

ACADIA UNIVERSITY JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes

Meeting January 27, 2022 – 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Teams

Present

Melanie Coleman, Admin Coordinator, Safety & Security
Eveline DeSchiffart, Acadia Divinity
Patrick Difford, Director, Safety & Security
Michael Holmes, AUPAT
Amitabh Jha, AUFA
Richard Johnson, Athletics
Sarah Keefe, OHS Nurse
Kathy Klein, Human Resources
Caroliina Landry, OHS Nurse
Laura Miller, Chartwells
Pat Mora, Financial Services
Ann Myers, SEIU, Library – Co-chair
Derek Parker, Physical Plant
James Sanford, Exec. Director, Student Services
Aran Silmeryn, SEIU
Sandra Symonds, AUPAT
Brian Wilson, AUFA

Regrets

Greg Deveau, Operations Supervisor & OHS Coordinator, Safety & Security
Marcel Falkenham, Director, Facilities Management
Bertrand Gloeckner, Physical Plant
Nancy McMullin, Physical Plant

1. **Call to order** by James Sanford at 1:31 PM. Welcome Dr. Jha representing Vlad Zamlynny (previously filling in for Terri).
2. **Approval of minutes** – both November and December's minutes were approved by Brian Wilson, seconded by Ann Myers.
3. **Approval of agenda** – Two member updates from Brian Wilson and Aran Silmeryn to be added. Approved by Aran Silmeryn, seconded by Richard Johnson.
4. **Business arising from previous minutes:**
 - a. **COVID updates:**
 - i. Introduced Sarah Keefe, part-time OHS Nurse supporting Caroliina Landry.
 - ii. B for Kai: tentatively scheduled for February 4 (for a second dose or individuals who want the first dose). Location TBD.
 - iii. 165 doses administered on January 21 on-campus vaccine clinic. Since Moderna takes half doses, lots are left over. A second clinic scheduled for Monday. Participants must be 30 and older (also open to immediate family to avoid wasting doses)
 - iv. 200 Pfizer doses for February 25 clinic, could increase dose numbers depending on uptake.

- v. Rapid tests are granted to students who are symptomatic or have been in close contact with a COVID positive (more than 72 hours previous). Last week 96 rapid tests were distributed.
- vi. Actual test clinics aren't having much uptake- most likely due to students not being on campus and serving only unvaccinated/partially vaccinated individuals. Looking to increase numbers as time goes on. A lot of students didn't come back due to uncertainty in the next week, may have further uptake after.
- vii. Student pledges: 4,000 students on campus, 633 outstanding (but could be inactive students). Very few students that have outright refused vaccination, most are willing to comply with rules and understand they must visit the clinic (for a fee if living off-campus).
- viii. Mask-free eating spaces introduced on campus to address needs of off-campus students having no safe place to eat (or a legal avenue to take their mask off and eat without getting into trouble). Students must be actively eating to take their mask off. Locations: SUB main level, KCIC garden room, Biology main entrance, McCain commons outside the labs. Signs added this morning.
- ix. Spaces previously designated as mask-free suspended until further notice, only mask free eating spaces on campus.
- x. Numerous positive COVID cases on and off campus. Unable to log off-campus numbers due to the volume. Following provincial guidelines: only identifying PCR lab testing, not rapid tests. The responsibility of contact tracing now falls on the individual- we provide the information but do not reach out on their behalf.
- xi. A COVID hotline is in the works to assist with the volume of calls inundating both OHS nurses and Safety & Security. The email account will be monitored by employees 16 hours a day to answer numerous emails coming in.

b. Emergency response/emergency preparedness

- i. Item deferred to next meeting.

5. New Business

a. Update from Brian Wilson:

- i. Brian was approached by several professors with numerous OHS questions and concerns:
 1. Based on language in the contract, some faculty believe the JOHS committee should have been more involved with the return to campus plan/resuming in-person classes.
 2. Since N95/KN95 masks are more effective, should they be supplied to the campus? Provincial guidelines recommend 3ply masks at minimum. If you are a vulnerable demographic an N95 is advised. It is the individual's responsibility to provide their own masked based on their vulnerability.
 3. Questions regarding a department on campus that underwent a ventilation systems inspection and did not meet criteria for safe in-

person meetings. Caroliina clarified the professor was most likely referencing the Student Resource Centre/Counselling Centre who recently evaluated their space to determine whether in-person sessions could resume see if ok to return in-person, and was about service delivery specific to the unit. Air quality testing is generally a Phys Plant responsibility (coordinated through Marcel's office).

- ii. Please note: just because a building or room don't meet the criteria for a mask-free space doesn't mean it is not a safe space, people just need to wear their masks. We set a high criteria during the alpha variant to follow government guidelines (MERV-13 minimum to filter virus- not common in buildings before COVID).
- iii. Encourage colleagues and members of the Acadia community to visit the JOHSC website - important to understand, we take information forward and we then take action. James Sanford invited Brian to send him a quick summary of concerns that can be passed along to the VP.
- iv. Regarding the return to in-person delivery: all plans have been approved through the Department of Labour and Advanced Education. There has been continuous contact with Public Health and Dr. Strang to take direction. At one point all plans were viewed by OHS through Department of Labour.

b. Update from Aran Silmeryn

- i. In the aftermath of our sever storm on January 14, there was a brief discussion: if emergency exits are blocked by snow, does a building such as the library stay closed? And if the situation does constitute a risk, how do the lines of communication work to get the proper information out to make a call?
- ii. It requires some work around Patrick through the EMC process. The VP Admin is contacted to make recommendation, who then communicates to other execs and then to Safety and Security to coordinate campus messaging.
- iii. What comes first: do staff receive notice from Phys Plant stating “___ building's exits are blocked” or is it the building manager's responsibility to identify concerns? It is part of Phys Plant's protocol: grounds are in constant contact with Safety and Security through the night, reporting weather patterns/changes/visibility. There are priority areas for clearance (laneways and exits) but if the storm is severe, Security is instrumental on communication points to direct machines on the ground.
- iv. James will follow up with Patrick/Greg/Marcel to determine clear direction and protocol on snow removal for blocked exits.
- v. Aran commented there are lots of new staff on campus who have not received OHS onboarding and are not aware of existing protocols. If staff are ever in doubt, Safety and Security is a reliable contact.
- vi. Who has the authority to say a building is going to stay closed? It is a conversation with Security/Physical Plant and whoever is near the door. We shouldn't open a building where emergency exits aren't accessible.

This can be determined internally (through the Dean, in the library's case)-- whatever your system allows. No one will question the intention of someone who feels the building isn't safe for opening. If it's meal hall or a residence, clearance will be escalated as it is a required service.

- vii. Question posed: if a storm escalates to campus closure/notice, do we issue a retraction once re-opened? No, we do not issue a "campus opening." It's an assumption. Goes day-by-day for closure notices
- viii. Are Everbridge alerts issued for individual building closures? Generally, Everbridge is reserved for more critical/time sensitive information. Other campus building closures-- the Arena, for example -- are communicated with internal email messaging. However, the library could warrant an Everbridge alert. (It is a topical discussion, as Security is in the process of re-writing the campus closure policy.)

6. Incidents reports

- a. Aside from the expected annual slip and falls, there are no major incidents to report.

7. Summary of Actions and Results Timetable arising from this meeting

- a. Brian Wilson will send a summary of concerns brought forward by faculty, James Sanford will help clarify or ensure the message is passed along to the VPs. Melanie Coleman will insert these comments into the minutes.
- b. James Sanford will follow up with Patrick Difford/Marcel Falkenham/Greg Deveau on snow removal for exits.
- c. Melanie Coleman will connect with Greg Deveau to see if there are any incident reports to bring to the committees attention.

Next meeting: Thursday, February 24, 1:30 p.m.

8. Adjournment by James Sanford at 2:29 p.m.