



Hello Newly Admitted Daniels Faculty Undergraduate Students!

Congratulations on your acceptance to the Daniels Faculty. We are so pleased that you will be joining us this fall. You will soon be a student at a great faculty that is part of an amazing university at a very interesting time in world history.

My name is Robert Wright. For the next year, or until the next dean is selected, I'll be the Faculty's interim dean.

Why do we have an interim dean? The answer is as you probably suspect: we were just beginning to search for a permanent dean when the COVID-19 pandemic put a stop to all international travel and in-person meetings. As a result, the dean search needed to be suspended.

I have been a professor of landscape architecture at the Daniels Faculty for almost 35 years, and I have a long history of teaching, research, and university administration. I look forward to learning alongside you as we embark on what promises to be a most unusual academic year.

Of course, the Daniels Faculty's dean search isn't the only aspect of the school's operations to have been disrupted by the pandemic. Many of you have urgent questions about the fall semester. What follows is a brief explanation of some of the steps we'll be taking to balance health and safety with the needs of our students and faculty during this challenging time. You'll find further information on the Daniels Faculty website.

Please note: If, after reading this letter and the website, you have any further questions, you can always email our Office of the Registrar and Student Services at undergraduate@daniels.utoronto.ca.

Will Daniels studios and courses be in-person, or will they be virtual?

Virtual. The Daniels Faculty will not be conducting any required in-person instruction during the fall semester. All of our classes will be online-only, either synchronous (happening in real time) or asynchronous (previously recorded), and the same goes for exams, critiques, and other forms of instruction. With guidance from public health authorities and the University of Toronto administration, we've determined that this is the best way to ensure the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff.

Do students have to be in Toronto to complete fall semester courses and studios?

No! Because courses and studios will be offered exclusively online, students will be able to complete their coursework from anywhere in the world. But many courses and studios will include live lectures and reviews, all of which will be conducted on Toronto time, synchronously. We hope to provide in-person opportunities throughout the fall on an optional basis.

Will any in-person activities be taking place?

Yes. As soon as it is safe for us to do so, we plan to open our facilities and student services offices, such as the Office of the Registrar and Students Services, Facilities, and IT.

Will students be able to access the Daniels Building to use design equipment, research or meet with small work groups?

Yes. We are planning to allow students limited access to all of the Daniels Buildings in the fall. You will be able to access studios and the digital fabrication lab, and you will be able to meet in small groups to work on collaborative projects and assignments. We will be enforcing health and safety rules, like physical distancing, to ensure that all those who enter the building are minimizing their COVID exposure risks.

No students will be required to enter any of our buildings. All visits will be strictly voluntary. And we will be carefully monitoring the advice of public health authorities throughout the fall semester. If, at

any time, we feel that the risks of access outweigh the benefits, we will further restrict in-building activities.

What about students who don't have reliable internet access at home?

Our expectation is that most Daniels Faculty students will have at-home access to computer equipment that meets the University of Toronto's minimum technical requirements (<https://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/covid-19/tech-requirements-online-learning/>) for online learning. For those who don't have access to reliable equipment, help may be available. If you need assistance with setting up your home learning environment, contact the Office of the Registrar and Student Services.

Will online courses and studios be as good as in-person courses and studios?

Our faculty members have spent the past few months honing their skills at connecting with students over the internet. I have confidence that the quality of Daniels Faculty instruction during the fall semester will be the same as — or better than — it has always been in the past.

Will tuition be reduced?

No. The Daniels Faculty will be delivering its usual range of academic programs and student services. As a result, tuition fees will be maintained at their normal levels.

Will students be able to live in student residences in fall?

For the latest information on the University of Toronto's student residences, visit the University of Toronto website (<https://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/covid-19/#Residence>).

I hope that this has answered most of your questions about the fall semester. Again: if you need further information, our staff are here to support you. Contact the Office of the Registrar and Student Services with your questions and you'll receive timely responses. Stay tuned for an invitation to an all-school meeting in late August/early September, at which point I look forward to meeting all of you.

I'm glad you chose to attend the Daniels Faculty. Please know that I and the Daniels Faculty's instructors and staff are dedicated to ensuring that you remain happy with that choice.

Until fall!



Robert Wright
Interim Dean

picture credit: Nic Lehoux