



St. Stephen's College

Memo regarding Fall 2020 Semester

To: All St. Stephen's College Students and Faculty

Regarding: Course Delivery for Fall 2020 (September–December)

As all of us continue to feel the impacts of COVID-19, the Faculty and Staff of St. Stephen's continue to monitor this situation carefully and to respond in ways that promote the ongoing health and safety of the St. Stephen's community.

Despite the fact that Alberta and much of Canada slowly begin to reopen, the Faculty Council of St. Stephen's College has made the decision that all Fall 2020 (September–December) courses at St. Stephen's College will continue via remote/online delivery. Courses will remain as scheduled, though they will be delivered online in much the same format as the Spring and Summer 2020 courses have been delivered. Exceptions may be made for practicum/clinical placements (such as Counselling Practicum and CPE), where the decision to allow for on-site, in-person placements will be worked out in cooperation with the clinical site (and of course, in full compliance with all public health guidelines).

This decision was not made lightly, and I know it will be disappointing for some. Of particular concern to the Faculty Council were pragmatic realities such as:

- a) The amenability of the teaching spaces at St. Stephen's College to public health guidelines (such as physical distancing),
- b) The amenability of the St. Stephen's building to sufficiently accommodate restrictions on human movements as outlined in the current public health guidelines,
- c) The potential effects of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) upon the educational experience at St. Stephen's College (e.g., should instructors and students need to wear masks, how might this impact the learning experience),
- d) Because in-person courses will need to have course caps relative to the size of each classroom (to allow for proper physical distancing), the Faculty Council feels it is best to keep courses online so as to allow for regular enrollment numbers. If we were to run in-person courses with smaller course caps, it would mean that some students would be delayed in completing program requirements if they do not register before the course fills up.
- e) Given that almost half of St. Stephen's students live outside the Greater Edmonton Area, it does not seem reasonable to require students to travel to Edmonton to complete program requirements. This is true not only of students who live outside of Canada, but also for students who must travel interprovincially in order to study at the College. For some, such travel would be impossible; for others, such travel would be uncomfortable and perhaps financially prohibitive (given the current COVID-19 situation).
- f) In the event of a second wave of COVID-19 cases, the College may be forced again to move our in-person offerings to remote delivery. By keeping all courses online for the time being, we thus prevent future disruptions to student learning.

For all these reasons, the Faculty Council feels the best way to ensure some measure of equal educational experience is to continue delivering the Fall 2020 courses via remote/online delivery.

Over the past 12 weeks, I have been so amazed and encouraged by the responses of both our faculty and our students. Our faculty have demonstrated much creativity and flexibility in moving the Spring/Summer courses online, and our students have embraced this change with openness and a willingness to explore something new. Through all of this, the character and quality of the St. Stephen's community has shone brightly. I continue to feel immense gratitude toward the learning community that is St. Stephen's College.

With thanks,
Fred Tappenden,
Principal and Dean,
St. Stephen's College