

# Accommodation and Academic Consideration Requests: Procedures and Suggested Responses for CBS Instructors, Fall 21

Given the transitional nature of the F21 semester, faculty and staff instructors have many questions about how to handle student requests they are receiving now, during course selection, and expect to receive during the semester. Below we provide some guidance on how best to respond to these requests. This document will be located on the ADA website and will be updated on a regular basis (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/ada-cbs/instructors/resources>).

If you are receiving questions from students about their courses prior to the semester, see Section I. If you are receiving requests from students for accommodations during the semester, see Section II.

## Section I. FAQs from students about their Fall 2021 courses prior to semester.

Below, we list some of the more common questions being asked by students and provide suggested wording to use in your responses. If students do not accept your response as sufficient, please direct them to the Associate Dean Academic ([bhusband@uoguelph.ca](mailto:bhusband@uoguelph.ca)). If you are receiving questions that are not found on this list, or are specific to your particular course, please share them ([bhusband@uoguelph.ca](mailto:bhusband@uoguelph.ca)) and suggested responses will be added.

### A. University messaging

#### 1. Student is not happy because they were led to believe that they could complete the semester remotely.

*“The university has communicated from an early stage its intention to offer as many F2F courses as public health guidelines will allow, while considering the health and safety of its students, faculty, staff, and graduate teaching assistants. With current reduced capacity limits on our classrooms, the university expects many but not all courses to have F2F components. To achieve an equitable learning experience across all registered students in a course, students are expected to attend F2F components of their courses, although some instructors may offer remote alternatives at their discretion. Students who cannot attend in-person are encouraged to select remote-only courses and may contact a program counsellor for assistance in adjusting their course schedule (if you don’t know your program counsellor: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/uaic/programcounsellors> ; for BSc: [bscweb@uoguelph.ca](mailto:bscweb@uoguelph.ca)).”*

#### 2. Student is not happy because they were led to believe that they would have more F2F courses.

*“ The university has communicated from an early stage its intention to offer as many F2F courses as public health guidelines will allow, while considering the health and safety of its students, faculty, staff, and graduate teaching assistants. With current reduced capacity limits on our classrooms, the university expects many but not all courses to have some F2F components. Because of differences in enrolment and room capacities, the number of F2F courses available may vary somewhat among programs and year levels. Students who wish to attend more in-person courses are encouraged to select such courses and may contact a program counsellor for assistance in adjusting their course schedule to increase the number of F2F courses (if you don’t know your program counsellor: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/uaic/programcounsellors> ; for BSc: [bscweb@uoguelph.ca](mailto:bscweb@uoguelph.ca)). ”*

### B. Course delivery

### 3. Student wants to register in a F2F course but complete it remotely:

Courses that offer F2F components operate on the premise that students will be present for the F2F portion. Instructors can accommodate at their own discretion. Remote accommodations would increase accessibility and may be justified when: i) remote options are pedagogically equivalent to F2F activities; ii) students are unable to attend due to circumstances out of their control (e.g. international students unable to travel); or, iii) when the course is required for degree progression. If it is logistically or pedagogically infeasible to provide a remote option, the instructor may say:

*“This course is designed with an in-person component. Unless stated otherwise, it is the university’s expectation that students registering in this course will attend these components in-person. Students who cannot attend in-person are encouraged to select remote-only courses and may contact a program counsellor for assistance in adjusting their course schedule (if you don’t know your program counsellor: <https://www.uoquelfh.ca/uaic/programcounsellors> ; for BSc: [bscweb@uoqueph.ca](mailto:bscweb@uoqueph.ca)).”*

### 4. Student wants to register in two remotes courses with overlapping schedules.

This should be strongly discouraged under all circumstances. Moreover, it isn’t the instructor’s responsibility to manage this issue. Instructors may say:

*“Students should not register in courses with overlapping schedules due to potential conflicts in course activities, assessments and deadlines. Please see a program counsellor in your degree program if you need assistance in selecting your courses (if you don’t know your program counsellor: <https://www.uoquelfh.ca/uaic/programcounsellors>; for BSc: [bscweb@uoqueph.ca](mailto:bscweb@uoqueph.ca)).”*

## C. Exams

### 5. Student wants to register in a F2F course, which will have F2F exams, but they wish to complete the exams remotely.

There is no obligation to provide a remote alternative exam in a course that has some F2F components and a F2F assessment but instructors can accommodate at their own discretion. Options for supporting some students with a remote exam should be considered when feasible and pedagogically equivalent to completing the exam remotely. Otherwise, the instructor may say:

*“This course is designed with an in-person midterm/final exam. Unless stated otherwise, it is the university’s expectation that students registering in this course will attend those assessments in-person. Students who cannot attend in-person are encouraged to select remote only courses and can contact a program counsellor for assistance in adjusting their course schedule (if you don’t know your program counsellor: <https://www.uoquelfh.ca/uaic/programcounsellors>; for BSc: [bscweb@uoqueph.ca](mailto:bscweb@uoqueph.ca)).”*

### 6. Student is registered in a remote course that will have a F2F final exam but they wish to complete the exam remotely.

Courses that are scheduled as remote have the choice of offering a F2F final exam; however, in this circumstance, instructors must provide a remote alternative for those students who prefer it. The university position is that, because the course was advertised as completely remote, students may register under the expectation that there are no F2F components.

## Section II. Requests for accommodation from students during the Fall 2021 semester.

### A. If a student requests specific accommodations in your course due to a disability:

#### Accommodations for students with disabilities:

- Specific student requests should follow standard university procedures (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-accommodation-students-disabilities-policy/> , <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/accommodations> ). i.e.
- Students should be registered with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), which assesses their needs based on medical documentation. If students are deemed to require accommodations (e.g. extra time, notetakers, use of HR transmitter, memory aids, etc.) for in-course activities, that will be communicated to instructors by students or SAS (students are encouraged to self-advocate).
- Registration in a course does not guarantee the granting of a specific form of accommodation; however, as these are addressed in the Human Rights code, instructors are encouraged to accommodate students unless they face undue hardship or cannot meet the course learning outcomes. Instructors may follow-up with the student or SAS to better understand how to implement an accommodation. When a consensus between student and instructor around accommodations cannot be reached, the instructor should consult the Chair or ADA.
- Universal instructional design is strongly encouraged as standard teaching best practice to proactively support the diversity of learning needs and backgrounds of students in the classroom. Resources can be found at: <https://opened.uoguelph.ca/student-resources/Universal-Instructional-Design> and <https://otl.uoguelph.ca/teaching-pedagogy/inclusive-teaching/universal-instructional-design-and-universal-design-learning> ).

### B. If a student requests specific accommodations to complete course activities/assessments due to unforeseen events or personal difficulties (i.e., academic consideration):

#### Standard requests for Academic Consideration during semester (covid-19 related requests are below):

- Within semester requests should be handled following standard academic consideration policy and procedures (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-consideration-appeals-petitions/> ), summarized below.
- Students who miss course activities and associated assessments during the semester should inform instructors as soon as possible so these issues can be addressed during the semester.
- Students can request academic consideration on psychological, medical, or compassionate grounds. Instructors should use their discretion as to whether medical documentation is required so as not to over-burden health professionals. If the student is deemed to have reasonable grounds, academic consideration may include:
  - i. extending a deadline,
  - ii. waiving a late penalty,
  - iii. offering an alternate deadline or alternate exam date.

Simply reweighting missed assessments to the final exam should be the last option considered as they may not cover some course learning outcomes and inevitably places more stress on students, which can result in additional requests for consideration.

- If the accommodation cannot be arranged within the semester or if a student missed end-of-term assignments or assessments, students must apply for a Deferred Privilege via the program counselling office (see next section). In this case, Instructors should inform the student and report the missed assignments/exam on an Incomplete Course Work Form when grades are submitted.
- **Proactive strategies to reduce requests for academic consideration and to ensure all students have access to the same forms of consideration**, include:
  - i. having clear course policies related to academic consideration listed in your course outline,
  - ii. communicating course policies directly to students early in semester,

- iii. recording or live streaming (in technologically enabled classrooms) class activities/lectures,
- iv. posting recorded lectures or other course material on courselink,
- v. adopting flexibility in the course schedule to accommodate missed labs or quizzes or exams; e.g., having a requirement to complete only x of y lab reports, or planning for an alternative date for quizzes; allowing students one late submission of an assignment without penalty, etc.

If you'd like assistance or resources to plan your remote or F2F teaching activities to be as inclusive as possible, contact COESP at [coesp@uoguelph.ca](mailto:coesp@uoguelph.ca) or go to <https://www.uoguelph.ca/ada-cbs/coesp/coesp-resources/remote-teaching-pathway>

#### Standard requests for Academic Consideration at the end of the semester

- Students who miss end-of-term assignments or assessments must apply for a Deferred Privilege via the program counselling office. Instructors should inform the student as they may not be aware of the process.
- Instructors should report missed assignments/exams on an Incomplete Course Work Form when grades are submitted. The student will still need to submit documentation to the program counselling office to support their request.

#### **C. If a student requests accommodation for in-person activities because of absences due to covid19:**

##### Prolonged absences (weeks, whole semester) from F2F components due to covid19-related illness or circumstances

- Student absences may arise if, for example, international students are unable to return by September or when students are required to self-isolate due to either their health or that of someone they are caring for.
- For students who reach out in advance of the F2F semester because they will not be able to attend any F2F activities, the instructor can accommodate at their own discretion. We encourage any attempts to provide remote alternatives such as live streaming, recorded lectures or labs, or remote alternatives for assessments as this will promote accessibility and will lighten the number of requests from students but recognize this may not always be possible. Instructors are encouraged to consider some form of accommodation especially in courses that are required in a student's program so as not to interfere with degree progression. If accommodation is not possible, instructors should direct the student to a program counsellor or faculty advisor for assistance in developing a course schedule that does not involve F2F courses. This may involve course substitutions or simply postponing a F2F course.
- For students who unexpectedly miss isolated in-person classes during the semester due to covid-19, standard requests for academic consideration apply (see B) (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-consideration-appeals-petitions/>). Instructors assess the grounds for the absence and grant consideration on that basis. Please use discretion when requesting documentation so as not to overburden health professionals.

##### Absent from F2F components due to decision not to move to Guelph

- In general, unless the circumstances fall under criteria listed in C (prolonged absences), there is no obligation to provide academic consideration. Accommodation is at the discretion of the instructor.
- If no accommodation is possible, students should be directed to a program counsellor for assistance in developing a course schedule that does not involve F2F courses.