



To: All Dawson
From: Richard Filion, Director General and Diane Gauvin, Academic Dean
Date: May 11, 2020
Subject: Summer and Fall Semester

Dear employees,

As you are already aware from news reports, over the next weeks the government will gradually relax the health and safety protocols established to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, on Montreal Island and in the immediately surrounding region, which have been “hot zones” throughout the pandemic, continued vigilance remains necessary. The government and public health authorities are monitoring the situation closely and will issue directives as appropriate.

In its directive of May 6, the Ministry of Education states that:

Teaching activities at the college and university levels will continue on-line for the Summer 2020 semester and until September, except for activities that cannot be conducted on-line and are deemed essential for students to develop the competencies necessary for graduation.

Furthermore, in the opinion of the Direction régionale de Santé publique (Montréal), post-secondary institutions will not be permitted to re-open in the fall. The necessity of maintaining a minimum two-metre distance between people, the importance of avoiding unnecessary congestion on the public transit system and the absence of a vaccine for the foreseeable future, among other reasons, all militate against a complete re-opening for learning activities in the fall.

Based on this information, Dawson’s teaching and learning activities during the summer and fall semesters will be conducted mostly on-line. Exceptions will be permitted for those activities that must be done in person at the college and that are deemed essential to the attainment of the competencies. In taking this decision, the College has been guided above all by the need to help safeguard the health of the Dawson and broader Montreal communities in a context where physical distancing will remain the prevailing state of affairs. Other post-secondary institutions in Montreal and elsewhere are taking similar positions.

A task force has recently been established to prepare for a partial re-opening of the college that involves only the activities that cannot be done on-line, which will be conducted on the campus in strict adherence to the conditions set by the public health authorities. Some learning activities could technically be permitted as early as the week of May 25. The College will put in place appropriate health and safety measures which may vary from course to course. These measures will comply with the directives issued by the Ministry of Education, the Direction régionale de santé publique (Montréal), the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ), and the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) as well as the requirements of the professional orders.

For non-teaching employees, the need to respect physical distancing will create new working conditions. While the College is waiting for guidance from the Ministry of Education and the Direction régionale de santé publique, it is preparing for a gradual, but modified return to work. To avoid situations where too many employees are on the campus at the same time, work will involve some combination of telecommuting and in-person time at the college. Your manager will provide you with details as it becomes available.

Teachers, professionals, support staff and managers have shown great resilience and a strong capacity to adapt to an unprecedented situation that continually imposes new demands. The crisis that we all had hoped would be short-lived is turning into something far more prolonged. While the number of new cases in Montreal appear to be abating, the pandemic's lingering impact and potential for a sudden, new outbreak are very real. To meet this ongoing challenge will require renewed individual and collective effort, flexibility and creativity if Dawson is to fulfill its mission and provide the education for which it is well known. To sustain and enhance a suitable educational and working environment that must remain largely virtual during these exceptional circumstances, the College is committed to improving resources to support students and employees.

The energy, dedication and resourcefulness the Dawson community is demonstrating during these challenging times have been inspiring. We sincerely thank you for the outstanding efforts you have made to maintain learning activities and to support our students in a stressful environment.



Richard Filion
Director General



Diane Gauvin
Academic Dean