Governance Executive Summary
Action Item

| Agenda Title | Emergency Academic Governance Protocols – Recommendations from University of Alberta’s COVID-19 Public Health Response Team (PHRT) Sub-committee on Academic Impacts |

Motions

THAT General Faculties Council Executive, acting with delegated authority from General Faculties Council approve the following changes to the University of Alberta admissions process regarding the academic records, subject to the following constraints:

1. In the event that an applicant to an undergraduate or graduate program at the university (domestic or international) is unable to provide final documentation due to school closures or exam cancellations that result from the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of Alberta may accept the grades and existing interim documents presented at the time of their initial offer as meeting the requirements to clear individual admission conditions. This provision applies to applicants to the Spring/Summer 2020 and Fall/Winter 2020/2021 semesters.

2. For students applying to undergraduate or graduate programs, grades issued by the University of Alberta for courses taken in Winter 2020 will not be included in the calculation of admission GPAs.

   Grades of CR from Winter 2020 will contribute to the credit requirements for admission and will be accepted as satisfying program prerequisites.

   Grades of NC from Winter 2020 will not contribute to credit requirements for admission. Courses for which students have received a grade of NC will not satisfy program prerequisites.

3. For external post-secondary students applying to undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Alberta, grades for courses taken in Winter 2020 will be included in the calculation of admission GPAs.

   Passing grades from Winter 2020 will contribute to the credit requirements for individual admissions, provided the grades meet the threshold required for transfer credit as outlined in the University Calendar, and will be accepted as satisfying program prerequisites.

   Non-passing grades from Winter 2020 will not contribute to the credit requirements for individual admissions and will not be accepted as satisfying program prerequisites.

4. The Duolingo English Test will be made available to all applicants to undergraduate and graduate programs as an additional option to demonstrate English Language Proficiency for Spring/Summer 2020 and Fall/Winter 2020/2021 semesters.

THAT General Faculties Council Executive, acting with delegated authority from General Faculties Council delegate to the President and Vice-Chancellor the authority to adjust admission offer acceptance and document deadlines for the Fall 2020 admissions cycle in order to facilitate necessary changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

THAT General Faculties Council Executive, acting with delegated authority from General Faculties Council delegate to the President and Vice-Chancellor the authority to adjust admissions-related deadlines for the Spring, Summer and Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 admissions cycles, in consultation with the Deans (departments), to facilitate necessary changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
Item No. 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Action Requested</th>
<th>☒ Approval</th>
<th>☐ Recommendation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed by</td>
<td>President Dave Turpin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presenter(s)</td>
<td>Melissa Padfield in her capacity as Chair of the University of Alberta’s COVID-19 Public Health Response Team (PHRT) Sub-committee on Academic Impacts</td>
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**Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office of Administrative Responsibility</th>
<th>University Governance</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Purpose of the Proposal is (please be specific)</td>
<td>The proposal is before the committee, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, decisive action is required from General Faculties Council Executive Committee to provide the academy with the authority to provide clarity for applicants, enrolment management, and effective administration for the current undergraduate and graduate admissions cycles. These measures are designed to support meeting our undergraduate and graduate enrolment goals while mitigating the impact of educational disruptions in Winter 2020. GFC Executive is being asked to act on behalf of GFC because the action is required to be taken before the next regularly scheduled meeting of GFC and communicated. The University of Alberta is already actively processing admissions for the upcoming Spring/Summer 2020 and Fall/Winter 2020/2021 semesters. Faculties and Departments are waiting for direction.</td>
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**Executive Summary (outline the specific item – and remember your audience)**

Key Considerations

1. In order to sustain a credible admissions process and account for the academic records consistently and equitably, it is critical that a transparent plan is developed and communicated as soon as possible.

**Recommendation**

In view of the global pandemic, its effect on all students, faculty, and all the members of our community who support program delivery, and after extensive deliberation, it is recommended that General Faculties Council Executive acting with delegated authority from General Faculties Council approve the following actions to support the temporary admissions practice changes for the admissions process.

**Background/Rationale:**

- Given the heightened sense of anxiety and uncertainty presented by COVID-19 for Canadian and international applicants, the University should adopt a proactive, decisive and flexible approach to the current enrolment cycle. This includes determining how we will consider grades for courses completed during COVID-19 disruption of secondary and post-secondary school operations.
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- Given the change to the grading scheme for Winter 2020, explaining our planned institutional approach to the use of CR/NC grades from the University of Alberta for Winter 2020 will provide clarity for *internal* applicants.

- Given the changes to grading schemes across the globe for Winter 2020, explaining our planned institutional approach to the use of Winter 2020 grades from all institutions for Winter 2020 will provide clarity for *external* applicants.

- Similarly, communicating flexibility around admissions-related deadlines and document requirements will reassure applicants that reasonable accommodations will be made for applicants whose learning environments have been disrupted.

- Applicants are looking for clarity in a rapidly changing and uncertain environment. The proposed actions are designed to provide students with a sense of reassurance that these disruptions, which are outside of their control, will not negatively impact their application and enrolment at the U of A.

- In making these decisions and transparently communicating them to applicants, the university is embracing our fundamental commitment to achieve an equitable environment for all who apply to learn within our community. This proposal aims to ensure that the academic changes and disruptions in global education systems that have accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic do not disadvantage applicants to our undergraduate and graduate programs.

### Supplementary Notes and context

- The Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) clearly outlines the authority of the Board of Governors (Board) and GFC. The Board in hiring the President has delegated the President the authority to act in extraordinary and/or emergency circumstances. This delegation of authority occurs through the President’s job description.

  The excerpt is as follows:

  > *Exercises, under delegated authority from the Board of Governors, the authority to act in extraordinary and/or emergency circumstances.*

### Engagement and Routing (Include meeting dates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation and Stakeholder Participation (parties who have seen the proposal and in what capacity)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;For information on the protocol see the Governance</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Those who are actively participating:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- University of Alberta’s COVID-19 Public Health Response Team (PHRT) Sub-committee on Academic Impacts</td>
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<tr>
<td>- President and Vice- Chancellor</td>
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<td>- Provost and Vice-President (Academic)</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Those who have been consulted:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>- Statutory Deans’ Council – April 1, 2020</td>
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<td>- Advisory Committee on Enrolment Management – April 1, 2020</td>
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### Item No. 4

#### Resources section Student Participation Protocol
- Graduate Enrolment and Finance Advisory Committee (GEFAC) – April 1, 2020

#### Those who have been informed:
- 

#### Approval Route (Governance) (including meeting dates)
| General Faculties Council Executive – Monday, April 6, 2020 |

### Strategic Alignment

#### Alignment with For the Public Good
For the Public Good – Objective 21 – Strategy i.) Encourage transparency and improve communication across the university through clear consultation and decision-making processes, substantive and timely communication of information, and access to shared, reliable institutional data.

#### Alignment with Core Risk Area
Please note below the specific institutional risk(s) this proposal is addressing.

| ☒ Enrolment Management | ☒ Relationship with Stakeholders |
| ☒ Faculty and Staff | ☒ Reputation |
| ☒ Funding and Resource Management | ☒ Research Enterprise |
| ☒ IT Services, Software and Hardware | ☒ Safety |
| ☒ Leadership and Change | ☒ Student Success |
| ☒ Physical Infrastructure |

#### Legislative Compliance and jurisdiction
Legal Authority
- Pursuant to section 26(1) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) - subject to the authority of the board, a general faculties council is responsible for the academic affairs of the university.
- Pursuant to section 26(3) a general faculties council may delegate any of its powers duties or functions under [the PSLA]…as it sees fit and may prescribe conditions governing the exercise or performance of any delegated power, duty of function, including the power of sub - delegation.
- In accordance with section 4.1 of the GFC Executive Committee Terms of reference GFC EXEC has delegated authority to act on behalf of General Faculties Council on matters that must be decided before the next regularly scheduled GFC meeting and where it is not feasible to call a special meeting of GFC.

### Attachments

1. Attachment 1 Briefing Note from University of Alberta’s COVID-19 Public Health Response Team (PHRT) Sub-committee on Academic Impacts (April 1 –Proposed Temporary Admissions Practice Changes (including proposed Communications Plan)).

**Prepared by:** Melissa Padfield, Brooke Milne, Marion Haggarty-France and Yimmie Sonuga,
Briefing Note for General Faculties Council Executive
April 1, 2020 (updated – April 6)
Prepared by: PHRT Sub-Committee on Academic Impacts

Proposed Temporary Admissions Practice Changes

The following actions are being proposed to support clarity for applicants, enrolment management, and effective administration for the current undergraduate and graduate admissions cycles. These measures are designed to support meeting our undergraduate and graduate enrolment goals while mitigating the impact of educational disruptions in Winter 2020.

Actively Engaged:
PHRT Subcommittee on Academic Impacts
President and Vice-Chancellor
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Consulted:
Deans’ Council
Advisory Committee on Enrolment Management
Graduate Enrolment and Finance Advisory Committee (GEFAC)

Proposed Actions

The PHRT Subcommittee on Academic Impacts proposes the following six actions, which, if approved by the university, will clarify our admissions response to students whose academic records will be impacted by institutional responses to COVID-19.

1. In the event that an applicant to an undergraduate or graduate program at the university (domestic or international) is unable to provide final documentation due to school closures or exam cancellations that result from the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of Alberta may accept the grades and existing interim documents presented at the time of their initial offer as meeting the requirements to clear individual admission conditions. This provision applies to applicants to the Spring/Summer 2020 and Fall/Winter 2020/2021 semesters.

2. For students applying to undergraduate, graduate programs, grades issued by the University of Alberta for courses taken in Winter 2020 will not be included in the calculation of admission GPAs.

   Grades of CR from Winter 2020 will contribute to the credit requirements for admission and will be accepted as satisfying program prerequisites.

   Grades of NC from Winter 2020 will not contribute to credit requirements for admission. Courses for which students have received a grade of NC will not satisfy program prerequisites.
For external post-secondary students applying to undergraduate, graduate or professional programs the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, Faculty of Pharmacy, and Dentistry programs (DDS and DH) in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry at the University of Alberta, grades for courses taken in Winter 2020 will not be included in the calculation of admission GPAs.

Passing grades from Winter 2020 will contribute to the credit requirements for individual admissions, provided the grades meet the threshold required for transfer credit as outlined in the University Calendar, and will be accepted as satisfying program prerequisites.

Non-passing grades from Winter 2020 will not contribute to the credit requirements for individual admissions and will not be accepted as satisfying program prerequisites.

The Duolingo English Test will be made available to all applicants to undergraduate and graduate programs as an additional option to demonstrate English Language Proficiency for Spring/Summer 2020 and Fall/Winter 2021 admission.

With Authority delegated by the President, the Vice-Provost and University Registrar will adjust admission offer acceptance and document deadlines for the Fall 2020 admissions cycle in order to facilitate necessary changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

With Authority delegated by the President, the Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, will adjust admissions-related deadlines for the Spring, Summer and Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 admissions cycles, in consultation with departments, to facilitate necessary changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background/Rationale:

- Given the heightened sense of anxiety and uncertainty presented by COVID-19 for Canadian and international applicants, the University should adopt a proactive, decisive and flexible approach to the current enrolment cycle. This includes determining how we will consider grades for courses completed during COVID-19 disruption of secondary and post-secondary school operations.

- Given the change to the grading scheme for Winter 2020, explaining our planned institutional approach to the use of CR/NC grades from the University of Alberta for Winter 2020 will provide clarity for internal applicants.

- Given the changes to grading schemes across the globe for Winter 2020, explaining our planned institutional approach to the use of Winter 2020 grades from all institutions for Winter 2020 will provide clarity for external applicants.

  - Work continues with respect to the professional programs and the Winter 2020 grades in the calculations of admissions averages.

- Similarly, communicating flexibility around admissions-related deadlines and document requirements will reassure applicants that reasonable accommodations will be made for applicants whose learning environments have been disrupted.
Applicants are looking for clarity in a rapidly changing and uncertain environment. The proposed actions are designed to provide students with a sense of reassurance that these disruptions, which are outside of their control, will not negatively impact their application and enrolment at the U of A.

In making these decisions and transparently communicating them to applicants, the university is embracing our fundamental commitment to achieve an equitable environment for all who apply to learn within our community. This proposal aims to ensure that the academic changes and disruptions in global education systems that have accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic do not disadvantage applicants to our undergraduate and graduate programs.

Proposed Communications Plan

April 6, 2020 Communications
- FYI Email to University of Alberta Students (~2:15 p.m./upon approval)
- Update to COVID-19 FAQ for Students (~2:15 p.m./upon approval)
- FYI Email to Everyone at the UofA (~2:15 p.m./upon approval)
- Targeted Email to Advisory Committee on Enrolment Management (~2:30 p.m./upon approval/sent from RO)

RO Web Updates
- Targets High School and Post-Secondary Applicants (after 4:15 p.m).

Beginning April 8
- Targeted Email to Applicant Groups (Direct Email sent through the Application System)