



Dear Colleagues,

In my last update, I talked about the fact that we continue toward planning to reopen in September, in-person and on-campus, and some of the steps we are taking to be ready in the event that we cannot welcome students back to campus for in-classroom teaching. The Online Preparedness Task Force has been working with our Faculty members since then. Also, we have taken steps to communicate regularly with our new and returning students and their parents.

Over the last two weeks, Nova Scotia's Public Health Authority has relaxed some of the protocols regarding physical interactions, including allowing families to 'bubble' and visit with one another, and has been providing signals that it will continue to take a measured, phased-in approach to relaxing regulations even further. We are all hoping that conditions will continue to improve over the weeks ahead to the point where we can confidently welcome back faculty, staff, and students in the Fall. We must continue to follow the direction of Public Health to the letter if we are to avoid setbacks.

While conditions are improving, we must remain cautious and be prepared for the exercising of various scenarios of both course delivery and day-to-day life on campus. If we welcome students to campus, it will be under very specific and strict conditions. In the event we are unable to invite students back to campus in the fall, we will be prepared to deliver our high quality academic programs online as a result of the efforts of the Task Force and faculty members. We also realize that the decision to open campus to students must be made within the next few weeks and assure you that this decision is being made with extreme care, with the concern over the health of students, faculty, and staff at the forefront.

With these factors in mind, we are drafting a plan for a return to campus. The COVID Steering Committee, chaired by Randy Peters, has started to document the steps and procedures that will allow an increasing number of employees to return to campus in a phased and controlled manner over the months ahead. While still under development, the plan will include details such as criteria relating to who may apply to return to campus, strict rules and codes of conduct related to health and safety protocols, as well as timelines. The plan will be presented to and approved by StFX's Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee before rolling out to the campus community. Randy will report progress to StFX's Executive Committee on a weekly basis. I look forward to sharing more details in the coming weeks.

We recognize that the situation is fluid and we must be nimble in response. It is with that in mind that I ask our community to continue to express patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

Kevin B. Wamsley, PhD
President & Vice-Chancellor
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