

Dear Quincy University community:

We have six more days of class remaining in the fall semester, Hawks, with final exams to follow. The semester is nearly complete, and those assignment deadlines are imminent. Stay focused!

This message is the seventy-seventh 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)

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|---|------------|
| Number of Student Positive Tests, Active Cases | 22 |
| Number of Previous Positive Tests, Not Active Cases | 200 |
| Total Number of Cases Following QU Entry for Fall 2020 | 222 |

COVID-19 Data

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

- **222** 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.
- **Twenty-two** of those 222 students currently have active COVID-19 infections and are in quarantine.
- **200** of those 222 students have completed their quarantine periods and are not active cases.
- **Sixty-four** 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 **five** positive COVID-19 tests in the current semester for non-instructional staff members, **two** positive tests for faculty members (one full-time, one adjunct), and **four** positive tests for employees of QU vendors. Three of these 11 individuals are quarantined; eight of these 11 are not active cases. We will continue to be transparent about the number of COVID-19 cases involving students, employees, and vendors, as we are notified about them.

Note: One additional student who only takes online courses and does not live locally has previously tested positive for COVID-19. This student is excluded from our reporting of on-campus and local cases (see above), but we are concerned for the safety and recovery of all QU students.

Surveillance Testing

We will conduct a sixth round of surveillance testing on Monday, November 16, for at least 140 individuals. In addition to the students taking part in the scheduled surveillance testing on November 16, other students and members of our community who wish to take a **free COVID-19 test** before traveling for Thanksgiving or the December holidays are also welcome to take their test on November 16. Please see below (and the attached document) for additional information.

Quincy University has been conducting surveillance testing of students during the current semester and plans to continue doing so during the spring academic terms for students taking in-person courses. 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 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.** We remind all students that **violations of our COVID-19 protocols and campus rules may lead to sanctions under the accountability process,** as explained in the *Student Handbook*.

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 Wednesday, November 25.** 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 recent weeks in COVID-19 cases in the Midwest, Illinois, and Adams County requires that we continue to restrict dining opportunities, both on and off campus.

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. **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.

7. 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

8. 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.

9. **As provided last week, please see the attached public health and safety guidance for students and other members of our community who are living on or near campus and plan to travel to be with family and friends during the Thanksgiving and December holidays.** These end-of-semester recommendations also are available on QU's coronavirus website. As covered in the recommendations document, you may be particularly interested in the availability of **free COVID-19 viral testing on Monday, November 16**. This testing may help some members of our community reduce the risk of infecting family and friends with COVID-19.

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 November 16, 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 2,910 COVID-19 cases have been reported in the **Quincy region (i.e., Adams County)**. Adams County has not reported active case numbers for several days because of a technical problem with a database. The Quincy region also has had 43,432 confirmed negative COVID-19 tests. There are 63 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 30 Adams County residents.

There have been 498,560 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.

Missouri has begun reporting its COVID-19 cases only for the past seven days. Information about COVID-19 in Missouri is available at <https://showmestrong.mo.gov/data/public-health/>.

As you likely know from reading other messages, a sprinkler head malfunctioned on Friday evening in Francis Hall, and we are now addressing some water damage in the building. Please read your email messages carefully for the remainder of the semester and, in particular, the messages that provide information on access to Francis Hall. Students continue to have full access to all other campus buildings, including the SSC, Brenner Library, and the North Campus. Students, you have all the study space you need.

We remain very concerned about the higher levels of COVID-19 infection in Adams County, in Illinois and Missouri, and across the U.S. While several of you have noted that QU's COVID-19 case numbers have been stable during a time when known Adams County infections have increased, we believe the only satisfactory number of COVID-19 infections is zero. Please be careful and observe all of our safety protocols while you are on campus and when you are away from campus. From contact tracing, we know that several QU students and employees likely contracted COVID-19 while visiting Quincy-area homes and businesses. Please be just as vigilant off campus as you are when you are on campus.

We are pleased to report that, while vote counting continues, the U.S. election campaign is complete. We are now pleased to return to television advertisements for reverse mortgages, attorney class-action lawsuits, cleaning products, and pretty much anything else not related to politics. Thanks to all those who were eligible to vote and decided to do so.

Today, November 9, is World Freedom Day, celebrating the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of communism in Eastern and Central Europe. In this era of political division, we hope that all of us can get behind celebrations of world freedom – with masks and physical distancing, of course.

Stay safe, Hawks.

Sincerely,
Dr. Brian McGee, President
Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development