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Winter term will be online: McMaster Provost's letter

September 14, 2020

McMaster Daily News

Dear members of the McMaster community,

While the fall term is only in its second week I want to update our campus community on the planning being done for the winter 2021 term. I have been leading a group with broad representation of academic and campus leaders who evaluated many options for the winter term. The President and Vice-Presidents (PVP) have accepted the group's recommendation that McMaster extends this fall's online delivery of academic programs into the winter term.

I realize that this will be disappointing to many. For those of you who are used to being on campus and interacting with colleagues, peers and students in person, the virtual environment presents additional challenges. For those of you who, like me, are new to McMaster, I understand the difficulties with building relationships and negotiating through our University virtually.

McMaster remains committed to making decisions based on the health and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. Every level of public health continues to stress the need to maintain physical distancing and anticipates the pandemic continuing for the foreseeable future. To keep our community as safe as possible, the winter academic term will be online with only a few exceptions where program requirements or the need for access to specialized equipment or facilities may still require some in-person campus time.

- Classes for the entire winter term will be online.
- With few exceptions, students will not need to be on campus to take courses. Students enrolling in programs with an on-campus component will receive additional information directly from their departments.
- Faculty and staff are encouraged to continue to find alternate, online means to deliver programs.
- The process used for the fall term to request use of labs and other specialized facilities, where essential to meet program requirements, will continue to be used with requests requiring approval

from the Department Chair, Dean and the Provost or delegate.
- Residences will remain closed but will continue to provide accommodation in exceptional circumstances and to support international students or others who need to quarantine
- Decisions regarding research at the university will continue to be determined under the leadership of the Vice-President, Research

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