Dear Members of the StFX Community,

COVID-19 has presented the university with significant challenges. These challenges are not just about academic credit or attending work or the hosting of events; the issues we are facing are about the personal health and safety of friends, family, and ourselves. Your health and safety are our priorities. We have based our decisions on how the university will proceed in its operations on the latest health reports from the Public Health Agency of Canada, on careful conversations with other universities but, most importantly, following the advice of Nova Scotia Public Health. With this information at hand, it is our contention that StFX remains a safe location for our students, faculty, and staff.

StFX shall remain operational under very specific conditions.

Almost 50% of our student population hails from outside of the Province of Nova Scotia and forcing our students to travel home at this time is a far greater risk than having them remain in Antigonish. However, there are very specific conditions under which we must, as a community, proceed. As such, we ask that every community member adhere to these conditions.

The university remains open and will continue to share updates with the campus community as we receive information and as decisions are made. **We encourage you to visit and bookmark www.stfx.ca/coronavirus for the latest information from the university.** Again, this is a fluid situation and you should expect to receive additional updates as any further decisions or directives are issued. The situation is fluid and rapidly evolving, with various jurisdictions (including Nova Scotia) considering further measures to stop the spread of the virus as new information becomes available.

In the meantime, I wish to share StFX’s response regarding COVID-19:

- StFX has activated a committee to oversee our pandemic preparedness. Their work continues to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our campus community.
- Academic Leadership is reviewing programming continuity and contingencies.
- Operational directors have conducted risk assessments, identified critical activities, and are developing contingency plans for business continuation.
- StFX has and continues to meet with the Regional Emergency Management Organization.
- StFX has prohibited all academically-related student international travel, and non-personal faculty and staff international travel. StFX employees and students, currently travelling, shall impose a self-monitoring protocol, for a period of 14 days upon return to Antigonish.
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- Authorization for an additional 10 cleaning staff; updated cleaning and disinfecting procedures have been implemented.
- Morrison Hall will be eliminating self-service stations, transitioning to full-service stations.

Nova Scotia Public Health reminds us that the risk to those within the Province of Nova Scotia remains low. As such, the university remains open and facilities such as the libraries, recreation centres, food services, health and wellness centre, etc., remain fully operational. However, there will be restrictions on class sizes, public gatherings, and social events. These restrictions will be noted on the website and will be communicated directly to you. Until further notice, students, staff and faculty should continue to go to classes and work as usual. If you have extraordinary circumstances that require accommodation, please see your Dean or supervisor. If you are ill, stay home. If you are feeling anxiety or are unsure, please speak to Health and Counselling or your immediate supervisor. We are here to help.

This situation is causing significant stress and anxiety among our StFX community members. Rest assured that the University is exercising the utmost caution and care in the decision-making that affects us all so personally. At this time, risk is low but we remain vigilant and continue to meet daily to consider appropriate actions to maintain the health and safety of all of our members. We ask you to remain calm and to be vigilant about hand-washing and social distance.

On behalf of the university, I thank everyone for your patience and understanding. In my time at the university I can see that we are bound to help one another in times of challenge and difficulty at StFX. We will emerge from this together as a community.

Please visit StFX.ca/coronavirus/FAQ for answers to frequently asked questions.

Kevin Wamsley, PhD
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