

A MESSAGE FROM:
Dr. Janet Morrison,
President and
Vice Chancellor



News from Queen's Park

March 25, 2021

Colleagues,

There's lots of news to share following yesterday's release of the provincial Budget. I was thrilled, for example, to see commitments to expand Peel Memorial and to allow Ryerson University to plan for a new medical school in Brampton.

Ryerson's plan is to focus on community-centric primary care and the social determinants of health. Sheridan has a history of working collaboratively with Ryerson and Algoma in Brampton; we've been collaborating on this specific project for more than a year. Specifically, we've discussed how each institution can leverage its programmatic strengths to advance upstream, preventative care for chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity and mental illness. We are committed to working together to educate healthcare practitioners who embrace a holistic model of care. The Region of Peel needs health care talent, and we are up to the task of skilling, reskilling and upskilling professionals who will improve the wellbeing of our home communities.

I'm excited to share two other updates with you today that will positively contribute to Sheridan's future:

- College investments
- Enrolment & fall delivery

College investments

As expected, the Ontario government remains focused on both public health and economic recovery. In terms of the college sector, the government will:

- Continue to invest in a virtual learning strategy to expand access to global markets, integrate virtual learning with micro-credentials and build capacity in small and northern institutions.
- Support micro-credentials and lifelong learning through a virtual passport that allows micro-credentials to be "stackable and trackable."
- Invest in building and equipment renewal as well as the Ontario Research Fund.
- Create a temporary tax credit for people 26-65 for retraining and reskilling.
- Continue to expand and upgrade high-speed internet to support students and workers across the province.

We appreciate these investments and will be exploring how the provincial budget can be leveraged to advance Sheridan's strategic priorities.

Enrolment & fall delivery

I'm thrilled to report that there are already 3000 registrations for the online Open House this Saturday! This is stupendous and a reflection of how hard everyone has been working on domestic and international enrolment recovery. There is feverish work going on to reach potential students and demonstrate our incredible value proposition. Among other things, we are ensuring that international students have support to meet the federal government's quarantine requirements and that students are aware of the innovative ways we are delivering curriculum.

Of course, students want to know precisely how much delivery will be online and how much in person next fall. This is the 10-million-dollar question that all postsecondary institutions are grappling with as we monitor the vaccine rollout and international travel restrictions. Assuming the achievement of the government's goal of having every adult vaccinated by the end of the summer, we foresee that the coming school year will allow for much more on-campus activity and an increased level of flexibility in our program and service offerings.

Specifically, we're working toward plans for fall 2021 that will provide increased flexibility for our students – i.e., some sections of courses will be delivered remotely, some in-person; similarly, some services will also be delivered in a hybrid model. We're planning to maximize opportunities for in-class, hands-on learning, more availability for residence, more on-campus community, wellness, and co-curricular activities. We are also looking forward to researchers being able to increase their in-person interactions. At the same time, we're intent on leveraging our pandemic/virtual experience to optimize the student experience, fuel our aspirations and live our empowering enablers.

Finally, I learned this week that all our accelerated personal support worker spring cohorts have been filled. These spots are funded by a provincial government commitment to increase the supply of PSWs to the health care system. I know from personal experience that PSWs are crucial to supporting families across Ontario who need skilled, compassionate care. I'm equally delighted that Sheridan's first cohort of PSWs enrolled in a pathway to Practical Nursing is now in place.

Spring has sprung! I hope all of you enjoy the weekend ahead.

Warmly,

Janet Morrison, PhD
President and Vice Chancellor

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