

MEMO

To: SJU Community

From: Peter Meehan, President and Vice Chancellor
Mike Gourlay, Executive Director, Finance and Administration

Date: August 9, 2021

Subject: August Update – Campus Response Team

The Senior Administrative Team and the Campus Response Team have been continuing to plan for our gradual return to normal campus activity during the fall term. All planning remains focused on protecting the health and well-being of our community and is guided by the Government of Ontario, Public Health, and the University of Waterloo (UW). We continue to encourage that all department leaders/chairs to support employees who have the opportunity to receive their COVID-19 vaccine through a scheduled or last minute appointment. SJU will show flexibility to support all employees who need time off during regular business hours to get their vaccine. St. Jerome's is continuing to plan for a staged return to campus while following the guidance of Ontario's '[Roadmap to Reopen](#)' steps and university and Public Health guidance. We are looking forward to ensuring our students have an excellent experience while on our campus and anticipate having them access as many SJU services and spaces as safely possible during the fall term.

As previously communicated in our July update, our plan is to invite employees to return to campus under the following plan:

1. August 2021 – We will continue to allow faculty and staff access to campus on a request basis. Part-time and full-time access to office space will be possible for anyone interested in this option. All requests can be made directly to Mike Gourlay (mike.gourlay@uwaterloo.ca).
2. August – October 2021 – In consultation with their staff, student-facing and administrative department leaders will identify which positions require in-person presence during this time. As determined through this consultation and assessment of needs, staff will return to campus for all or a portion of their work week in order to deliver in-person services to students and/or to prepare a department for fall re-opening. We recognize that student-facing services/academic advising roles will require employees in these positions to be present more frequently than non-student facing roles in order to provide positive experiences to our student population. Campus presence in all roles will scale up slowly as department needs increase.
3. By November, the University hopes that more campus activities will resume with all employees able to work on campus, as least part-time. Some may opt to work on campus full-time. The University is planning our full and stable return by January 2022.

Faculty and Contract Academic Staff

Eleven courses are currently scheduled to take place in person this fall in SJ2 (using rooms 1002, 1004, 2002, 2003). All of these courses are ones taught by SJU faculty. Each of the classrooms is scheduled to

be cleaned before and after each use. Further, no individual classroom is scheduled for back-to-back use. Instead, 30 minutes of flex-time is set aside before and after each course, with cleaning taking place before and after that flex-time. Courses have been scheduled such that up to two classrooms in the building are in use at the same time. Please note that although no individual classroom is scheduled for back-to-back use, there are moments in the schedule when a course in one classroom begins 10 minutes after the course in another classroom concludes. The relatively small size of our classes and the distribution of our courses across the schedule suggests that traffic flow and occupancy levels will remain appropriate, but audits of the space will be conducted as the term begins and throughout the fall.

In preparation for the Fall term, in-person instructors may consult the [Covid-19 Classroom and Lab Management Guidelines](#) (last updated August 9, 2021) available via the UW Registrar's Office (In order to access these guidelines, you will have to login using your WatIAM credentials). Please do expect that there will be revisions to those Guidelines in the coming weeks due to recent changes in public health guidance; for example, although the Guidelines currently reference seat decals, since guidance regarding capacity limits has changed, there are no longer plans to decal seats in a classroom, although please note that SJU has decided to maintain the original classroom capacity limit of 50%.

A key contemplation for in-person instructors would be contingency planning. As the current Covid-19 Classroom and Lab Management Guidelines read, instructors should have plans in place for various scenarios, such as, short term cancellations of in-person classes, longer term cancellations of in-person classes, cancellation of in-person exams, and accommodations for students needing to quarantine/self-isolate. Furthermore, considering that we remain in uncertain times, in-person and remote instructors alike might find CTE's Teaching Tips regarding [Resilient Course Design](#) of interest.

Flexible, on-campus IT assistance will be available during all in-person classes throughout the fall so as to ensure our classrooms are well-supported.

All Contract and Full-time faculty should expect to be contacted in August regarding their needs for the Fall term, with a particular eye to discerning intentions regarding office use. Although SJU is working towards a full return to campus, we would like to get a sense of office space needs so as to ensure our return continues to adhere to public health protocols.

Ventilation Upgrades on Campus

In order to ensure community safety, St. Jerome's has implemented a number of ventilation upgrades, that have also been made at UW (<https://uwaterloo.ca/news/waterloo-upgrades-ventilation-systems>). Some highlights of specific activities our Facilities team has undertaken over the past several months include:

- We have adjusted our Building Automation Systems (BAS) to increase fresh air intake without compromising HVAC efficiencies
- MERV 13 filters will be installed in our buildings in August. MERV13 filters are recommended by the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers and over the pandemic have become standard across the industry because they are more effective at filtering small droplets and particles that travel through the air (at least 85 per cent efficient at capturing particles in the 1 µm to 3 µm size range).

- A review of air exchange rates in campus buildings has occurred to ensure our spaces meet the recommended air exchange guidelines
- Air quality tests across campus have been conducted to ensure that we have quality air flowing through our buildings

In addition to these ventilation system upgrades, we have been working closely with our cleaning staff to review and modify cleaning schedules, especially for high touch surfaces where necessary. Common areas, classrooms and shared workspaces on campus have been modified to allow for safe physical distancing. Plexiglass has been installed in service areas and hand sanitizer wall units will be installed throughout campus, including for all classrooms being used for in-person teaching and common areas. Clear signage will be visible on campus to help inform those returning in the fall.

While we are on campus, we must continue to maintain physical distancing, wear masks in common indoor spaces, and employ appropriate PPE in situations when physical distancing is not possible. We will continue to update our campus protocols and ask that employees are familiar with them before coming to campus (<https://www.sju.ca/sju-return-campus-training?t=1>). Department leaders are also asked to review our Manager training (<https://www.sju.ca/sju-return-campus-training?t=2>). We encourage all meetings (with the possible exception of student advising and office hours for in-person courses), to continue in a virtual setting.

Illness Reporting Guidelines

As employees return to campus, it will be important for everyone to be aware of and follow our illness reporting guidelines:

- Please stay home if you are sick
- All employees must be aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and the importance of reporting [symptoms](#) and/or absences to their manager before the beginning of the first day absent
- When reporting illness or absence to your manager, confidentiality of personal information will be maintained at all times per PHIPA ([Personal Health Information Protection Act](#))
- UW Occupational Health will monitor all absences and engage in contact tracing in consultation with [Region of Waterloo Public Health](#) if a positive COVID-19 case is identified on campus; only those who are required to self-isolate and/or get tested will be contacted

Employees who experience any symptoms of COVID-19 or Influenza-like-illness (ILI), should follow [Public Health guidelines](#) and contact a testing and assessment centre directly to book an appointment. If directed to self-isolate by public health authorities, advise UW Occupational Health at occupationalhealth@uwaterloo.ca of your first date absent, related symptoms, and if unable to work, the expected return to work date.

As we continue to monitor public health measures throughout the province, we will continue to maintain flexibility in planning our return as we may experience changes that are beyond our control. Your understanding, resilience and hard work during this time have been incredibly appreciated. We will share any key updates to our fall planning as things continue to develop. The CRT will provide another detailed update to the SJU community at the beginning of September, prior to the start of the term. Please feel free to reach out to Mike Gourlay (mike.gourlay@uwaterloo.ca) if you have any questions or concerns along the way.