



January 5, 2022

Dear Members of the McMaster Community,

We hope that you had an enjoyable holiday season and had time to rest and rejuvenate.

Before the break, we shared with you our planning for the beginning of the Winter 2022 term and committed to updating the plan as soon as we were able to assess the situation at the start of the new year. As anticipated, cases of Omicron have increased substantially, and the Ontario government introduced new restrictions as of today to help protect our healthcare systems and those who are most at risk.

The principles the university introduced at the beginning of the pandemic continue to guide our decisions. We remain focused on the health, safety and wellness of our community and the need to focus on our academic and research programs. We also want to ensure that we are supporting our broader community and our healthcare colleagues.

Academic Programs

Our plan to have all classes delivered virtually for the week of January 10th, with the exception of some clinical programs, remains in place. We will incrementally offer more hands-on learning to our students in alignment with the latest government and public health measures.

Beginning January 17 – Undergraduate labs, studios, clinical and other high priority hands-on learning and experiential activities will be in person, with limited exceptions. Instructors will share information for in-person learning through Avenue to Learn no later than January 10th. All students should check each of their Avenue sites, to confirm when their labs or studios will begin meeting in person.

Beginning January 31 – All level-one undergraduate courses will be in person giving students who have had limited opportunity to interact and spend time on campus the opportunity to adjust. More than half of our first-year students will be living in residence as of January 14. All graduate courses offered at the Ron Joyce Centre will also begin on January 31.

Beginning February 7 – All in-person classes begin for all students (undergraduate and graduate).

Research

The Vice-President Research is sharing information with the research community. The latest information can be found [here](#).

Employees

Employees who can do so will continue to work remotely as we gradually begin to return to university locations over time.

Beginning January 17: Employees who support student and academic activities will return on a limited basis. As occurred throughout the fall, areas can determine how to best manage

staffing levels to provide needed services while following physical distancing guidelines and minimizing staffing wherever possible.

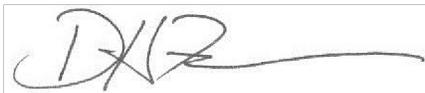
Beginning February. 7: Hybrid work plans across the university originally developed by units to start in January will begin to be implemented. The transition to these plans will occur throughout the month of February.

We recognize that there will be challenges for our community at home and on campus over the next few weeks as the pandemic continues and more people are required to isolate, manage their own health and care for family. We are committed to being as flexible as possible as our community navigates through this latest phase of COVID.

We encourage you to continue to monitor the [Daily News](#) and the [Back to Mac](#) website where you will find updated information on services, supports and health and safety.

Our thanks to everyone for your support for each other and particularly for our students, who need our ongoing focus and special attention to their wellbeing and long-term academic success. We are fortunate that we continue to have students, faculty and staff who are exceptionally caring and mindful of the roles each of us play in supporting the health and success of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DF', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Farrar
President and Vice-Chancellor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan F. Tighe', written in a cursive style.

Susan Tighe
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)