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May 21, 2020

Dear Students:

The University of Toronto issued an announcement on May 19 outlining its approach to the delivery of teaching and research in 2020-21 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Each University Division is being asked to implement specific plans that suit their unique circumstances and student constituencies. I am writing on behalf of the Program Directors and Student Services to communicate our plans for Fall 2020.

At the Daniels Faculty, we have been hard at work developing new and innovative ways to deliver all our core undergraduate and graduate studios, classes, and field courses on-line, in some cases in both synchronous (live) and asynchronous (recorded) ways. Our faculty and staff have been adjusting our teaching schedules and modes of delivery and making sure the technical resources are in place to deliver our specialized programs effectively. We know that many of you are concerned about access to our library, fabrication facilities, studios, and labs at 1 Spadina, the Borden Building, and Earth Sciences. We want to assure everyone that we are trying to balance health concerns with our shared eagerness for a careful return to campus.

We are working on safety protocols that will enable our Toronto-based students to make use of physical spaces at the school in limited numbers to access the library/hi-speed WIFI, fabricate models and other artifacts, work in labs, and to meet in small groups to study, and socialize. Of course, such planning will be undertaken in conformity with all government and University regulations and recommended safety guidelines as they evolve. For now, we have determined that the large, open character of our studios, and the degree of human contact that takes place in them cannot be safely occupied until ways of detecting, safeguarding against, and treating the COVID-19 virus are better known. Should circumstances change, either before, or during the upcoming Fall term, we will be ready to smoothly switch to more on-site operations (or move in the other direction, if necessary). In any scenario, we will accommodate those members of our student, faculty, and staff who for whatever reason – whether health or logistics related – must continue to work remotely.

We are also developing new and innovative ways to involve students on web-based public programming and other extra-curricular activities to disseminate what is happening at the school and help us connect with each other during these strange times.

For those of you graduating this June, I want to remind you that we are committed to staging a great – and live – graduation celebration in the future, as a soon as we are cleared to congregate in larger numbers.

Our Program Directors and the Office of the Registrar and Student Services will continue to update you with further details in the coming weeks. In the meantime, please stay safe and try to enjoy the summer!

Yours,



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Dean

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