



Deans Community Update – August 4, 2021

Dear OISE Community,

I hope that many of you are enjoying the warm weather and spending some quality time with family and friends. I am writing to share a brief but important update. As always, you can find all community updates on the [Deans Community Updates and Resources](#) website.

OISE Statement Fall-Winter 2021-2022

Planning for the 2021-2022 academic year at OISE is well under way as course registration has opened since July 14. While the hope for return to in-person activities is increasing with the roll-out of vaccination against COVID-19, OISE is carefully monitoring the ongoing pandemic and is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment for our community, while also ensuring that our students continue to make progress toward the completion of their degrees.

Consideration and priority for in-person activities will depend on building capacity restrictions and on the degree to which the activity in question is an essential program requirement ^[1 & 2]. We want to provide the most positive student experience by avoiding as many disruptions as possible.

We are in a unique position given that out of our 3500 students, 1000 students complete a practicum or an internship as part of the essential requirements of their program. Our primary objective is to ensure that our students are safe.

Given there are uncertainties associated with up-coming public health directives and where we are in terms of course registration and academic preparation, we will continue the path of offering courses online for the Fall term. Courses that include a field placement will be indicated as in-person courses in the course registration system. There is an expectation that students will complete their placements in-person; however, those who need special accommodations are invited to connect with their program.

For the Winter session, we continue to plan for sixty percent of courses *across all OISE programs* to be offered in-person, which include full-year courses that will have started online in the fall and pivot to in-person in the winter if public health conditions are favourable. Most of these are in our teacher education and

counselling/clinical programs. The remaining forty percent of courses will continue to be offered online; however, we will continue to monitor the pandemic situation in Ontario closely and modify our plan in accordance with the public health directives and University guidance. We will keep the community updated with any changes in our planning. We are working with the University to provide rooms in the OISE building for academic co-curricular activities.

As noted in previous updates, OISE has a long history and a depth of experience offering online courses. We continue to build on our expertise in pedagogy and use of technology in order to offer cutting-edge teaching and learning opportunities online. We are committed to offering exceptionally high-quality instruction and programming to support our graduate programs, while also enhancing access to these programs during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

[1] Students with Research Fellowship, Graduate Assistant or Teaching Assistant responsibilities may be required to attend campus to fulfil their duties.

[2] International Students should connect with [UofT's Centre for International Experiences](#) to learn more about study permits, work permits and travel to Canada.

For the latest updates relevant to OISE programs, please be sure to visit the [ORSS site](#).

Petition

We received a [petition](#) from a group of OISE students expressing their support of the censure imposed by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) to the University of Toronto following a failed search for a new Director of the International Human Rights Program at the Faculty of Law.

One cannot stress enough the importance of academic freedom and freedom of expression as the central pillars of the university. They are what make universities so unique as institutions and are absolutely essential for the advancement of knowledge and the fulfilment of human kind. Therefore, I thank our students for taking part in such a difficult but also important debate.

For those who are interested in having a comprehensive account of the sequence of events around the search for a Director of the International Human Rights Program at the Faculty of Law, and the reasons that led to a failed search, I recommend reading the [Cromwell Report](#). The report proposes a series of recommendations, including engaging in a reconciliation process, both internally and with the preferred candidate.

I thank all those who have engaged with this issue and I hope very much that it can be resolved quickly.

Thank you,

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