



BOARD NOTES

St. Francis Xavier University Board of Governors
June 19th 2020

The Board of Governors held a special meeting on Friday, June 19th 2020. The following is a summary of proceedings at the meeting.

CAMPUS REOPENING PLANS

Dr. Wamsley provided an overview of the work that has been done over the past 9 weeks to prepare plans for the reopening of campus in the Fall. It is the recommendation of the Executive Team that campus be reopened for students in the Fall including the reopening of residences

A phased return to campus for employees is now underway which also includes a phased resumption of on-campus research activities and fieldwork. Extensive plans have been developed to support this return to campus as well as for return to residences, return to classrooms and social spaces, distancing protocols, health and hygiene, return to meal hall, and return to the Town of Antigonish. All of these plans are founded upon public health safety protocols and data collection by Risk Management and management teams.

With regards to considerations related to methods of delivery for academic programming a Task Force has been formed to look at on-line program delivery options, an assessment of classrooms given distancing requirements and construction of a workable timetable. The Academic Vice President & Provost has confirmed that all faculty members have been consulted and, that we can deliver approximately 75% of our courses face-to-face/mixed methods and 25% of courses online

The primary consideration was assessing the ability to provide a safe working and learning environment for students, faculty and staff. Our plans have been reviewed and endorsed by LAE and Public Health.

The Students' Union President and Academic Vice President have been consulted and are in support of our safety protocols and plans to bring students back to campus, We have also received support from University Senate on all motions regarding academic regulations, the calendar of dates, the addition of the pandemic context to the Code of Conduct and a motion to support our mixed methods approach to teaching in the fall.

We also met Thursday with the Town, Municipality, RCMP, hospital, landlords, and Chamber of Commerce. They confirmed that they supported our plans and would work with us to welcome students back to Antigonish.

This is not a zero risk proposition however. A report was provided that highlighted some of the key risks. Mitigation strategies have been developed that provide confidence in our isolation, classroom, social space, residence, and meal hall strategies. We are also confident that we can ensure a safe working environment for faculty and staff, confident in our illness and outbreak strategies. We will have a legal waiver and code of conduct guidelines for each student to sign.

Ms. Yeo provided an overview of the steps that had been undertaken in development of the Return to Campus for Students plan. She noted that the Plan provides an overview of the public health protocols and the administrative measures developed to date. The approach was endorsed within the past week by both the Departments of Occupational Health and Safety and Public Health.

Ms. Yeo provided commentary on the main components of the Plan: General health protocols, Residence Reopening Plan, Plan for safe return of Off-Campus Students, COVID-19 Student Wellness and Student Experience Plan and a Communication Plan

The Board of Governors approved the Return to Campus plans in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as presented, including the delivery of academic programs using a mixed method that will include face-to-face and on-line courses and the reopening of residences.