccination. Alternatively, an individual may, due to family status, have a child or children under 12 for whom the vaccine is not yet available. Again, it is the position of the FA that there needs to be an expedited process for requesting a workplace accommodation related to any status protected under the Human Rights Code.

If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact me at facnc\_chiefsteward@telus.net. Please use a personal email address whenever you contact the Union office or a representative.

In solidarity,

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