



# Resuming testing at a post-secondary institution during a pandemic

Dr. Cindy L James  
Thompson Rivers University  
cjames@tru.ca

May 2020

# *Presentation Outline*

- Context: TRU & Assessment Centre
- Phase One reopening (May 2020)
- Proposed Phase Two (June – August 2020)
- Q & A



# THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

A comprehensive, public university offering certificates, diplomas, baccalaureate and masters degrees in various disciplines

- The main campus including is located in Kamloops, BC
- Serve ~ 30, 000 students



## COVID-19

- Late March moved to virtual services & learning
- Campus remained open (selected buildings only)
- Limited cases in the Interior of BC (as of May 25)

*194 total confirmed, 2 deaths and 1 currently hospitalized*

# TRU Assessment Centre (Pre-COVID 19)

## Space - Modified classroom

- 1 larger testing room + 2 private rooms
- 10 computer stations + 3 large tables

## Staff

- FT Coordinator
- One full-time clerk
- One part-time clerk (.6)
- Auxiliary



## Activity

- Administer or facilitate over 3300 assessments /year
- Respond to 18, 000 emails, phone calls or walk-ins/year

# Testing Activity

- Admissions Testing - various program
- Placement Testing - UPrep & ESAL
- Personal Assessments – SII, MBTI & EQ-i
- External Testing – testing site for over 110 different agencies & institutions

## Format

- Individual appointments
- Group sessions



Testing March 23, 2020



# *Phase One (May 2020)*

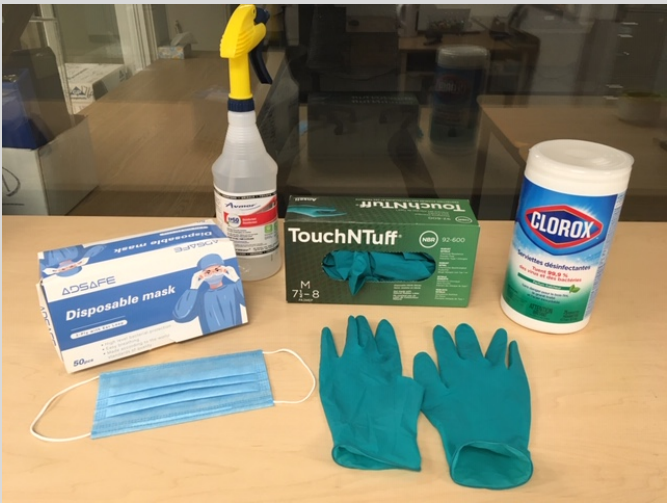
To adhere to social distancing and other health regulations related to the pandemic, testing activities must follow strict protocols.

- Hours of operation are limited, with testing scheduled for mornings only
- A maximum of 5 candidates tested at a time, with appointment times offset
- Candidates supply and wear a non-medical mask during the testing session
- Candidates use the hand sanitizing station before entering the Centre
- Candidates not tested if they appear ill
- Testing limited to internal candidates

## *Additional requirements mandated by TRU*

- Plexi-glass installed – Front Counter
- Maximum of two staff members working at one time
- Wearing masks optional for staff

# *Modifications to the Centre*





# *Registration Procedure*

- Contacted clients who were scheduled to test in March/April
- Contacted clients referred by different areas (high priority)
- Registration via email only (for now)
- Two options: F2F or virtual proctoring
- Fees paid online only

# *Testing Procedure*

- Clients arrived 15 minutes apart to avoid overlap
- Clients use hand sanitizer before entry Centre
- Clients show their ID through plexi-glass
- Clients put on masks and enter testing room

# *Testing Procedure*

- Computers are ready so clients can begin testing immediately
- Follow ACCUPLACER Instruction Sheet
- Monitor test through lockdown browser (Faronics Insight)
- Signal students when they can leave
- Print score report from our computers & give to client
- Use gloves and sanitizer to clean each station

# *Issues & Comments*

- No shows
- Not following protocols
- Increase anxiety levels for clients
- Accommodations
- Increase in requests for virtual sessions

# *Reflections*

- Staff buy in is critical
- Communication is crucial
  - Students – being on time, wearing masks
  - TRU & community – adhering to protocols

**This is the *NEW NORMAL***

# *Proposed Phase Two (June – August 2020)*

Increase testing capacity slowly

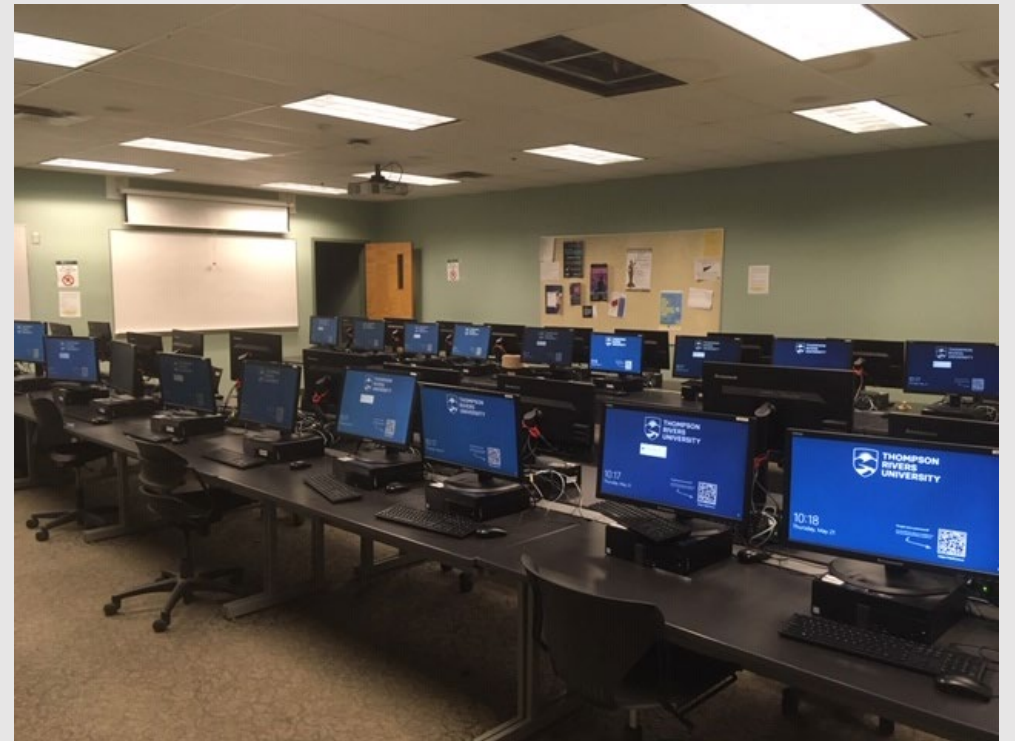
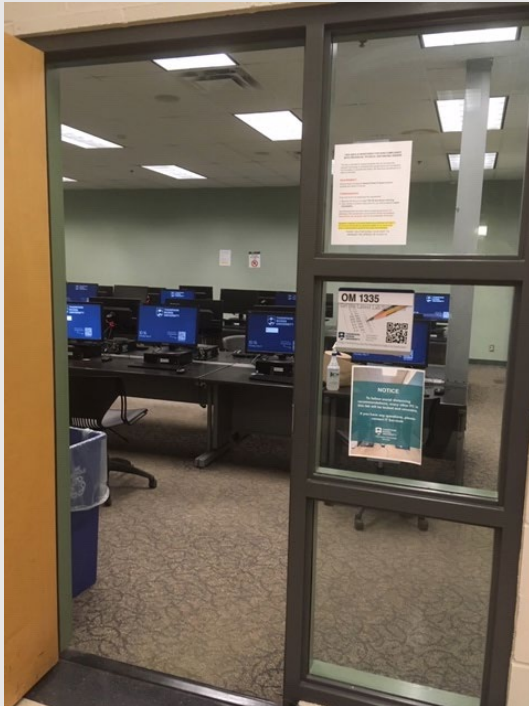
- Extend hours
- Use computer labs & classrooms

Expand testing services to external clients

- Individual (e.g., university, distance)
- Groups (e.g., LSAT, SAT)

# *Group testing in a computer lab*

- Entry assessment testing once a week in computer lab
- Applicants would register & pay online
- Capacity for the computer lab is 40, but testing limited to 15 candidates
- Establish a waiting area in adjacent lab with markers laid out to ensure social distancing



## *Group testing in a computer lab (continued)*

- Students must supply and wear mask
- Student store personal items in a ziplock bag (only bring min.)
- Students check in one by one
- Students show their ID and sanitize their hands
- Students go to an assigned testing station and begin testing
- When finished, students leave one at a time
- Candidates not tested if they appear ill
- Two staff members work in the lab at the same time
- All testing stations sanitized after testing



# *Group testing in a classroom*

- Capacity for available classrooms is 24; testing limited to 10 candidates
- Establish a waiting area in hallway with markers laid out to ensure social distancing



## *Group testing in a classroom (continued)*

- Students check in outside the classroom
- Student store personal items in a ziplock bag (only bring minimum)
- Students must show their ID and sanitize their hands
- Students sit at assigned table, wait for others to check in
- When finished, students leave one at a time
- All testing tables sanitized following testing
- Two staff members oversee testing
- Sessions limited to once or twice a week



# *Testing in the Centre*

Testing in computer labs and classrooms would allow for other testing in the Centre, following similar protocols:

- Hours of testing limited, but Centre opened longer
- A maximum of 6 candidates tested at a time, with appointment times offset
- Candidates supply and wear a non-medical mask
- Candidates use the hand sanitizing station before entering the Centre
- Candidates not tested if they appear ill
- Two staff members working in the Centre at a time

## *Objectives of phased approach*

- Re-establish pre COVID 19 procedures
- Increase capacity to at least 50% normal
- Generate some revenue
- Prepare for future expansion of services in the fall



Resuming testing at a post-secondary institution  
during a pandemic

Q & A

Please type questions into chat box