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**Subject:** Keeping You Informed About the Strike

Dear Sheridan Community,

As we reach the end of week three of the academic strike impacting all 24 colleges in Ontario, I wanted to share some important updates with our community. In this email, you'll find information regarding:

- The fall term
- The holiday break
- Field placements
- Fees and refunds
- Assignments
- Winter reading week
- Bargaining

### **The Fall Term**

Every day, Sheridan is modelling scenarios for a return-to-class that will ensure students' learning goals can be successfully achieved. Optimally, we are working to deliver the fall term by the end of 2017 to avoid an impact on subsequent terms. At this moment in time, we are not looking at any scenarios in which the fall term is lost or restarted. Our number one priority is to maintain our exceedingly high standards for program quality; this will ensure students meet the learning outcomes associated with their courses and programs.

Depending on the length of the strike, it may be possible that part of the fall term may need to carry over into January. This has not yet been determined. We are acutely aware that there are 1,100 students who are expecting to graduate in December. We are reviewing their programs, one by one, to see what can be done to address these sorts of exceptional circumstances.

### **The Holiday Break**

Sheridan may need to use the week of December 18-22 to make up for lost days of instruction; indeed, Conestoga, Fanshawe and Mohawk College have already announced that they will be using this week. With that in mind, on October 30, 2017 we asked students who had not yet booked travel plans during the week of December 18-22 and/or during the winter reading week February 26 – March 2 to please refrain from doing so.

We recognize that some students made travel arrangements prior to when this was announced on October 30. After the return to work, those students will be given an opportunity to present documentation that confirms a booking date. With that in hand, Sheridan will ensure that academic accommodations are duly arranged.

Sheridan further commits that no classes will run during the period of December 23-January 1 (inclusive).

### **Field Placements**

At the start of the strike, Sheridan cancelled all field placement activities. This was a difficult, carefully considered decision that was based on our commitment to student success. It recognized the important role faculty at Sheridan play in vocational learning and development.

As the strike goes on, however, we have been contemplating which programs might be able to resume field placements. Inherent in this is ensuring programs have the requisite staff to support students' learning in field placements. After three weeks of disruption, we have now determined that the following programs will re-start as early as the week of November 6.

- Kinesiology, All semesters
- Vet Tech, Semester 1
- Practical Nursing, Semester 3
- Athletic Therapy, Off campus placements
- Investigations-Public and Private, Semester 3
- Community and Justice Services, Semester 3
- Paralegal, Semester 4

All Sheridan students engaged in Field Placements this fall will be contacted by their program office shortly.

### **Fees and Refunds**

Sheridan is not collecting fees from students while a strike is in effect.

Fees for the winter term for returning students were originally due on November 15. Should the strike end five business days before this date, the original deadline will apply. In the undesirable event that the strike progresses to this date, we will extend this deadline to five business days after the strike ends.

Fees for new students who are beginning at Sheridan in January were due on October 11. This deadline has been extended to November 24. That date will also be adjusted should a strike extend to that date.

Sheridan is also not collecting late fees that were charged for the fall term after October 16, which is the date that the strike began. Late fees charged prior to October 16 remain in effect.

The balance of fees for students receiving OSAP is February 14, 2018.

Refunds are tied to provincial policy, which states that students are eligible for refunds up to the 10th day of class – a date which has long passed. Any possible changes to this policy, due to the extraordinary circumstances resulting from an academic strike, will be determined by the Provincial government.

### **Assignments**

Sheridan has underscored that no exams will be scheduled and no assignments will be due during the strike, nor will any be due for 72 hours (including weekends) following the announcement that the strike has ended. This decision has been made to allow students several days to re-engage in their learning and to return to campus. Students are, however, encouraged to remain engaged in their coursework during the strike. To be clear though: students will not be penalized for missing original deadlines that fall within the strike period.

New dates for assignments and tests will be communicated by faculty upon their return to work. Our faculty are invested in and committed to your success. I am confident they will alter dates and assignments carefully and thoughtfully. Students can reasonably expect that they cannot be assessed on material that has not yet been covered.

### **Winter Reading Week**

In all of our scenario planning, Sheridan is endeavoring to maintain the winter reading week, which is currently scheduled for February 26-March 2, 2018. We are conscious of the importance of this break for our students' physical, mental and financial well-being. Depending on the length of the disruption, however, this may need to be used for instruction. Confirmation of the winter term calendar will be communicated as soon as possible following the end of the strike.

## **Bargaining**

The provincially-appointed mediator called the College Employer Council (representing Ontario's 24 colleges including Sheridan) and OPSEU (the union representing academic employees at the colleges) back to the bargaining table on November 2. We have not received any updates with respect to how bargaining is proceeding.

## **Further updates**

Please continue to monitor your Sheridan email and the strike information webpage, which can be found at [strikeinfo.sheridancollege.ca](http://strikeinfo.sheridancollege.ca). Developments can occur quickly. We will be certain to share all major updates with you, through these channels.

Thank you once again for your continued patience during this difficult time. I am certain that I speak for everyone at Sheridan when I say that we would all like to see a quick resolution to this strike so that our students and faculty can get back to the classroom.

Sincerely,

Mary Preece, PhD  
President and Vice Chancellor