

Brock announces Fall 2020 academic plan

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Please note: While this message regarding the University's plans for the Fall 2020 Term was shared Thursday with Senate, the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and students, and also appeared on the Brock website and shared on social media, due to a distribution error, some members of the Brock community may not have received it through email.



The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on student and community health and well-being have resulted in a new approach to the Fall 2020 academic term. Today, we are sharing the Brock plan for Fall 2020.

We've included significant and important information in this email. You can also learn more at brocku.ca/fall

Brock's plan prioritizes student and community health and well-being, while providing the highest quality teaching and learning environment along with personalized coaching and mentoring to ensure student success. Our goal is to give you a safe and high-quality academic experience, together with the engaging student experience for which Brock is known.

For Fall 2020, most courses will be offered online. A small number of courses will be offered on campus, these courses will be with small-sized classes that need specialized labs or other equipment.

The plan focuses on providing a high-quality learning and research environment for students, while taking the necessary steps to protect your health and well-being.

What will happen this Fall?

- **Almost all undergraduate courses will be delivered online**, including lectures, seminars, tutorials and many lab components.
- **A small number of courses will be offered on-campus**, in cases where a suitable online substitute does not exist.
- **All on-campus courses will strictly follow public health guidelines** to ensure your safety and well-being. This will include physical distancing both on-campus and in the classroom, as well as regular cleaning of classrooms between courses.
- **BU4U – an innovative program offering a personalized program of academic coaching, community building and supports** – will guide first-year students through the weeks leading up to the start of classes, including all the tools and help you need to start smart, meet new friends and hit the ground running as you embark on your Brock education.

What courses will be offered on campus?

- An overview of this Fall's small number of in-person courses:
 - Lab-based graduate students requiring specialized lab facilities and equipment/technology
 - On campus offerings will be limited to those that:
 - Have a size limit of 20 students or less,
 - Have required components for which online delivery is not practical
 - Will be held in spaces that allow for appropriate physical distancing
 - Some practicum classes

How will I know whether a course is online or in person?

The default option for all undergraduate courses will be online delivery.

A limited number of undergraduate courses that are lab-based or require access to specialized equipment or facilities and cannot be replaced by online equivalents will be offered on campus.

The University is in the process of adjusting the course schedule to identify which classes will be online and which will be on campus. On-campus courses will follow public health guidelines to ensure safety, including physical distancing and spacing.

Those courses being offered on campus will be identified as you review the Fall/Winter 2020 timetable and register for Fall. The timetable will be posted on June 24 and you'll be able to begin building your schedule. Registration will be opening in July and further information is included below in this update.

What will online courses be like?

We're fortunate at Brock to have a great team of engaging, dynamic and passionate instructors who have seized the opportunity to teach online and who are dedicated to providing the best possible learning experience.

We're spending the summer helping instructors develop and design engaging and interactive online courses for the Fall. Instructors are involved in virtual Brock communities focused on specific areas like large group instruction, seminar courses and teaching labs online where they are learning from experts and sharing ideas with each other in order to bring the most relevant and interesting ideas to their classes.

We have a team of Educational Developers and Educational Technologists who are working with individual instructors to help bring their ideas to life in an online environment so that students can continue to achieve their academic goals. A new team of Instructional Support Assistants is being deployed across the campus to work with faculty and teaching assistants in preparation for Fall. Across Brock, we're taking a team approach to create the tools you'll need to succeed online. The team is ensuring that students, faculty and teaching assistants have the tools and information you need to successfully learn online.

What kinds of technology and content will be offered?

When classes start, you will be engaged in a variety of learning activities including video conferencing, pre-recorded video instruction you can review on your own time, online group work and virtual small group interactions with teaching assistants.

Instructors will use polls, podcasts, forums, films, interviews with experts and the most current readings to help you advance your knowledge and skills in your area of interest. Your courses will offer one-on-one assistance through teaching assistants, student success supports with peer mentors and virtual student/instructor office hours. It will be flexible, variety-filled and content-rich.

I'm a graduate student. What should I expect?

Graduate students in lab-based programs that require access to specialized facilities or equipment will be provided access to campus.

A limited number of low-enrolment graduate courses with class sizes fewer than 20 will take place on campus. All public health guidelines will be followed to ensure safety, including physical distancing and spacing.

Tutorials for undergraduate courses will be predominantly online. The Centre for Pedagogical Innovation (CPI) is currently developing workshops and materials to provide both new and returning TAs with the tools to transition to an online tutorial environment.

We are aware that graduate students from outside Canada will have additional concerns and face further complexities during an ever-changing global pandemic. Brock will continue to work to provide supports and assistance as we navigate these uncertain times.

I'm a first-year student. How will I get started?

Starting in June, Brock will launch a new program called **BU4U**, a customized and detailed coaching, orientation and mentorship program designed specifically for you that will include:

- A free online summer orientation program, including a roadmap to assist you in navigating online learning.
- Brock U 101, a series of free academic skills courses to help you get ready for the term, including the best tips for learning success and a complement to the Fall Academic Orientation.
- A chance to meet new friends who share your interests through engagement communities, where you will meet your upper-year mentor and receive personalized supports.

- A virtual Welcome Week in September.
- A six-week program starting in September to support incoming students.

What about living in residence?

We know that an important part of the first-year experience is living in a Brock residence. Unfortunately, health guidelines will drastically change the way our residences will be able to operate. If students are permitted to live in a residence setting, it would likely be in smaller numbers, with modifications to our residence community standards and students' responsibilities.

We are working with public health to determine the best way forward. For now, if you are interested in a residence room, prospective students can continue to submit their residence application and \$600 application fee. We'll let you know your options as quickly as possible and all residence application fees would be refunded (or credited) as applicable should you decide before the beginning of term, you do not want to live on campus.

What financial help is available?

Brock understands these are times of economic uncertainty and students face many challenges funding their education. Be assured the courses you'll be taking this Fall and throughout your time at Brock will be of the highest quality. Your Brock degree will have significant value and is highly regarded. Brock has many options to help defray the costs of your education including a wide variety of scholarships and bursaries. The Government of Ontario has enhanced OSAP provisions to help students. The Government of Canada is providing monthly payments to students who are unable to work this summer.

For the Spring/Summer Terms, Brock has waived some ancillary fees for on-campus services. The University is reviewing the Fall and Winter ancillary fees and will provide an update shortly.

What's next?

The Fall/Winter 2020 timetable is being finalized.

On June 24, you'll be able to review the timetable and begin developing your individual schedule.

On July 8, registration opens for graduate students.

On July 10, registration opens for students in Teacher Education programs

On July 13, registration opens for first-year students with registration for upper-year undergraduate students to follow.

All registrations will be completed by July 31, which will allow students time to proceed with OSAP and RESP funding for Fall.

More information and a question form where you can direct specific questions about Fall Term can be found at brocku.ca/fall

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