

Dear colleagues,

I know that many of you have questions about what the coming weeks and months will bring at UTM. The pandemic has created an unprecedented and fluid situation: UTM will continue to adapt, always making the health and safety of both our own and the wider community its highest priority.

The most common question we have heard is: “will we all return to campus in September?” The answer is **no**. At last count (by the measure of “seats”) over 90% of our enrolment for the Fall term was online. **Most faculty, staff, and librarians will continue to do most of their work at home**, as they have since March. We know that working from home comes with serious challenges and we will continue to do our best to support you where you are.

Meanwhile, in accordance with provincial guidelines, we are also planning for the gradual, in-person return of *some* members of our UTM community. Instructors and students who have chosen in-person classes, for example, will join the small group of employees who continued to work on campus safely and effectively throughout the pandemic, and will build on the positive momentum of June’s research restart.

To protect all people who come to campus, we have implemented new safety measures that follow the scientific consensus about best practices in occupational health and safety. These measures include:

- redesigned classrooms with student seating spread at least two meters apart;
- hand sanitization stations available across campus—70 in the Davis Building alone;
- detailed signs that indicate maximum occupancy in meeting rooms and elevators and that encourage physical distancing and proper hand hygiene;
- two non-medical, fabric face masks distributed by the university to every student, staff and faculty member, and librarian: U of T requires that all people able to do so wear masks in indoor university spaces normally accessible to the public;
- sanitary paper towel dispensers installed across campus in all public washrooms;
- disinfecting high-touch surfaces, including elevator buttons and doorknobs, twice a day with a solution approved for use against SARS-CoV-2.

Our response to the pandemic, including all of our [guidance documents](#), will develop as scientific evidence and public health standards evolve. [As we adjust to a world with COVID-19](#), I welcome input from all members of our community: please be in touch. You can email me at [principal.utm@utoronto.ca](mailto:principal.utm@utoronto.ca); tweet @alexgillespie; or reach out through our new communications channels, such as the virtual “Principal’s Check-Ins,” that will start running in August.

I am deeply grateful to all of you for your continued hard work, patience, and commitment to UTM during this difficult time. Your response to this challenge has confirmed my confidence that we will emerge from this time stronger, better connected, and ready for the future.

Best,

Alex Gillespie  
Vice President & Principal