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Monday, November 6, 2017

RE: Open Letter to the Senior Management of George Brown College

As we move into the fourth week of strike action, the students of George Brown College have grown increasingly concerned about the implications and impact this strike has on their education.

The Executive of the Student Association met with the President of George Brown College, Anne Sado, and the Interim Executive Dean, Dr. Cory Ross, on Wednesday, November 1, 2017. We presented them with questions sourced directly from students and requested that the Student Association executives be included in future meetings with the senior management when planning strategies that will ultimately affect our students, such as a possible extension to the current semester, financial hardships and cancellation of the next semester's intersession week.

In this meeting, the questions submitted to the President and Interim Executive Dean were partially answered. The answers we received were presented in an [executive update](#) posted on November 3, 2017. The remaining questions, largely revolving around topics concerning OSAP disbursement and tuition refunds, that were left unanswered were given a deadline for response, which was to be November 6, 2017. A full list of the questions asked can be found on the [Student Association's website](#).

Unfortunately, this was not honoured and the executives of the Student Association were shocked to discover, through a Facebook post from the College on November 6, 2017, that decisions were made impacting the scheduled breaks in the academic year. No consultation with the Student Association occurred.

The Student Association condemns the cancellation of the originally scheduled winter break. There has also been no tangible plan regarding students who have already made travel plans during the originally scheduled breaks that the College has decided to revoke. Other options should be explored with consultation from students, as we are the ones who are directly affected by such decisions.

The students have communicated that, while George Brown College may not be directly responsible for the outcome of the strike action, the College has been lacking in proper planning for and communication of the strike. While the College has been updating students with information as it is released, there has been no notice of what tangible plan is in place to accommodate the missed classes, exams, and assignments upon return to the classroom.

As elected representatives of our full-time students, we are calling on you, the senior leadership of George Brown College, to develop and share with students a tangible plan for students who have been impacted by this strike.

The Student Association is presenting the following demands to you, the senior leaders of George Brown College:

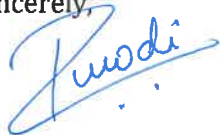
- the development and communication of a contingency plan for this semester;
- the development and communication of a contingency plan for the Winter 2018 semester;
- maintain the originally scheduled winter break and intersession week;
- clear, direct communication regarding the strike and its impacts on students via email, George Brown's website, and social media platforms;
- a formal written statement from the President of George Brown College regarding the state of our academic year;
- confirmation of special academic consideration for students with prior travel plans during the week of December 16-22 made prior to November 6, 2017;
- re-commitment to the agreed upon open communication with the Student Association Executive team during the strike; and
- inclusion of representatives from the Student Association in any and all George Brown College meetings where strike-related decisions affecting students will be made.

Every day that our students are not in class affects their ability to learn, their financial situations, and their mental health and well-being. Every day is a day of uncertainty and students need to know what plan is in place. We are extremely concerned about the strike's impacts on our international students' academic and immigration status.

Students should not suffer the consequences imposed upon them because of a dispute between employers and employees, and most importantly, students need more than an FAQ with vague responses that do not address a very real issue: our access to education.

We are committed to ongoing communications on this matter and we will continue share the concerns of our students.

Sincerely,



Riddhi Modi
Director, Communications and Internal



Tiffany White
Director, Education



Mercedes Burrowes
Director, Campus Life



Alex Stewart
Director, Equity