



June 15, 2023

RE: Open Letter from Cap. U. Faculty Senators to President Paul Dangerfield

President Dangerfield,

We write to you today in our capacity as Faculty Senators with all the powers and duties vested in us under the University Act.

Your invocation of a state of Academic Disruption ([Grade Assignment During an Academic Disruption policy S.2016-01](#)) on June 13, 2023, in the midst of Summer Term I, reminds us that the current job action has academic elements that extend well beyond contract bargaining and union relations. These academic elements and your proposed actions vis-à-vis an offer to have administrators assign student grades, credit and/or tuition refunds for Summer I term courses call for the close review and attention of the Senate, our central academic governance body on campus.

First, and most importantly, we urge you to return to the table with MoveUp and include their requested contractual language about equity and the protection of rights around the assignment of remote work. The scale of disruption of Capilano University's teaching and learning environment is far out of proportion to a request for wording (in fact one to two sentences) around the equitable assignment and protection of remote work for our academic support staff. This is especially true when those sentences reflect language that is already present and commonly accepted around the Province in other staff contracts.

We believe the request by academic support staff for this language in their contract is eminently reasonable. More importantly we believe such language is conducive to a higher quality academic experience and a more equitable teaching and learning environment. For the reasons above, as Senators, we favour the inclusion of this language in the staff contract.



Second, we write out of concern about your proposed plan to administratively assign credit, grades, and/or course refunds to students taking classes in Summer term I 2023.

Any attempt to circumvent faculty involvement in the educational process will lead to a lessening of the student experience. Feedback not given will make learning non-existent under the execution of this plan as it is currently proposed.

If you proceed with this plan to have administrators, rather than instructors of record, assign credit and/or grades, we expect that you will return to Senate once it reconvenes with a full accounting and a transparent breakdown of the number of Summer Term I course credits and grades assigned as well as the number of student refunds requested and granted. The Registrar can easily provide all of this information while preserving the degree of student privacy and confidentiality it deserves.

As Senators, we understand that there are some students involved in practicums or other relationships with outside parties that may have a specific program requirement or non-repeatable WIL or internship experience for which they must receive credit.

However, this group of Summer I students is in the vast minority. For the overwhelming majority of the roughly 4,300 students in Summer I courses, we have serious concerns, from an academic integrity perspective, about your proposal to assign grades and/or credit for courses that have only met for an average of 60% of the required contact hours. This would be the average for courses that ceased to meet after the University unilaterally suspended classes on June 6, leaving only 4 full weeks of class contact hours in a 7-week Summer term.

For these reasons above, we regard the current strategy outlined in your “Academic Disruption” email of June 13 as not only a disservice to staff but also to students and to faculty. It also undermines the academic integrity and value of the high-quality education that our faculty delivers to Capilano University students year in and year out.



We hope you will consider our views as you weigh the options for moving forward and for moving us out of this impasse. We urge you to return to the table and deliver MoveUp the fair and equitable contract they seek and deserve so that our faculty can return to class and complete this term with the students they serve.

Thank you,

Faculty Senators of Capilano University

Deanna Baxter
John Brouwer
Sue Dritmanis
Brian Ganter
Christy Goerzen
Michael Thoma
Diana Twiss
Corey Muench

CC: Robert Thompson; Dean Ramin Shadmehr; Dean Tracy Penny Light; Dean Brad Martin; Dean Lara Duke; Dean Dennis Silvestrone; Vice President, Academic and Provost Laureen Styles; Registrar Kyle Vuorinen; BC Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills; Mary Jukich; MoveUp Support Staff Union; Capilano University Faculty Association