



To the StFX Community,

With the start of the semester fully underway, it is time to advise the StFX community on how the university will approach upcoming public events, such as Spring Convocation, that would normally be held on campus and attract large numbers of people from outside the campus community and across Canada.

All on-campus public events last semester were greatly impacted by the pandemic and were either cancelled or restricted, with each one vetted through a risk management lens that focused on the health and safety of our campus and Antigonish communities. The X-Ring ceremony, the President's Installation and Fall Convocation are three examples of ceremonies that were reformatted to accommodate virtual delivery with some in-person participation.

At present, the course of the pandemic and the public health response to it remain top of mind as we consider the ongoing operations of the university. We are in a high state of vigilance with respect to how provinces across Canada are navigating the pandemic. Although, to date, our province and local community have navigated the pandemic very well, there is a continuing need to be mindful of how rapidly things can change if a major outbreak were to occur.

There are many aspects of the pandemic that are simply beyond the control of the university, and with the necessity of providing certainty to students, their parents and other interested parties in a timely fashion, the university has decided that it is best to proceed with alternative delivery formats for major public events for the duration of this semester. Ultimately, for our graduating students and their families, this means that Spring Convocation will be taking place virtually.

Our university has committed to work with our student leaders to plan for the best possible experience for graduating students that current circumstances will permit. By working together, we will deliver a truly memorable occasion for all, while maintaining the safety and health of our campus and local community.

With this decision, we also recognize the impact on plans for the return to campus by the Class of 2020 in May. Options for alternative plans will be discussed with leaders from that class.

The work to organize a virtual Spring Convocation we will all be proud of starts today. We will ensure that the campus community is updated regularly as our plan develops. Please stay safe and continue to look out for one another.

Andy

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