March 24, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to thank our community of researchers, students and staff for their patience, diligence and flexibility.

York’s Research Continuity Group (RCG) is pleased to support the continued safe return to research activity. We are committed to ensuring that on-campus research and scholarship is undertaken as effectively and efficiently as possible while protecting the health and safety of our community, and in coordination with Public Health guidelines and recommendations.

Please review York University’s COVID-19 guidelines for the safe return to campus and note that York’s vaccination mandate policy will continue for the remainder of the Winter 2022 term. In addition, masks are mandatory, and the YU Screen must be filled out daily prior to attending campus. The YU Better Together website remains a centralized community resource and includes regular updates on COVID-19 measures, guidance, frequently asked questions, and related materials to help guide and support our community members. I strongly encourage you to visit the website for the latest information.

Please see below for important updates regarding research:

**Face-to-Face (F2F) Research**

We are pleased to inform you that the Office of Research Ethics (ORE) launched a new streamlined F2F research procedure to facilitate a smoother review process for researchers and to ensure F2F research is undertaken as effectively and efficiently as possible in coordination with Public Health guidelines and recommendations. It should be noted that Face-to-face on-campus research with unvaccinated human participants is prohibited for the immediate future.

Researchers conducting low-to-moderate risk research must:

- Review the Covid-19 Research Risk Assessment table to determine the risk level of your research.
- Complete and submit the signed Standardized Health and Safety Plan using the template provided. *(New Update: The Standardized Health and Safety Plan does not need to be reviewed by a member of the ORE).*

Researchers conducting research that is greater than low-to-moderate risk are required to submit a Complete Health and Safety Plan, which will be reviewed by a Health and Safety Advisor, in addition to review and approval of the research ethics documentation (protocol or amendment application by the HPRC).

For guidance on how to assess your protocol’s COVID-19 risk level, and which documents to submit, visit the ORE website.

**Off-Campus Research**

For researchers who are conducting research off campus and/or in other countries,
researchers are encouraged, where possible, to consider online research options. Researchers conducting face to face research must abide by their approved Health and Safety Plan and adhere to local health guidance, including potential cessation of face-to-face research activities if stipulated so by local public health authorities. Further, York is advising all of its community members to follow the Government of Canada’s travel advisory for all international travel.

As many researchers resume their research activities, researchers conducting face-to-face human research activity should consult Alison Collins-Mrakas, Director, Office of Research Ethics at acollins@yorku.ca for further information on compliance requirements.

The dynamic nature of the pandemic means that we must continue to remain flexible, and we are doing all that we can to provide quality support and resources to help achieve academic success, whether remotely or on campus. Our Division staff are available and remain committed to helping you navigate and assist with the continuation of your research activity.

I thank you all for your continued contributions, dedication to research and flexibility in adapting to and navigating the new circumstances of research and scholarship in these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Amir Asif
Vice-President Research & Innovation