

Dear Quincy University community:

This year, autumn means that, one day to the next, we move wildly from shorts weather to frost advisories. Go figure. Consider the weather report another way in which 2020 continues to make us feel challenged.

This message is the seventy-second update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here's the simplest possible summary for the current academic semester:

### **COVID-19 Test Summary for QU Students (Fall 2020)**

Number of Student Positive Tests, Active Cases	30*
Number of Previous Positive Tests, Not Active Cases	115
<b>Total Number of Cases Following QU Entry for Fall 2020</b>	<b>145</b>

\*One additional student who only takes online courses and does not live locally has tested positive for COVID-19. This student will be excluded from our reporting of on-campus and local cases, but we are concerned for the safety and recovery of all QU students.

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### **COVID-19 Data**

Here are some of the most relevant data points at present for Quincy University and COVID-19:

- **145** positive COVID-19 viral tests have been reported this semester for QU students after those students arrived at the university. One additional student who only takes online courses and does not live locally also has reported a positive COVID-19 test.
- **Thirty** of those 145 students currently have active COVID-19 infections and are in quarantine.
- **115** of those 145 students have completed their quarantine periods and are not active cases.
- **103** students are currently in quarantine, including all active positive cases and many other students who have not tested positive for COVID-19. 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.
- **Over 100 rooms** on campus currently are available for quarantine use.

- We are aware of **two** positive COVID-19 tests in the current semester for non-instructional staff members and **one** positive test for a faculty member, all of whom currently are quarantined. We are not aware of any positive tests in the current semester for QU vendors. We will continue to be transparent about the number of COVID-19 cases involving students, employees, and vendors, as we are notified about them.

## Surveillance Testing

**We conducted a fourth round of surveillance testing today, Monday, October 19, for about 140 individuals.** You may recall that surveillance testing is testing of people who do not currently have COVID-19 symptoms and have not been exposed to someone who is COVID-19-positive. Such testing helps us to find people with infections who will never show symptoms (i.e., asymptomatic cases) or people who are not yet showing symptoms, though they are infected and will soon experience symptoms. Many other universities, including other universities in our region, are doing little or no surveillance testing, and their COVID-19 numbers are not comparable to ours. Some other universities, including a few in our region, conduct surveillance testing using different and potentially less sensitive tests.

## Our Current Situation

Here's our review of the current COVID-19 situation at Quincy University:

1. We continue to follow our plan for COVID-19 testing and to have confidence in that plan. At QU, the combination of symptomatic and surveillance testing is designed to help us limit new infections. Ultimately, though, the best way to reduce our risk for COVID-19 infection is the consistent use of **masking, distancing, and good hand hygiene**. COVID-19 positive test counts will rise and fall from one week to the next.
2. At QU, all available evidence continues to indicate that students are contracting COVID-19 in their social and residential interactions. While students are being careful and behaving responsibly overall, the pattern is that students are contracting the disease in interactions with family, friends, and romantic partners, in both on- and off-campus settings. Thus far, it appears **students are not contracting the disease in classrooms, laboratories, or organized sports practices or games**.
3. In previous COVID-19 updates, we **announced limitations on indoor dining and gatherings on campus, along with requests that all members of**

**our community avoid use of indoor restaurant seating and minimize shopping trips. Those limitations and related requests will remain in place through at least Friday, October 23.** At present, those on campus should eat outdoors or eat in residence hall rooms, either alone or only in the company of roommates. The increase in COVID-19 cases in Adams County over the past several days continues to inform our thinking about on-campus restrictions. **We repeat, once again, our request that faculty and staff join our students in minimizing in-person shopping and avoiding in-person dining while away from campus.** We know these limitations can be difficult, and we will continue to look for better options.

4. We are using **contact tracing** and **quarantining** to find people who may have a COVID-19 infection, to keep them safe, to make certain the right people have testing and medical care, and to prevent those who may have the disease from infecting other people. Our quarantining decisions are made, when appropriate, in consultation with the Adams County Health Department.

5. As we have said many times in the past, it is essential that students, faculty, and staff **report symptoms** of anything that might be COVID-19 as soon as possible. While some of us might be tempted to avoid reporting a symptom on the grounds that the symptom seems minor, a healthcare professional, not an individual student or employee, should make this determination. **There is *no* acceptable reason for failing to inform us about a medical symptom that might point to COVID-19.**

6. We are entering the **cold and flu season**. For the rest of the semester, we anticipate an increase in the number of students with symptoms requiring a COVID-19 test, even though many of those students will have an illness other than COVID-19.

7. **If you intend for any reason to have a COVID-19 test** or you have taken a COVID-19 test not arranged by the university, **please contact Dr. Tracy immediately** with the details of your situation.

8. The **Health and Well Being Clinic** is open to all students and offers Nurse Practitioner Services and Counseling Services. If you need counseling services, please call 217-222-6550 ext. 3418 and set up a telehealth appointment, a face-to-face appointment on our campus, or an appointment at QMG at no cost. If you need to consult with the Nurse Practitioner, please see her on the Friars' Hall main floor during the times listed below. She will be offering **flu shots** for all students who want one, and flu shots are strongly encouraged for all of us during the pandemic.

Monday	1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Tuesday	8:30 am – 12:30 pm
Thursday	12:00 pm – 4:00 pm

9. 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.

10. As a reminder, asymptomatic people who are infected with the virus pose very little risk to members of our community if all of us are wearing masks, practicing physical distancing, and committed to good hand hygiene.

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. The next COVID-19 email update from the university is anticipated no later than October 26, 2020.

### **Local and State Reports on COVID-19 Cases**

As background for our safety measures at QU, we continue to report local and statewide COVID-19 information to all members of our community. As of today, a total of 1,625 COVID-19 cases have been reported in the **Quincy region (i.e., Adams County)**, 229 of which are considered active cases. Some of these cases spread within households. The Quincy region also has had 36,442 confirmed negative COVID-19 tests. There are 49 current hospitalizations in Adams County linked to COVID-19. One Missouri resident has died in Adams County of causes related to COVID-19, as have 15 Adams County residents.

There have been 347,161 COVID-19 cases in **Illinois**. More information about COVID-19 cases in Illinois, including county-by-county reports, is available at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>. These QU updates on COVID-19 cases are taken from the public reports of state and county agencies.

As of yesterday, there were 158,101 confirmed COVID-19 cases in **Missouri**.

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Earlier today, Illinois's Governor announced significant new restrictions on bars, restaurants, and public meetings for 20 counties in Southern Illinois. While these restrictions currently do NOT include Quincy or Adams County, other places in Illinois are at risk of having similar restrictions imposed on

them. See [https://thesouthern.com/news/local/additional-covid-19-mitigations-to-take-effect-in-southern-illinois-region-5/article\\_80e41b16-ded6-55bc-ad2a-c1d18f888d17.html](https://thesouthern.com/news/local/additional-covid-19-mitigations-to-take-effect-in-southern-illinois-region-5/article_80e41b16-ded6-55bc-ad2a-c1d18f888d17.html). Hawks, let's all do our part to prevent these restrictions from being imposed in Adams County.

As the semester continues, all of us now know someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, and many of us know people who have had significant symptoms as a result of COVID-19 infections. Please take care of yourselves by following our basic safety rules, which we all know: wear masks, keep a safe distance, and wash hands frequently. As the weather gets colder and more activities move indoors, it's more important than ever that we be absolutely insistent on following the rules.

President McGee is aware that *Star Trek: Discovery* fans are now learning about the Star Trek world of the thirty-second century, which is very exciting. He is even more excited, though, about QU students completing their course assignments. *Star Trek* will still be streaming when the semester is over. Let's get our work done, Hawks. We can save some of our binge watching for later.

Finally, we remain deeply grateful for the work of all those who are cooking and delivering meals, taking temperatures, sanitizing indoor spaces, taking out trash, and doing everything else that makes our community safer during the pandemic. Thank you. Thank you.

We are praying for all Hawks and for the health and wellbeing of this community. Your prayers also are needed and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development