

April 8, 2020

Dear UTSC faculty members,

As you can imagine, I, like you, have been extraordinarily busy over the last three weeks, and I should have written to you sooner to express my gratitude for your excellent work. I have been in steady contact with your Chairs and Academic Directors as we have thought through how to navigate the last three weeks of term, the exam period, and the summer session. Last week I wrote to the Provost to tell her what remarkable faculty we have at UTSC, based on the reports I hear from your Chairs and Directors and feedback from students. You are a group of talented individuals of whom I was already immensely proud, and you have been nothing less than magnificent in rising to the challenge of converting your courses to remote offerings within a complex web of changing circumstances, evolving government directives, stressed out students, while at the same time managing increasing demands at home.

I will not minimize how overwhelmed many of you feel. While there is a range of emotions, I think uncertainty shades all aspects of what we do and plan. When looking back on a life-altering experience there is a beginning, some middle chapters, and an ending. However as we go through such, it is not always clear how long the experience will last and this engenders a pervasive disquiet. As we move through the COVID experience we don't really know what part of the story we are in. Is it still the beginning? how many middle chapters will there be? when will the ending occur? Although there have been a wide range of responses to this crisis, I know many of you are very anxious, exacerbated by what is turning out to be an almost constant state of self-isolation.

The COVID crisis is demanding a lot of each of you. I know I am demanding much of each of you to complete the term and mount a robust slate of summer term offerings. I do this with the absolute certainty that you are able to rise above COVID's insidiousness and uncertainty and you are doing the very best that circumstances will allow, as you help to fulfill our commitment to our students. UTSC has hired remarkably well for many years and this legacy of excellence is bearing much fruit today. Sometimes it may feel like your efforts are unacknowledged, but I assure you that your work is appreciated and valued by me, the decanal team, and your Chairs and Directors. When the final chapters of the COVID story is written, your contribution will be a shining light that will inspire generations to come.

Yours sincerely,



William A. Gough
Vice-Principal Academic & Dean
University of Toronto Scarborough