

Dear fellow members of COEO,

In the spring of 2019, Queen's University, located near Kingston, Ontario, created an Additional Qualification Course in Outdoor & Experiential Education. However, the decision to make this an online course comes as a detriment to professionals working in the field of Outdoor and Experiential Education (OEE).

Within the next two weeks I encourage you to reach out to Queen's University to share your thoughts about this matter. Especially if you are a graduate of the Queen's OEE program, please take this opportunity to make your voice heard. Please consider the following discussion points and feel free to add your own thoughts based on your experience. Our hope is to maintain and reclaim the leadership, innovation and high quality of education that has always been the hallmark of Outdoor and Experiential Educators. The contact information for specific individuals is listed on the following page.

- Due to the nature of online courses and the virtual community they use, an Online AQ course that is entitled *Outdoor & Experiential Education* would not contain meaningful outdoor or experiential components that are central to the OEE philosophy of education.
- The online curriculum was written without any input from the present Queen's University OEE coordinator, the program's highly-regarded graduates, or members of the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario.
- Although offering the course online makes it theoretically available to more people, this mode of delivery for an OEE course requires a sacrifice of quality by erasing the key experiential components that take place as a community of professional educators, in the outdoors. This philosophy of quantity over quality is not one that should be supported.
- The Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) mandates the name of the course must be *Outdoor & Experiential Education*, resulting in the online course bearing the same title as the 50 years of OEE courses run in Queen's Faculty of Education. Allowing graduates to list the completion of a Queen's online course bearing the same title of *Outdoor & Experiential Education* (OEE) denigrates both the effort expended and the benefits derived by all previous graduates that completed the rigorous courses offered to teacher candidates in the OEE program.
- By offering an online, rather than a fully experiential or blended AQ course in OEE, the department of Continuing Education seeks to financially capitalize on fifty plus years of leadership that the Queen's OEE program has provided educators—only without providing the well-considered content that the Queen's OEE program was founded upon.

Letters can be sent to:

**Jessica Della-Latta**

Executive Director, Continuing Teacher Education Queen's University  
[lattaj@queensu.ca](mailto:lattaj@queensu.ca)

**Rebecca Luce-Kapler**

Dean of Faculty of Education, Queen's University  
[rebecca.luce-kapler@queensu.ca](mailto:rebecca.luce-kapler@queensu.ca)

**Patrick Deane\***

Principal & Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University  
[principal@queensu.ca](mailto:principal@queensu.ca)

\*The new principal, Patrick Deane, is currently seeking input from others, especially alumni, on the direction the university should take in the upcoming years.

I plan to send a letter to the people listed above on behalf of COEO members. I appreciate any additional individual responses sent to Queen's University on this matter. The *Outdoor & Experiential Education* AQ course can and should be a valuable Professional Development opportunity for educators interested in OEE. My hope is that our responses will encourage Queen's University to reconsider their decision on this matter, choosing to instead offer the AQ course using a blended or experiential format.

Sincerely,

Natalie Kemp  
COEO President