

To all Undergraduate Students in Mechanical Engineering

I hope that you have all stayed healthy and safe this summer.

As you likely know, the Fall Semester will be *entirely* online, and as such you are not required to come to campus. We have been taking important steps towards providing you with a high-quality distanced program and wanted to let you know a bit more about what you can expect this fall.

Lecture-Based Courses

Most of the department's lecture-based courses will have synchronous (live) and asynchronous (pre-recorded) components. The specifics for each course will be detailed in the course outlines. Points that we would like you to be aware of:

- Any synchronous (live) lectures/tutorials will be recorded and posted afterwards. This is intended to assist any students who run into connectivity issues, although it may help reinforce your learning to go back and re-view as required. We still strongly encourage you to attend live interactions with the professors and TAs (which every course will have).
- Posted videos will be closed-captioned. If you require other assistance or accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services and speak to your specific instructors.
- **We expect students to have access to internet, as well as some sort of scanner or phone for submitting evaluations.** We have posted assignment standards on our website (see bottom of email).
- Avenue to Learn and MS Teams are expected to be the primary platforms for communication with your instructors.

Composite Lab Courses (3M03, 4P03)

The composite lab courses are being offered this year with some changes. Lab groups will be defined in late August / September once enrollment is complete, and will be the mechanism for scheduling, but in general, submitted work will be individual efforts.

Groups will attend the labs virtually and have a synchronous experience with the TA assigned to the lab during the assigned lab time, once every two weeks (5 labs / term). If permitted by McMaster, some TAs may 'stream' from the lab room itself. For synchronous content students must attend during the assigned time, but there will be flexibility for exceptional situations where technical issues get in the way of attendance (i.e. make-up sessions, etc.).

Video resources are being developed to explore the physical apparatus and experiments in order to recreate the in-person experience as closely as possible. TAs and Technical Staff will be available to support students who have questions about the lab and/or results. Write-ups will be done at home.

Capstone Course (4M06)

The 4M06 project list and course outline will be available in early September. This year, there will be very few opportunities to do design fabrication in the Department project laboratories.

There may be some opportunity for Department technicians to make a few parts for the student groups by 3D printing, or some supervisors may allow students to access their labs for build, but this will be **limited**. In place of design build, this year there will be much higher expectation from student teams of better definition of design objectives and deliverables of their project in Term 1 and detailed analysis and optimization of the final design in Term 2. Meetings with project mentors will be conducted virtually.

We don't yet know what the Winter Semester will look like but will continue to keep you informed as we receive more information from the University. The exact form of our winter design courses (2C04 and 3E05) will be determined once we have this decision.

We have a number of resources available to help you adjust to our new mechanism of delivery and are committed to supporting you. Please review general resources at <https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/mech/resources> as well as online learning resources <http://mechfaculty.mcmaster.ca/studentmat/>

If you are feeling concerned about any of this, we are here to support you, so please reach out.

Here is a list of contacts in Mechanical Engineering:

- Marilyn Lightstone – Dept Chair – lightsm@mcmaster.ca
- Cheryl Quenneville – Associate Chair Undergraduate – quennev@mcmaster.ca
- Lily Sazz-Fayter – Undergraduate Administrator – fayterl@mcmaster.ca

We will keep you updated as things develop in Mechanical. Please do your best to stay healthy!