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## **Happy holidays and research during COVID-19 update from the Vice-President (Research)**

Dear University of Guelph research community,

With the various COVID-19 communications coming from the University over the past week, I wanted to connect with our community and share some research-specific information – as well as wish you all a joyous, restful, and safe holiday season.

I know it's been another tough year. I send immense gratitude to each one of you for the hard work you have already done to keep the research enterprise running while also safeguarding the health and well-being of students, staff, and faculty engaged in the research enterprise at University of Guelph.

Your efforts, making use of the guidelines we consultatively developed, have been so effective through the entirety of the pandemic to date that you have provided the evidence and reassurance that we can sustain the research effort through this next stage of the pandemic.

Consistent with this, **for now, information on our [Research during COVID-19 website](#) still applies.**

This said, there are a few things I would like to highlight:

### **Please take a break**

As you know, the University is closed from December 24 – January 3. As would normally be the case, the only research activities that should be happening during this time are those that are essential. Make sure to take a break and refresh keeping in mind also, the essential staff who maintain the research environment in which we work.

### **Face-to-Face Human Participant Research**

Currently our guidelines say human participants need to be fully vaccinated to take part in research. We ask that you encourage participants to have a third dose of vaccination.

### **Graduate Students**

Graduate students working in university research facilities should be confident that their personal health and safety are assured given the University's vaccine mandate and our mandatory safety measures. In instances where such measures are perceived to be incomplete, graduate students should communicate their concerns with the Lab Manager and/or research advisor, who is expected to address those concerns either by clarifying perceptions or more fully implementing safety measures.

## Student International Travel

International research-related travel is suspended for all students (undergraduate and graduates) as current government [travel advisories](#) restrict student travel as per the [University's Safe Travel Policy](#).

Graduate students who can postpone planned research-related travel are encouraged to do so; those with less flexibility and who wish to look for means through which planned (i.e. booked) travel can proceed have been instructed to communicate with Graduate Program Assistants.

To keep us on track, the University of Guelph Research-Continuity planning group, established in the early stages of the COVID-19 outbreak, continues to meet regularly and on an as-needed basis to discuss any actions or updates that may be required in response to WDG Public Health, Provincial, Federal, and University guidelines. The Research Continuity Group is chaired by the Vice-President (Research) and its membership includes, among others, the Senate Research Board Chair, a representative from the Council of Academic Chairs, all Associate Deans Research and Graduate Studies, the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies), the Director of Research Financial Services, the Associate Librarian, representatives from Environmental Health and Safety and Physical Resources, and leaders of key portfolios across the Office of Research.

As it has been from the start, the pandemic is ever-changing. The University is monitoring how the Omicron variant is affecting our community and we will course correct as needed in the new year.

Please keep a lookout for future Research Alerts, and make sure to consult regularly with the [Research during COVID-19 website](#) which we will do our best to keep updated in real-time. If you are unsure about anything, please do feel free to reach out to your Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies. Contact information is listed below my signature.

Wishing you and yours the greatest of health and wellbeing as we continue to navigate the challenges of this pandemic and take a well-deserved break.

All the very best,

Malcolm Campbell  
Vice-President (Research)

## Associate Deans, Research & Graduate Studies

College of Arts: Andrew Bailey at [abailey@uoguelph.ca](mailto:abailey@uoguelph.ca)

College of Biological Science: Todd Gillis at [tgillis@uoguelph.ca](mailto:tgillis@uoguelph.ca)

College of Engineering & Physical Sciences: Leonid Brown at [lebrown@uoguelph.ca](mailto:lebrown@uoguelph.ca)

Gordon S. Lang School of Business & Economics: Sean Lyons at [slyons01@uoguelph.ca](mailto:slyons01@uoguelph.ca)

Ontario Agricultural College: Rebecca Hallett at [rhallett@uoguelph.ca](mailto:rhallett@uoguelph.ca)

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Ontario Veterinary College: Shayan Sharif at [shayan@uoguelph.ca](mailto:shayan@uoguelph.ca)

College of Social & Applied Human Sciences: Francesco Leri at [fleri@uoguelph.ca](mailto:fleri@uoguelph.ca)

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