

Dear friends of CSBS&C,

We know you have all been anxiously awaiting some announcement about the fall semester.

Well, here it is! Under the permission granted by Alberta Health, **we will have in-person on-campus classes in the fall!** Of course, we will be careful to operate within the government regulations and guidelines. We believe that by God's grace and the cooperation of our students, staff, and faculty we will be able to provide a safe and secure learning environment going forward. If for any reason things change between now and then, we will notify you immediately. So stay tuned!

Naturally, there may be some students who would prefer to continue to study remotely, so we want to make that option available to them. I am very pleased to announce that we will be pilot testing two course delivery methods in the coming semester. The first is called "**HyFlex.**" The HyFlex educational model is designed with flexibility and student choice in mind. These courses will be taught both face-to-face and online (via Zoom) by the same instructor at the same time. With the instructor's permission, students can move between these two "sections" as necessary without any additional cost. So for those longing to be back in community with their classmates in person, the doors are open. Others who prefer to stay at home for now, or who become symptomatic during the semester and need to quarantine, can join their classes from the privacy of their homes.

We learned many things this last spring about Zoom, advantages as well as challenges. We are now working on changes in our infrastructure to improve sight and sound quality as well as adjustments to the way instructors present material. Students will also notice changes we have made to the weekly schedule. Most of the 3-hour block classes have been divided into 2 x 1.5 hour sessions. There are a few more minutes between classes and a full hour for the lunch break! All of these changes will help us deliver a quality product, whether things return to "normal" or whether we are forced to return to 100% online, in the near or distant future.

At the seminary level, we will also be pilot testing a number of "**HyperFlex**" courses this fall. The HyperFlex model is just like the HyFlex model but goes one step further. In addition to the in-person and Zoom options, HyperFlex will include an asynchronous option for students who cannot join the class in real time (what we have previously referred to as "Online FLEX"). Live class sessions will be recorded and uploaded for students to watch at another time. But rather than studying in a completely different course, these students will be integrated into a single course with the same instructor and the other enrolled students. As we increase the number of HyperFlex course offerings, distance students will be able to complete their degree programs more quickly than ever! In addition, there will be a couple of "**Hybrid**" seminary-level courses this coming semester, which include a combination of both online and on-campus components. Students can check the syllabi for details once they are posted.

These changes will take time for all of us to adapt to, and more information about protocols and procedures will be forthcoming. Our Registrar will shortly be sending out the course schedule and the registration deadline for the fall. We encourage students to sign up soon, as there may be restrictions on how many students are allowed into some courses in order for us to comply with social distancing guidelines. Students are also encouraged to contact the Registrar with any questions they may have.

We look forward to being back together soon, one way or the other!

Sincerely,

Steve Booth
Academic Dean