

LETTER FROM THE NEW DIRECTOR TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Dear students, staff, faculty, alumni and friends of the School of Planning at Waterloo,

As of July 1, I am the new Director of the School of Planning. I am excited and proud to take on this role. I follow in the footsteps of those who have built and shaped our department. In particular, I would like to thank Dr. Clarence Woudsma for his leadership and hard work in this role over the past 12 years.

We have achieved so much as a School over the past 50 years, but the work of building a community is never complete. We must continue to challenge ourselves and each other to strive for excellence in all that we do. As professional planners, educators and scholars, what we do will always include a broad range of social, environmental, and economic issues. However, at this moment in time we have an important role to play in addressing ongoing and pressing social justice and environmental sustainability issues. We have work to do.

During these unprecedented times, we are going to face new challenges while old ones become amplified. Different members of the School will be impacted by these in unique ways. Working together in an inclusive and supportive environment is absolutely essential so that we can understand each other's needs and experiences and are prepared to respond accordingly.

We need to take the time to listen, learn, and reflect on how our diverse students, faculty, staff and other members of our community experience the School. We need to centre the voices and experiences of our marginalized and vulnerable community members in our thinking as planners, educators, and scholars, and take corrective action when needed. Historic and recent events make it clear that we need to do more, particularly as it relates to the experiences and voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour members of our community. For instance, we started a process to review our curriculum from an anti-racist perspective, hoping to identify important areas for change.

I look forward to working with the School community to continue the listening and learning process so that we can make changes together.

Sincerely,

Dr Markus Moos

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