

May 27, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

We are now well into our eleventh week of isolation and physical distancing, and already two weeks into our Spring term. So much change has taken place in this time, but our College community continues to meet the challenges and find innovative ways to help our learners and care for one another, and for that, I thank you.

I know many of you were disappointed to see large groups gathering in various cities this past weekend — I was, too. Dr. Vera Etches, Ottawa's Medical Officer of Health, warned earlier this week that as we go about reopening the province, we must do so in a "smart way." This means that we must continue physical distancing and taking extra care with hand-washing. As Dr. Etches noted, how we behave today will have an impact on our future freedoms and will determine the likelihood and severity of a second wave of the COVID-19 virus.

As we think about the future and what it will look like at Algonquin, I know the most important question for everyone is when we will be resuming on-campus operations. There are no easy answers to this, but I can assure you that we have been working closely with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and Colleges Ontario to find a way forward. As you know, the Government of Ontario has identified a three-stage reopening plan for the province, which is also guiding our plans. We have already determined that we will minimize face-to-face instruction and promote the delivery of remote academic instruction for the Fall term. This will ultimately assist in our ability to continue to respect physical distancing for those programs and services that will require an on-campus presence. Our teams are working diligently to help us ensure public-health guidance is reflected in our campus reopening plans, and we will be releasing information about these plans as decisions are made.

In the meantime, we are also engaged in discussion with Colleges Ontario about an opportunity to potentially bring a small number of students back to our campuses in July and August. If this is deemed possible, and if we can do so safely, some employees would be required to return to prepare the campuses for limited re-opening and to deliver these applied academic activities. I would caution that these discussions are ongoing and this proposed plan is a possibility, not a certainty. We will provide more information as soon as we know whether this approach has been approved.

On March 31, we cancelled all in-person events (professional development, celebrations, and regularly occurring gatherings and group events) at Algonquin College up to and including June 30, 2020. I know we are all anxious to resume these activities and events, but we now know that we are going to have to extend that date in order to ensure the health and safety of our College community, and all our many visitors, continues to be a priority. For this reason, we are now cancelling all in-person events at Algonquin College up to and including August 31, 2020. This deadline may be revised as we learn more about how the pandemic is unfolding, and we will notify you of any updates as soon as they are available.

I know there are still many questions that await answers and I thank everyone for your patience as we work with our academic and services teams, government and external partners to determine the best — and safest — plan for our College.

Finally, I would like to wish *Chag Sameach* to all our Jewish learners and employees who will begin marking Shavuot over the next few days and also acknowledge that the Christian community will be marking Pentecost this Sunday. I wish everyone a happy and restful weekend with your families.

Stay well and healthy, everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claude Brulé", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Claude Brulé
President and CEO