International Applicants to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

The coronavirus pandemic has caused considerable disruption to the normal procedures and timelines for admission of students to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, and commencement of these students’ programs of study. This is particularly true for international applicants, many of whom were accepted prior to the present crisis. This email provides guidance on how international students are being impacted, and recommendations for accommodating these students.

International students admitted for the Summer or Fall 2020 terms, and who have already arrived at the University of Manitoba, should be accommodated by their unit and/or advisor, given the present circumstances including lack of access to laboratories, studios, classrooms, sports facilities and physical resources. Such accommodations should be as reasonable as possible given the circumstances, providing flexibility while maintaining the goals and requirements of the program of study. Online, non-contact accommodations are recommended, including reading assignments, literature reviews, manuscript preparation, home study or practice, webinars and electronic classes as appropriate. Online meetings between students, advisors and advisory committee members are encouraged. It is unclear when access to university buildings and physical resources will return, thus both short- and longer-term accommodations are required. As a reminder, units are responsible for their students according to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulations and unit Supplemental Regulations.

For international students admitted (actual or provisional) for the Summer or Fall 2020 terms, but who have not yet arrived at the University of Manitoba, units and advisors may need to plan for possibilities including delayed commencement of programs. Incoming students may face challenges obtaining transport to Winnipeg for the foreseeable future. Should such students manage to arrive in Winnipeg, they may face challenges obtaining consular and visa services, supplemental health insurance, and housing, and may be under particular stress in adapting to their new location. At the present time, such students may also be required to self-isolate for up to two weeks, and will require close support during this time, including obtaining the necessities such as food and medicine. Units should assist students with accessing student support services (http://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/counselling-resources-students) and the International Centre (http://umanitoba.ca/international), and should be aware of the particularly acute mental stresses that international students may be under upon arrival.

Advisors and units considering admitting students for the Winter 2021 term and beyond should consider the above, particularly in the context of the present rapidly evolving situation.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies remains ready to assist students, staff, faculty and units in minimizing disruption to the initiation and progression of international students’ academic programs.