

## Ontario Tech University Return to Campus Research Task Force

### Recommended Guiding Principles

June 2020

1. The collective health and safety of students, staff, faculty and the broader community should govern decisions made in relation to research activities on campus and in the field.
2. Recovery will follow a progressive, phased approach. Safety is the first consideration for the timing, rate and scale of recovery efforts.
3. Provincial and public health agency directives will guide when campus and field research activities should resume.
4. Nimbleness and flexibility should be central to institutional planning as public health protocols and information related to COVID-19 are continuously shifting.
5. Consideration should be given to the hierarchy of health and safety controls when developing risk management plans (e.g. restricting density on campus, physical distancing measures, PPE).
6. Consideration should be given to the ability of on-campus ancillary services to support an increase in on-campus research activities (e.g. cleaning, security, campus stores, etc.). Any increase in research activity entails custodial, shipping and receiving, purchasing, maintenance, security, special services, and safety staff come to campus more often, stay longer, and are more frequently exposed to spaces shared with other people. Increases in research activity should therefore accommodate a broad plan for incremental activity across campus.
7. Clear communication to the research community is fundamental.
8. Consideration must be given to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) factors, such as the differential effects of the pandemic on research by members of designated groups.
9. Consideration should be given to the availability and reliability of external resources and services that may impact the health and safety of students, staff, faculty, and the broader community, such as the availability of public transportation on how individuals will travel to campus safely.
10. Consideration should be given to traffic pinch points in spaces that are shared by different research facilities.
11. Research that can feasibly and safely be done remotely, without significantly compromising the quality and ethical integrity of the work, should continue to be done remotely until later phases of campus reactivation.
12. For those researchers who do not return to campus until the later phases of campus reactivation, efforts should be made to facilitate their research from a remote location. This may include one-time access to retrieve materials and supporting requests for enhanced remote network access (e.g. VPN for HQP or Zoom).
13. Conducting research on campus or in the field in the early phases of campus reactivation should be voluntary for all students and researchers. Students and researchers must not be compelled to return to campus labs or field research activities.
14. As research activities are phased in, plans should be simultaneously developed to reduce or shut down research activities in a safe manner due to potential changes in public health directives related to COVID-19. These plans should include a notification window for researchers.