1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

This required two-term course emphasizes the links between improvisation and social practices, and the connections between principles of improvised artistic practices and those of ethical community-engaged collaboration.

1.2 Course Description

This two-semester course studies the links between improvisation and social practices, and the connections between principles of improvised artistic practices and those of ethical community-engaged collaboration. The Arts-Based Community Making (ABCM) course develops students’ critical literacy skills in inter-personal and -cultural contexts; teaches them to ‘read’ and negotiate systems of power and privilege; and develops their capacity to put these critical skills to work in the context of community-engaged research and collaborative artistic practices. Within a community context, this course teaches students to have initiative, to show leadership, to understand reciprocal community relations and how to make a difference; to become community catalysts by activating their and others’ agency; to understand structures of volunteerism, not-for-profit community engagement, and other forms of activating and engaging with community.

Through the assigned readings and case studies, students will become familiar with and able to employ the vocabularies and principles of improvisation in relation to what George Lipsitz insightfully – and provocatively – calls “arts-based community making.” Students will develop and exercise critical skills in interpersonal and intercultural literacy, and develop their capacity to put these skills to work in the context of community-based research and creative projects. Students will learn and then implement, through applied projects, key principles of community-engaged research and arts-based practice.
Students who complete the course will possess the ability to navigate and mediate conflict; to collaborate across differences of identity, position, and commitment; and to understand and mobilize their actions (including service, research, artistic practice, and scholarly work) toward the struggle for social justice, broadly construed.

1.3 Timetable

We will meet remotely (on Zoom) on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 to 10 am.

Timetable is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

1.4 Final Exam

Exam time and location is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

| Instructor: | Ajay Heble |
| Email:      | aheble@uoguelph.ca |
| Telephone:  | +1-519-824-4120 x53445 |
| Office:     | MCKN 406 |

2.2 Office Hours

I will not be holding regular office hours this semester but will be available to discuss class matters by email and virtual appointments. When emailing me, please use the course code as part of your title. If you are requesting an appointment, also indicate it in the title. I will respond to email within 48 hours (weekends excluded).

3 Learning Resources

Required texts:

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Continuum)

bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (Routledge)


Daniel Brooks and Guillermo Verdecchia, *The Noam Chomsky Lectures: A Play* (Talonbooks)

Ajay Heble, ed. *Classroom Action: Human Rights, Critical Activism, and Community-Based Education* (University of Toronto Press)


Additional texts may be placed on reserve in the library or available online.

### 3.1 Additional resources and recommended readings

Some suggested additional readings:

Rebecca Caines and Ajay Heble, eds. *The Improvisation Studies Reader: Spontaneous Acts*

Gillian Siddall and Ellen Waterman, eds. *Negotiated Moments: Improvisation, Sound, and*
Subjectivity

George Lipsitz, *American Studies in a Moment of Danger*

George Andreopoulos and Richard Pierre Claude, eds. *Human Rights Education for the Twenty-First Century*

Rita Maran, *Human Rights Syllabi for the College Classroom*

Micheline Ishay, *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents From the Bible to the Present*

Noam Chomsky, *Chomsky on (Mis)Education*

bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*

Neva Welton and Linda Wolf, *Global Uprising: Confronting the Tyrannies of the 21st Century*

David Trend, *Cultural Pedagogy: Art/Education/Politics*

Sherene Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye*

Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*
Ira Shor, *When Students Have Power*

Susan Danielson and Ann Marie Fallon, eds. *Community-Based Learning and the Work of Literature*

**Additional Resources:**

1. Bibliography and webography—posted on Courselink.

2. *Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études critiques en improvisation:* online peer reviewed journal available at criticalimprov.com


Some Local Resources:

10 Carden

“10 Carden is a living lab for social change. We provide the conditions for community members, practitioners and researchers, working in collaboration, to explore ideas, create and sustain new initiatives and make discoveries. This work will shift attitudes and behaviours and strengthen community resilience.”

The website: http://www.10carden.ca

The Office of Diversity and Human Rights

The Office of Diversity and Human Rights (DHR) helps promote a study, work and living environment free of discrimination and harassment. Our services are available to all members of the University of Guelph community including students, staff, faculty and visitors. We hope that you will take a few moments to review the University of Guelph's Inclusion Framework and the many, many resources that DHR has to offer. The website: https://www.uoguelph.ca/diversity-human-rights/

Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) - Guelph

The Ontario Public Interest Research Group - Guelph is a volunteer-driven, non-profit organization based on the University of Guelph campus. Formed in 1976, OPIRG-Guelph addresses social, political, economic and environmental issues of public concern.
The website: http://opirg.org/guelph/

4 Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Identify the principles of ethical cross-sector collaboration, with particular attention to improvisation and arts-based contexts.

2. Demonstrate the ability to understand and critique a range of case studies of effective and problematic community-based art and research projects, with a focus on those utilizing improvisation methodologies.

3. Have developed the necessary project-based skills to build a community-engaged project based on improvisation methodologies. These include community contact strategies,
development of a project proposal with communities, ethics clearance, scheduling and team management, and funding strategies.

4. Have critically examined the issues and possibilities unique to University/community partnerships with reference to contemporary Canadian contexts.

5. Have completed and defended a proposal for their own creative research with communities, including evidence of sustained, ethical contact with communities involved.

6. Have completed a community-engaged improvisation-based project, built on principles of ethical collaborative creative work.

Outline of activities:

Semester 1

Students will participate as a cohort in four modules—Community Literacy: Principles and Practices—that will familiarize them with the history, theory, and practices of community-engaged scholarship.
1. Orientation to community literacy and community engagement; core concepts and guiding principles.

2. Case studies in critical community engagement, reflection and critique using community literacy skills and knowledge of CE; participation and mentorship from other students and community partners who have participated in previous projects.

3. Non-intrusive (i.e. no partner involvement) community scan; students identify possible issues/sites for possible action, create a project proposal, identify potential community collaborators.

4. Project proposal forum: students present proposals for partnered projects to a panel of experts with expertise and experience in community engaged projects (these may include artists, community groups and partners, service organizations, faculty and student researchers, and campus staff).

Semester 2

Students will be engaged in carrying out selected community-engaged practice-based projects. These will be closely supervised by the course instructor (and by community mentors as appropriate). Outcomes of these projects will vary according to project plan; evaluation will be shared by faculty instructor, student and community collaborators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>LO addressed</th>
<th>Due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core concepts critical reflection</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
<td>End of module 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study report</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
<td>End of module 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community scan/literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>End of module 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project proposal: process and</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written proposal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project proposal: presentation</td>
<td>3, 5</td>
<td>Presentation event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community project: process,</td>
<td>3, 6</td>
<td>End of term 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collaboration, impacts,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concept, etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final cumulative</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
<td>End of term 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflection/commonplace book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

Tentative schedule:

Fall Semester

Module 1: Improvisation and Community Literacy: Core Concepts and Guiding Principles

Week One: Introduction: Teaching for Social Change
Introductions, Resources, Protocols, Limits

Thursday Sept. 10th: Daniel Fischlin, Ajay Heble, and George Lipsitz, “Prelude” in *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Improvisation, Rights, and the Ethics of Cocreation*

Thursday: Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Suggested readings:


**Week Two**: Learning from Improvisation: Listening, Trust, and Accompaniment

Tuesday Sept. 15th: Guest: Katelyn Wadleigh, Manager, Research Ethics, University of Guelph
Thursday Sept. 17th: Barbara Tomlinson and George Lipsitz, Insubordinate Spaces: Improvisation and Accompaniment for Social Justice

Guest: Dr. Elizabeth Jackson, Director, Community Engaged Scholarship Institute;

Suggested readings: George Lipsitz, “Listening to Learn and Learning to Listen” in American Studies in a Moment of Danger

**Week Three**: Tearing Down the Classroom Walls: The Community as Classroom

Tuesday Sept. 22nd: How do we do Community-Engaged Learning and Scholarship during the Pandemic?

See “Resources for Community Engaged Teaching & Learning during COVID-19 Social Distancing, Isolation and Quarantine.” Indiana University Bloomington, Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning:

Thursday Sept. 24th: bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*

(see especially Teach 1: The Will to Learn: The World as Classroom, Teach 2: Time Out: Classrooms without Boundaries, Teach 4: Democratic Education)

Module 2: Case Studies

**Week Four**: Classroom Action

Tuesday Sept. 29th: Visits from former students to talk about previous community-based projects (and modes of intervention) and to discuss the possibilities and perils of collaboration

Thursday Oct. 1st: Ajay Heble, ed. *Classroom Action: Human Rights, Critical Activism, and Community-Based Education*
Suggested reading: Kenneth Bruffee, *Collaborative Learning: Higher Education,*

*Interdependence, and the Authority of Knowledge,* Garth Meintjes, “Human Rights

Education as Empowerment: Reflections of Pedagogy” (in George Andreopoulos and


**Week Five:** Partnering for Change

Tuesday Oct. 6th: Discussion of previous or already existing projects with invited community partners (eg. KidsAbility Centre for Child Development, Musagetes Foundation, Immigrant Services, Guelph Jazz Festival)

Thursday Oct. 8th: *Doris Sommer, The Work of Art in the World*
FALL BREAK: no classes scheduled this week (Oct. 12-16)

Week Six: Research as Activism/Activism as Research: How the World is Changed

Thursday Oct. 22nd: Daniel Brooks and Guillermo Verdecchia, The Noam Chomsky Lectures: A Play

Some suggested readings:


Ariel Dorfman, “Speak Truth to Power: Voices from Beyond the Dark” in Kerry Kennedy Cuomo, Speak Truth to Power (Educational and Advocacy package)

Thomas King, The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative

Kalle Lasn, Culture Jam: How To Reverse America’s Suicidal Consumer Binge--And Why We
Must

Noam Chomsky, *What Uncle Sam Really Wants*

Neva Welton and Linda Wolf, *Global Uprising: Confronting the Tyrannies of the 21st Century*

Stephen Lewis, *Race Against Time*

Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*

Module Three: Community Scan

**Weeks Seven, Eight, Nine:** Selecting a topic

October 27, 29, November 3, 5, 10, 12

Suggested reading: Frances Westley, Brenda Zimmerman, and Michael Quinn Patton, *Getting to Maybe: How the World is Changed*
Group discussion and negotiation of possible issues for community-based projects in semester two, including identification of possible community partners, stakeholders, and collaborators

Module Four: Project Proposal Forum

**Week Ten:** Presentation of proposals for community-based projects in semester two

November 17, 19

[***Deadline for identifying topics for community-based projects***]

**Weeks Eleven, and Twelve:** Reality Checks

November 24, 26, December 1,3

Collaborative presentations to a panel of outside “experts.” These presentations should
concisely outline the issue or topic you have selected for your community-based project, your preliminary ideas about modes of intervention, ideas about possible resources and partners, as well as challenges you might face in moving forward with your work.

**Winter Semester (tentative schedule, to be confirmed in January 2021)**

**Week Thirteen:** Profiles in Practice: Learning Outwards from Jazz and Improvisation

Daniel Fischlin, Ajay Heble, and George Lipsitz, *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Improvisation, Rights, and the Ethics of Cocreation*

Screening and discussion of selected videos from the IICSI (International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation) and ICASP (Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice) archives, including “Stories of Impact” videos: www.improvisationinstitute.ca

**Week Fourteen:** The Sustainability Challenge

**Weeks Fifteen to Eighteen:** Planning, Progress Reports, and Presentations

In recognition of the fact that one of the most significant challenges for collaborative work is finding times when everyone is available to meet, we will devote half the time during our weekly meetings from weeks fifteen to eighteen in the second semester for group meetings. These meetings will be focused on facilitating productive and purposeful collaborative work. I’ll also use these times to hold short interviews/meetings/check-ins with all break-out groups. We’ll discuss and identify appropriate modes of intervention, set detailed goals and timelines for your projects, and consider how we will evaluate the success of our efforts. We will also consider how our work in critical studies in improvisation can enable us/empower us to intervene in the public sphere.

The other half of the class during weeks fifteen to eighteen will be devoted to in-progress seminar presentations about your community projects to the class as a whole.

Suggested readings:

Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*

Suggested reading: Kym Pruesse, *Accidental Audience: Urban Intervention by*
Artists, George Lipsitz, *American Studies in a Moment of Danger* (esp. Chaps. 9, 10, 11)

**Weeks Nineteen and Twenty**: Reality Checks: Part Two

Progress reports on community projects presented to “expert” panelists.

**Week Twenty-one**: Tearing Up The Course Outline: Theoretical Principles and Pragmatics

Suggested reading: Rita Maran, *Human Rights Syllabi for the College Classroom*,

Rita Maran, “Teaching Human Rights in the Universities: Paradoxes and Prospects”

(in George Andreopoulos and Richard Pierre Claude, *Human Rights Education for the Twenty-First Century*)

Lynda Barry, *Syllabus: Notes from an Accidental Professor*
[Presentation and discussion of alternate course outlines with rationales and
self-critiques]

Weeks Twenty-two and Twenty-three: Playing the Changes

During this period, students will finalize and present their community-based projects.

Week Twenty-four: Concluding Remarks, Catch-up, and Action Plans

bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (Teach 11: Heart to Heart, Teach 16:
Practical Wisdom)

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

This course takes seriously Paulo Freire’s claim that equality and social justice are predicated
on students playing an active role in the educational process, that teachers and students are
both simultaneously learners and knowledge-producers. In an effort to teach in ways that do
not reinforce traditional structures of domination and authority, the precise weights/grading
scheme for this course will be arrived at through a collective discussion.
Grades for this course will be based on the following presentations and reports:

1) throughout the year, students will be expected to write a series of short (250-500 word) entries in their commonplace book. These entries will include a critical reflection on core concepts (due Week Three for the end of Module 1), and a report on case studies (due Week Six for the end of Module 2).

2) during weeks Two to Six, we will have collaborative-led student seminars on the assigned texts. Each student is required to participate in one collaborative seminar during this period.

3) during Week Seven, Eight, and Nine, each student will lead a 20-30 minute presentation which identifies a community-based human rights or social justice issue which she/he thinks should be the focus of our intervention. In preparing your presentation, please identify resources that might be available to help facilitate any interventions we might choose to make, think through the ways in which your engagement with work in the field of Critical Studies in Improvisation might enable us to intervene, and discuss possible ways in which the class might collectively “make a difference” through addressing this specific issue. Please submit to me (and to other members of the class) a written abstract for your presentation (no more than 500 words) along with a preliminary reading list/resource list. Our task for Week Ten will be to choose an issue/issues (from the many that will have been presented to us). This issue/these issues will become the focus of our efforts in the second semester.
4) during Weeks Eleven and Twelve, we will have collaborative presentations to a panel of outside “experts.” These presentations should concisely “pitch” and outline the issue or topic you have selected for your community-based project, your preliminary ideas about modes of intervention, ideas about possible resources and partners, as well as challenges you might face in moving forward with your work.

5) during Weeks Fifteen to Eighteen, we will have collaborative in-progress presentations from each break-out group on your final projects. I would ask that each of these projects have a public or community-facing dimension: that is, in designing your projects, try to move beyond the walls of the classroom in an effort to make interventions in the broader community. I would also ask that you use these projects as an opportunity to take the initiative to “do something” about struggles for human rights and social justice. The projects should, in some way, attempt to grapple with the relationship between academic work and activism, and to open up discussion around the question of how teachers and students can best “activate” their knowledge in ways that might edge us towards a more just world. How, that is, can we use the tools of analysis that we’ve developed in Critical Studies in Improvisation? I encourage students to be creative in thinking through and performing their projects, and to structure their materials in ways that are genuinely collaborative and interactive. I encourage you to work in partnership with local resources and social justice organizations (Amnesty International, OPIRG, CFRU-FM, etc.) in the community. On the day of your presentation, please submit to me and to other members of the class, a 500 word abstract summarizing the project’s main interventions and areas of inquiry, and a bibliography of relevant sources. In advance of these in-progress presentations, you will be asked to “pitch” your projects to a panel of outside “experts” who will be invited to class during Weeks Eleven and Twelve. “Expert” panelists will be invited again at a later stage to comment on your work in Weeks Nineteen and Twenty.

6) during Week Twenty-one, we will have three collaborative one-hour seminars where you will present and discuss alternate course outlines for IMPR*6020, “Arts-Based Community-Making.” Think rigorously about issues such as what we teach (curriculum), how we teach (pedagogical strategies), and why we teach (sense of purpose). Each group should be prepared to offer a rationale for their particular choices (of texts, assignments, methodologies, etc.) and to recognize the limitations of their efforts. Please submit your alternate course outline (along with a statement of rationale) to me and to the other members of the course during our meeting in Week Twenty-one.
7) Final community-facing project and final reflection piece/essay. In evaluating this project, I will take into account your response to comments/concerns raised by the class and the panel of “experts,” as well as your ability to meet the goals (and challenges) you have set for your group. Each student will be required to write a concluding reflection or report. Use the reflection or report as an opportunity to think through your own rationale for the community projects in which you’ve been involved, as well as to consider both the anticipated benefits and the limitations of your work. To what extent have the teaching methods and learning strategies employed during your projects been successful? How, in short, has the work you’ve done in IMPR*6020 encouraged you to rethink your understanding of the places where we look for knowledge, and to think anew about what constitutes research and teaching?

7 Course Statements

7.1 Research Ethics Protocol

Research Ethics Protocol

Please note that students who propose to use human participants in their research projects must receive appropriate clearance from the course instructor. The potential for risk to subjects who participate in course-based research projects requires that protocol and consent information be reviewed by a research ethics board. For more information, please visit http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/humanParticipants/

Requests for approval of course-based research projects must comply with the following criteria:
The research projects must be no more than minimal risk.

The standard of minimal risk is defined as follows. If potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the subject in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research then the research can be regarded as within the range of minimal risk.

The research participants must be drawn from the general adult population, capable of giving free and informed consent, and may not include vulnerable subjects such as children, persons who are not legally competent to consent, mentally incompetent persons, legal wards or the therapeutically dependent.

The student projects must not involve any personal, sensitive or incriminating topics or questions which could place participants at risk.

The student projects must not manipulate behaviour of participants beyond the range of “normal” classroom activity or daily life.
The student projects must not involve physically invasive contact with the research participants.

The student projects must not involve deception.

8 University Statements

8.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

8.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals
https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration
https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions
https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml

8.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses
8.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

8.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm

8.6 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse
students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml

8.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

8.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph’s procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars
https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars

8.9 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/) and circulated by email.

8.10 Illness

The University will not require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for the fall 2020 or winter 2021 semesters.