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DSU Position on the Winter 2021 In-Person Exams at Dawson College
Adopted at the Winter 2021 General Assembly of the Dawson Student Union

REMINDING that Covid-19 cases nationwide have been on a significant rise in the past months, with 80.9% of confirmed cases suspected to be variant cases **(1)**;

HIGHLIGHTING that there is still uncertainty and ambiguity around the contamination rates and dangers of these various variants, especially on younger people;

CONSIDERING the Greater Montreal area is currently a Covid-19 red-zone, the highest level alert set by the Quebec ministry of health **(2)**;

HIGHLIGHTING that people between the age of 20 and 29 have seen the greatest increase of overall Covid-19 cases in Montreal over the past 2 weeks, with 806 new cases **(3)**;

CONSIDERING that up to a quarter of the population does not self-isolate even when having the virus or suspecting of having it **(4)**;

REMINDING that students lack sleep at the end of the semester which can have a negative impact on one's immune system;

HIGHLIGHTING that students are already stressed when being evaluated for finals and that being in-person could potentially cause more significant degrees of stress due to the higher risk of contracting the virus;

CONSIDERING students are already stressed by the overall Covid-19 pandemic, with 63% of Canadians between the age of 18 and 34 reporting increased stress and anxiety (data from February 2021) **(5)**;

CONSIDERING that stress and anxiety can impede on one's quality of thinking **(6)** and therefore, students' overall academic performance;

CONSIDERING that these exams would be worth 50% of students' grade, it is crucial that students take these in an environment where they feel safe rather than anxious;

CONSIDERING that Academic Integrity has been taken into consideration by the College and its faculty when designing online exams thus far;

HIGHLIGHTING that Academic Integrity should not be more important than students' health;

CONSIDERING the majority of exams thus far have taken place online and that it is crucial for the sake of consistency that these exams continue to take place online;

CONSIDERING a majority of students take public transportation to travel to school and that using such a service increases the risk of contracting the virus;

CONSIDERING that some students may be more at risk if we consider auto-immune diseases or may put their family members and those around them in danger;

RECOGNIZING that a survey conducted on the entire student body reported that 77.27% of respondents with scheduled in-person exams believe these should be online instead **(7)**;

RESPECTING the majority of respondents' concerns with in-person exams;

DENOUNCING the College's attempt to hire students as cleaning staff during exam period which would in turn put their health at even more risk;

HIGHLIGHTING that, by expressing the need for more staff during exam period, the College demonstrates that it does not have the capacity to hold these in-person exams in accordance with current health safety measures;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Dawson Student Union take a firm position against in-person final exams for the winter 2021 semester;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dawson Student Union supports the following: that online final exams be common across departments/courses and be worth as much as if they were in-person; that, in addition to their regular front camera, students be required to have a side-camera and open for the duration of the exam;

REMINDING that this position is supported by the Dawson Student Union's membership **(7)**.

**This Resolution was written by Inès Lamothe-Katrapani, Kevin Contant-Holowatyj and Leana Ramirez based on a motion that was passed at a regular meeting of the Special Committee of In-Person Final Exams on the 26th of April 2021 and approved for presentation at the Winter 2021 General Assembly by the Executive Committee on the same day.

- (1) <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/covid-19-hospitalizations-in-quebec-drop-by-over-20-as-1-106-more-positive-cases-reported-1.5400872>
- (2) <https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus-2019/systeme-alertes-regionales-et-intervention-graduelle/palier-4-alerte-maximale-zone-rouge>
- (3) <https://santemontreal.qc.ca/en/public/coronavirus-covid-19/situation-of-the-coronavirus-covid-19-in-montreal/#c46934>
- (4) <https://www.concordia.ca/news/stories/2020/09/15/global-covid-19-study-finds-a-strong-link-between-health-messaging-and-behaviour.html?c=/coronavirus>
- (5) <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/covid-continues-take-heavy-toll-canadians-mental-health>
- (6) <https://www.mcgill.ca/newsroom/channels/news/experts-covid-19-309919>
- (7) According to a survey that was sent out to the DSU's membership on April 22nd and that received over 5000 signatures