

October 23, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

I want to start by recognizing your persistence, resilience and adaptability this fall. As we mark the Mid-Term Break period next week (October 26-30), it's a time to reflect on the many unique challenges we have overcome together so far. Thank you for your continued hard work and collaborative spirit.

The Mid-Term break week is designed to be a chance to catch our collective breath – and support improved [student mental health](#). To our learners, I hope you make the most of the week ahead – whether enjoying some down time or catching up on your studies. To our academic teams and in keeping with the intent of the Mid-Term break week, I ask you to limit academic expectations of students during this time. I hope this period offers an opportunity for you to focus on your own well-being and to engage in professional development opportunities like [Kaleidoscope](#) and Learning and Teaching Services' [Teaching Expo](#).

Much like the past Thanksgiving Weekend, those of you travelling next week must [remain vigilant](#) – and do all you can to protect loved ones and members of our college community.

I want to remind everyone of the new, provincial [restrictions](#) that have affected some of our Ottawa Campus amenities – namely, the closing of the Algonquin Commons Theatre, Gym, Fitness Zone, and Restaurant International until at least Saturday, November 7. (Limited take-away service remains available at [select](#) Ottawa campus food locations.) In addition, the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association recently suspended varsity team sports for the 2021 Winter term. I recognize that losing such enjoyments and recreations has become all-too common, but we must continue to make health and safety the number one priority in our efforts to minimize COVID-19 cases.

Lastly, on Wednesday, October 28, Algonquin College will proudly host its first-ever [Virtual Convocation](#). And while our graduates cannot celebrate together in person with their peers and mentors, we can collectively celebrate the perseverance of this special group of graduates – most of whom had to adjust to remote learning amidst the pandemic in order to complete their studies. Their many success stories are a reflection of their individual efforts – but also of our entire community's ability to rally together, adapt, and reimagine our ongoing mission to transform hopes and dreams into lifelong success.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the significant efforts of countless employees of the College who have re-imagined our ceremony, preserving the traditional elements that make Convocation so special yet adapting them to an online environment.

I don't know about you but I, for one, look forward to the virtual ceremonies and the post-convocation virtual receptions!

As always, stay safe and healthy, everyone.

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

Claude Brulé
President, CEO
Algonquin College