
Champlain College Fall Semester Update

1 message

Champlain College, President <president@champlain.edu>
To: President Champlain College <president@champlain.edu>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 5:14 PM

CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE

Dear Champlain Students,

I write today to share current thinking on what has been on everyone's mind—what are Champlain's plans for the start of the Fall 2020 semester?

At the pandemic's onset, the State of Vermont took deliberate and swift action, ensuring an early flattening of the curve in our state. Now, as Vermonters are entering into a [phased restart](#) of the state's economy, we are following suit and planning for a fall opening of our physical campus in Burlington, Vermont. This will include in-person classes, complemented, as needed, by virtual instruction, and on-campus living for Fall 2020. We will send a separate email regarding fall operations at our campuses in Dublin, Ireland and Montreal, Canada in the coming weeks.

Recently, I asked our COVID-19 Task Force to focus their work on developing a plan for return to in-person instruction and work for the fall semester. I have consulted directly with Vermont's governor, Phil Scott; Burlington's mayor, Miro Weinberger; and the presidents of our neighboring institutions, the University of Vermont and Saint Michael's College, to ensure that the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff is our collective priority. This open discussion and collaboration will help to ensure a unified response if the virus elevates in the state. The agreement among these higher education leaders' decisions to move forward with face-to-face openings in the fall gives me some comfort that together we will do all that is possible to provide for the safety and health of our institutions' citizens.

We acknowledge that our understanding of COVID-19 and its impact on our community will evolve throughout the summer and well beyond, and thus, our team will continue to evaluate our approach for the Fall 2020 semester. The College is developing multiple contingency plans to be used should the virus appear on our campus at some level. We will work in concert with the State of Vermont to make certain that the state's [testing and contact tracing program](#) can ensure a swift and deliberate response to any potential positive tests of COVID-19 on our campus.

We know that a physical return to campus is a personal decision for you and your family, and that many factors will contribute to your plans. We also recognize that enhanced safeguards will need to be in place. The ultimate goal is to bring students and faculty back to the classroom as much as possible; for students who prefer to take classes virtually, we will do our best to offer remote options. As we develop specific protocols for ensuring the safety of students in our classrooms, residence halls, dining facilities and on campus, we will share those details with you.

We recognize that you may have questions about our plans for the fall. Please let us know what's on your mind by emailing us at feedback@champlain.edu. We will do our best to respond to your inquiries as quickly as possible, as we are eager to understand your questions and concerns. As our plans become solidified, you'll find answers to frequently asked questions on our [COVID-19 site](#) and you can also access all the messages we share with students, faculty, and staff [here](#).

If the past few months have taught the world anything, it is to hope for the best as we plan for the worst. We know life now requires us to be more flexible and agile than ever before. As the situation evolves—and we know it will in some way—we will be ready with contingency plans as needed. We are working to be as prepared as possible for a long-term, sustainable future and for operations on campus to be as safe as possible.

As we all learn how best to grow through these challenging times, do know that Champlain College is alive and well, in spirit and in person, through each of you around the world and on our Burlington campus. We recognize more than ever the importance of the continued support of our extended family to enable us to weather this storm, and emerge stronger and more able to meet our mission. Please know how seriously we take this challenge as we proceed with deep humility, a tremendous sense of social responsibility, and humble courage to live our motto: *Audeamus*.

Enjoy the summer, and we will continue to plan to see you in person this fall in Burlington, and virtually in the meantime. Be well and stay safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Benjamin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Benjamin Ola. Akande, Ph.D.
Incoming President