



May 7, 2021

Dear President Frémont and Vice-President Academic and Provost Scott,

We write today on behalf of the University of Ottawa academic staff, students, teaching and research assistants, and support personnel to follow-up to our [April 7, letter](#), for which we are still awaiting a response.

As expressed in our previous letter, our intervention is motivated by the counterproductive, top-down approach your administration has adopted toward planning a partial return to campus for the Fall 2021 semester, a lack of transparency and substantive information regarding these matters, and by continued delays in concluding Letters of Understanding establishing a fair operational framework for our working conditions and students' learning conditions. The ongoing silence from your office about these important matters is most troubling.

In the intervening month, we have grown further dismayed by:

1. claims put forward by members of your administration during exchanges with individual parties of the interunion coalition that, implementing a more democratic decision-making structure to plan a partial return for the Fall 2021 semester would be of no benefit our university community;
2. the continued and seeming total disregard of our request to create a Special COVID-19 Recovery Mental Health Fund;
3. the manner in which the Central Administration has sought to reach out to the signatory organizations on an individual basis rather than as a group;
4. the absence of any meaningful consultation with interunion coalition members prior to your administration having adopted its plan to offer 30-50% of courses in-person or in a bimodal format, and the subsequent pivoting away from the terminology of bimodal teaching toward "hybrid formats" in official communications about a planned partial return to campus this Fall;¹ and
5. the continued failure of your administration to provide any detailed and written information demonstrating that the announced plan "*to offer 30-50% of courses in-person or in hybrid formats*"² is founded on pedagogically sound practices.

¹ See "One year later: a promise of a brighter future," communication sent to academic staff by the Provost and Vice-President Academic Affairs and the Vice-President, Finance and Administration on May 4, 2021.

² See "*You made it! End of the academic year,*" communication sent to students by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs on April 30, 2021.



We, the signatories to this letter, and your administration share the common goal of implementing a successful partial return to campus in the Fall 2021. We further maintain that in confronting the challenges and uncertainties the COVID-19 pandemic places in front of us, working in partnership through democratic decision-making is the most productive way of identifying a path forward that both preserves and ensures the continued delivery of the high-quality educational programming for which our university is renowned.

In the light of the concerns outlined above, and in our letter of April 7, we are demanding that a meeting be held between your administration and all signatories, as a group, to these letters no later than **Friday, May 14, 2021**.

We look forward to receiving your timely response.

Respectfully,

The Executive Committee of the University of Ottawa Students' Union (UOSU)

Dimitri Karmis
President, APUO

Marcelle Desmornes
President, SSUO

Patricia Magazoni Gonçalves
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Michael Murphy
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Nesrine Cherif
Student Life Commissioner, on behalf of the GSAÉD