



## St. Stephen's College

### Memo regarding Accommodation of Student Program Delays due to COVID-19

**To:** All St. Stephen's College Students

**Regarding:** Program Delays and Convocation Adjustments in Light of COVID-19

St. Stephen's College recognises that the COVID-19 public health crisis has delayed many students in achieving certain program requirements. For some students who had expected to graduate in Fall 2020, COVID-19 has disrupted their ability to meet certain practicum and/or thesis deadlines needed to graduate. For other students not expecting to graduate in Fall 2020, COVID-19 has disrupted their ability to reach certain program milestones such as submitting a thesis proposal or accumulating practicum hours.

In response to this, St. Stephen's is committed to offering a fair and equitable way to help our students finish their last year of study, and to do so in ways that do not impose costs upon students beyond those costs that were in place prior to the public health crisis. Our hope is to find timely ways for students to graduate and progress from the college into their careers.

St. Stephen's will make the following accommodations available for students who expected to graduate in Fall 2020 but who have been delayed due to COVID-19:

- Over the next 12 months, St. Stephen's will graduate students at two points: one graduation as scheduled in Fall 2020, and a second (additional) graduation in Spring 2021.
- Students who are able to meet the Fall 2020 convocation deadlines will receive their degrees in November 2020.
- Students who experienced a delay in their practicum and/or final writing assignment (such as a Thesis, Culminating Paper, or Integrative Paper) due to COVID-19, will be able to graduate in Spring 2021 (this allows students an additional 6-months to complete their practicum and/or final writing assignment).
- If a student graduates in either Fall 2020 or Spring 2021, they will not be assessed Continuation Fees for the 2020–2021 academic year (even though they are given extra time to complete their practicum and/or final writing assignment). Students will receive an invoice for the 2020–2021 continuation fees as normal, and they must apply to the college to have those fees waived (form will be available soon in the Student Files section of our website). Students will have their continuation fees waived if they meet the criteria as outlined in Appendix A (below).
- An announcement about convocation will be made later this summer, though an in-person convocation event in Fall 2020 is unlikely. Instead, St. Stephen's will likely hold a virtual ceremony for both Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, while also making concerted efforts to highlight our graduating students on our webpage.

St. Stephen's will make the following accommodations available for students who did not expect to graduate in Fall 2020 but who nevertheless experienced program delays due to COVID-19:

- For students who are currently undergoing thesis approval, the 2019–2020 thesis fees will be honoured for all thesis proposals approved by September 1, 2020.
- For all students who plan to graduate in 2021, 2022, or 2023: The delays imposed by COVID-19 in Spring 2020 may have ripple effects that could impede students from meeting the graduation deadlines of 2021, 2022, or even 2023. This is particularly true of students in either the practicum course and/or in the midst of their final written project (Thesis, Culminating Paper, or Integrative Theology Paper), which can often take 2+ years to complete (even when students work diligently and make consistent and regular progress toward their completion). Because of this, in the event that a student is unable to meet the convocation deadlines of 2021, 2022, or 2023, accommodations will be available to students to allow them extra time to complete their practicum hours and/or final written project, and to waive up to one year of continuation fees. Similar criteria as outlined in Appendix A will be in place, and students will need to provide documentation that demonstrates they were unable to meet the convocation deadline because of the Spring 2020 onset of COVID-19. Please speak with your Department Chair for further details.

As always, if you have any questions, or if you need any clarity around these accommodations, please reach out to your Department Chair or to the Dean. We are happy to discuss these accommodations with you, and to help you continue to navigate your program of study. Our chief aim in this is to help you navigate and complete your program in a timely and equitable way given the impact of COVID-19.

With thanks,  
Fred Tappenden,  
Principal and Dean,  
St. Stephen's College

## **Appendix A:**

### *Fee Accommodations for Students in the Psychotherapy and Spirituality Department:*

Students in the Department of Psychotherapy and Spirituality can apply to the College to have their 2020–2021 continuation fees waived because of either: (1) Practicum Delay due to COVID-19, and/or (2) Thesis Delay due to COVID-19. Applications must be made using the “Application for Waiving Continuation Fees for One Year due to COVID-19” form (available soon in the Student Files section of our website), which will be reviewed and approved by the Dean. Students must meet the following criteria:

1. If Reason is due to Practicum Delay: By July 1, 2020, the student has completed all Counselling Practicum course requirements except for practicum hours and Integrative Paper assignment (Note: students must demonstrate that they had a plan in place to complete required practicum hours and Integrative Paper by July 1, 2020, but were delayed in doing so because of COVID-19).
2. If Reason is due to Thesis Delay: By September 15, 2020, the student demonstrates that they had a documented plan to submit the final and passed version of their thesis but were delayed in doing so because of COVID-19. (Note: September 15 is a COVID-19 deadline extension).
3. By September 15, 2020, the student has completed all coursework (with grades) required for their program, except for the Counselling Practicum course. Note: September 15 is a COVID-19 deadline extension.
4. By August 1, 2020, the student has completed personal therapy hours and provided the documentation to Tammy Chizen.
5. The student is in the Continuation Phase of their program (that is, they have already paid in full the program fees for Years 1–4).

Together, these criteria mean that the student has met all requirements to graduate in Fall 2020 but were delayed in completing their practicum hours (and corresponding Integrative Paper) and/or their thesis for COVID-19 related reasons.

### *Fee Accommodations for Students in the Theology Department:*

Students in the Department of Theology can apply to the College to have their 2020–2021 continuation fees waived for the following reason: Thesis, Integrative Theology Paper, or Culminating Paper Delay due to COVID-19. Applications must be made using the “Application for Waiving Continuation Fees for One Year due to COVID-19” form (available soon in the Student Files section of our website), which will be reviewed and approved by the Dean. Students must meet the following criteria:

1. By September 15, 2020, the student has completed all coursework (with grades) required for their program, except for their Thesis, Culminating Paper, or Integrative Theology Paper. Note: September 15 is a COVID-19 deadline extension.
2. The student had a documented plan to submit the final and passed version of their Thesis, Integrative Theology Paper, or Culminating Paper by September 15, 2020, but were delayed in doing so because of COVID-19. Note: September 15 is a COVID-19 deadline extension.
3. The student is in the Continuation Phase of their program (that is, they have already paid in full the program fees for Years 1–4)

Together, these criteria mean that the student has met all requirements to graduate in Fall 2020 but were delayed in completing their Thesis, Culminating Paper, or Integrative Theology Paper for COVID-19 related reasons.

### *Fee Stipulation:*

The above accommodations provide graduating students with a full twelve months of grace in meeting their program requirements; students will not be charged continuation fees through this process. However, in the event that a student meets the above criteria but does not complete their program of study by either the November 2020, May 2021, or November 2021 convocations, their program of study will continue on into the 2021–2022 academic year and they will be required again to pay continuation fees as of July 2021.