

Dear Quincy University community:

This message is the sixty-fourth update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are a member of the QU community and have not read the previous update messages, you could search them out in your email folders or read them at <https://www.quincy.edu/coronavirus/>. The QU coronavirus website contains a video highlighting many safety procedures for the QU community. The website also includes a Q&A document, which was updated on September 15.

The next Quincy University update will be emailed to you no later than Monday, September 21. Depending on campus events, it is possible that COVID-19 updates will become more frequent. Because of the number of COVID-19 positive results this week and the resulting increase in quarantine directives, we are writing to give you some newly updated information.

Forty-two positive COVID-19 viral tests have been reported this semester for QU students after those students arrived at the university. Five of those 42 students have completed their quarantine periods and are not active cases. Seventeen of those 42 students were identified as the result of recent surveillance testing and currently are in quarantine; all 17 are asymptomatic positive cases. Some very recent tests of students who already were quarantined because of exposure but are currently asymptomatic also came back with positive COVID-19 tests. The remaining students were tested because they had one or more COVID-19 symptoms and ultimately had positive test results; those students currently are in quarantine and are recovering from their infections.

As will likely be the case on any given day, we are awaiting some student test results for COVID-19.

The onset of the usual fall cold season may result in an increased number of COVID-19 tests over the coming weeks, as cold, flu, and COVID-19 share many of the same symptoms. As noted on Tuesday, we have had a few diagnosed cases of strep throat on campus this week, and strep throat symptoms also will trigger a COVID-19 test.

The 143 QU students who are quarantined at present have been placed in quarantine (1) because they have active COVID-19 infections, (2) as a precaution because of one or more COVID-19 symptoms, (3) because they have been exposed to someone who is being tested, or (4) they have been in close contact with someone who has had a positive test. **As noted in previous messages, people may be quarantined who have not had a positive test and may never have a positive test.** The majority of those who are quarantined in the typical week have not had a positive COVID-19

test. Because of the different reasons for which people are quarantined, some people may only be quarantined for a few days, while others may be quarantined for two weeks or more. Several students will end their quarantines on Monday, September 21, for example.

Because of their housing arrangements, some students are quarantined at off-campus locations. QU presently has over 80 unoccupied rooms set aside for possible quarantine use this semester – separate from the quarantine rooms currently in use -- so we have plenty of available quarantine rooms if they are needed.

We anticipate additional surveillance testing of over 100 QU student-athletes will take place on September 21, as previously scheduled. New and additional surveillance tests of QU students may be scheduled at a later time, depending on the results of completed and currently scheduled surveillance tests.

Here's the simplest possible summary for the current academic semester:

COVID-19 Test Summary for QU Students

Number of Student Positive Tests, Active Cases	37
Number of Previous Positive Tests, Not Active Cases	5
Total Number of Cases Following QU Entry for Fall 2020	42

We are not aware of any positive COVID-19 test in the current semester for any QU employee or vendor. We will continue to be transparent about the number of COVID-19 cases involving students, employees, and vendors, as we are made aware of those tests.

After a week with a significant increase in positive COVID-19 test results and quarantine directives, here's our review of the current situation at Quincy University:

1. We continue to follow our plan for COVID-19 testing and to have confidence in that plan. Consistent with current CDC guidelines, QU is having all people tested who have one or more symptoms of COVID-19 OR have been exposed to a person who is positive for COVID-19. In addition, and unlike some other universities, we are going beyond the current CDC guidelines and conducting surveillance testing over time of a large percentage of our students, largely student-athletes, consistent with guidance from the NCAA. At QU, the combination of symptomatic and asymptomatic testing is designed to help us limit new infections. We always expected there would be both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases on campus this semester, as we have seen this week.

2. We are using contact tracing and quarantining to find people who may have a COVID-19 infection, keep them safe, make certain they have testing and medical care, and prevent them from infecting other people. Our quarantining procedures are more aggressive than the procedures used by many other organizations, with the aim of quickly reducing the opportunities for the disease to spread. Our quarantining decisions are made, when appropriate, in consultation with the Adams County Health Department.
3. Contact tracing and quarantining over the past five days have worked well at QU, and we appreciate the honesty and cooperation of our students in this work. For each student who is a positive or presumptive positive, we often might quarantine three other students who may have been exposed to that student. This explains why we have many more students in quarantine than we have students who have a positive COVID-19 test. Additionally, and importantly, *the new COVID-19 positive tests of the past few days largely came from students who already were in quarantine*, which means our measures already had reduced the risk of those students infecting others.
4. Students and employees are largely following our health and safety guidelines, and we appreciate their responsibility and hard work. Some of us can do even better, and we ask everyone to remain very committed to wearing masks and distancing.
5. In this pandemic, inaccurate rumors tend to circulate, and people can make bad decisions if they accept rumors as fact. For example, it is unhelpful for people with no special knowledge or expertise to speculate about an imminent mid-semester shift to entirely online instruction at QU. We have objective criteria to help us determine whether or not to shift instruction online, and those criteria are *not* relevant at present. Let's make this easy for everyone to understand: *If you hear a surprising or disturbing claim about COVID-19 at QU from anyone other than President McGee or Dr. Tracy, you should ignore what that person says.* If you need more information, contact President McGee or Dr. Tracy directly. You have our email addresses, Hawks. We will get answers to your COVID-19 questions. Otherwise, we politely ask all members of our community to discourage people from making stuff up.
6. If you are already a student on campus and in Quincy, Quincy is the best and safest place for you to be for the remainder of the semester. Consistent with the very strong advice of the CDC, QU students should not leave the Quincy area in mid-semester, as doing so causes new COVID-19 risks for students and for families.

In closing, testing, contact tracing, and quarantining are very effective tools for fighting the pandemic and are working properly at QU. Proper masking, distancing, and hand hygiene are also effective, and we need to work harder than ever to follow

this basic public health advice, which we have been discussing for many months. We believe that our continued uses of testing, contact tracing, and quarantining have been and will continue to work well in responding to the pandemic, even after, and especially after, we see an increase in positive tests.

President McGee will next see his COM 101 students in our Francis Hall classroom at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 22. Please keep up with your reading this weekend!

You have our prayers and support, Hawks. Take care of yourselves. Be well. Stay safe.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development

P.S. At tonight's (outdoor and masked) gathering to promote voting and good citizenship, one of you insisted to President McGee that *Star Wars* is better than *Star Trek*. President McGee celebrates your right to hold an opinion on this matter, however misguided. Really, does he keep needing to explaining the advantages of *Star Trek*? For example, the *Star Wars* universe can't manage to create one constructed language, though they have made up names for wannabe pretend languages like Huttese. In contrast, *Star Trek* has Klingonese, complete with summer language camps and a language institute. Even Dothraki in *Game of Thrones* is a complete, constructed language. *Star Wars* looks pretty sad by comparison, as usual. But, hey, if *Star Wars* is your thing, so be it.

P.P.S. Yes, at long last, we gave you a *Game of Thrones* reference. Nerds rule.