



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE  
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

March 13, 2020

Dear Members of the OISE Community,

The University of Toronto and the Government of Ontario have made a number of important decisions over the last few days in response to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation. I am writing to provide an update on the implications of some of these decisions for our community.

1. Effective on Monday March 16th, OISE classes will no longer be held in-person for the remainder of this academic term. Over the last few weeks as part of our contingency planning efforts, our faculty were asked to plan for the possibility of shifting away from in-person classes towards alternative forms of course delivery. It is now time to put those plans in action. When our community returns from the March break, all classes will shift to alternative forms of delivery, which may include the use of Pepper, Quercus, email, or other platforms.
2. Our Jackman Institute for Child Study Lab School will be closing from March 14 to April 5 in parallel with the recent decision of the Government of Ontario to close public schools.
3. All Continuing and Professional Learning activities, including our Additional Qualifications Courses, have shifted to on-line delivery.
4. All discretionary events, such as public symposia, scheduled to take place at OISE before May 1st, 2020 will be cancelled or postponed. Unfortunately, this will mean postponing our OISE Faculty and Staff Awards Celebration, but we will find another, more suitable opportunity to honor our outstanding award winners. The OISE Dean's Office will be informing the community of the cancellation of events that we are hosting, including alumni events. It will be important for the organizers of other discretionary events (such as departments, centres, etc.) to communicate with their respective communities and registrants.
5. The School of Graduate Studies will be relaxing its current regulations concerning virtual participation in final oral examinations so that more examination members can participate through the use of appropriate technologies.
6. The University of Toronto (and OISE) will remain open, and our community will still have access to the OISE library, cafeteria, ORSS and other services.
7. OISE's Education Commons has developed helpful guidance for all members of our community who may need support in learning how to teach and work using digital technologies, including a [checklist](#) and [resource](#) page.

Continuity planning has been a key component of our ongoing Deans and Chairs discussions for some time, and I have created an expanded group including other key leaders within the Institute, to deal with the complex operational issues associated with what is now a rapidly changing situation. We are guided by three core priorities: 1) the

health and wellbeing of our students, faculty and staff; 2) sustaining our educational commitment to our students; and 3) sustaining our faculty and student research activities. We recognize that the Government of Ontario decision to close public schools will add another layer of complexity to the lives of many members of our community, including community members who are parents, teacher candidates with practicum requirements, and researchers who are actively engaged in schools. We will soon be providing additional information in an attempt to address some of these issues and concerns. We are also engaged in discussions about our course offerings in the summer of 2020 and will be informing the community of our decisions within the next week.

We are currently navigating in unpredictable and uncharted waters. I encourage you all to keep up to date with the University of Toronto's latest information at: <https://www.utoronto.ca/message-from-the-university-regarding-the-coronavirus>. While our leadership team will continue to do its very best to make decisions in this changing context and keep our community informed, I think that it is also important to note that our entire community will need to rise to our current challenge in a spirit of caring, compassion and patience. We need to recognize that we are all dealing with a range of complex challenges and uncertainties; we need to care for and support one another, especially the most vulnerable among us, and exercise patience and understanding as our faculty, staff, students, alumni, community partners, friends and families adjust to our changing context.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen A. Jones', written in a cursive style.

Glen A. Jones, Ph.D.  
Professor and Dean