

March 13, 2020

Office of the President

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**A Message to the Community on York's response to COVID-19**

As the COVID-19 pandemic has grown and evolved, York University has kept the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and faculty at the heart of all its decisions. We are also conscious of our role in the national and global fight against a serious illness. In light of [the developments](#) we have seen at home and around the world this week, it is time for the University to enter a new phase in its comprehensive response.

Beginning on Monday, March 16, 2020, we will be suspending all face-to-face instruction and moving courses to online formats. We are committed to completing the term and will deploy all of our resources to support faculty and students through this transition. Further information will be forthcoming from the Provost and Deans regarding courses with lab and studio requirements, and arrangements for examinations. Where possible, work and clinical placements will continue.

As of midnight tonight, we will be cancelling or postponing all non-essential events that are not required as part of an academic program. We will also be closing the Tait Mackenzie Centre and the Glendon Athletic Club until April 30, 2020. Our Keele and Glendon campuses will remain open, and research activities will continue.

In the days ahead, we will also be introducing new policies on working from home and doctors' notes to minimize risk and maximize flexibility for our community. More details on these changes will be forthcoming. As always, we encourage everyone to take [preventative measures](#) such as enhanced handwashing and social distancing. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

It will take time to sort out the details of the initiatives we are announcing today. I am grateful for the patience and support of students, staff and faculty during this period of rapid change. And to the members of York's Emergency Management Team and the many staff and faculty members who have put in so many hours – with many more to come – preparing and implementing our COVID-19 response, thank you. Your commitment to our community is extraordinary.

Compassion and care are among York's most important values. Some members of our community may need special accommodations to sustain their mental and physical health as the COVID-19 situation unfolds, and unfortunately, others will likely fall ill. York will be part of the network of family, friends and institutions that will help them recover.



I know this is an anxious and upsetting time for everyone. Let me say, without reservation, that York will be there to support every member of the community as we face this pandemic together. For students, my commitment is that you will have the academic and wellness supports you need to thrive in and beyond the current situation. For faculty and staff, know that the University recognizes your dedication and is, in turn, committed to your health and wellbeing.

Please stay tuned for additional information over the coming days. As always, you can find the latest updates on [York's dedicated COVID-19 website](#) and you can email your questions to [coronavirusinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:coronavirusinfo@yorku.ca). Senate Executive will also be providing guidance on adjustments to academic regulations, deadlines and schedules as required.

Take care of yourselves and each other,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rhonda L. Lenton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "L".

Rhonda L. Lenton,  
President & Vice Chancellor