

Dear Quincy University community:

Welcome to this rare weekend edition of the COVID-19 email update. We haven't updated you about COVID-19 recently because, well, there hasn't been much news. The absence of news, though, is news in its own right.

This message is the eighty-fourth update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here's our review of the COVID-19 situation for the Quincy University community:

1. There are **no known COVID-19 infections on campus** for QU students. There are no students in quarantine on the QU campus. Quarantine facilities are available on campus, in the event they are needed.
2. **Nearly 1,000 COVID-19 rapid tests** have been administered on the QU campus in the first four weeks of the spring semester. There have been **no positive test results** in our on-campus testing.
3. We are aware of **no active COVID-19 cases for QU students**.
4. **One student has reported a positive test for COVID-19 since the semester began.** That student has completed quarantine and is no longer an active case.
5. Mandatory surveillance testing for COVID-19 is occurring this semester for **student athletes**. The frequency of testing for each student athlete depends on the nature of student contact in each individual sport, as designated by the NCAA.
6. As previously described in emails sent by Dr. Tracy, and beginning next week, **mandatory surveillance testing** for COVID-19 also is being conducted this semester for **non-student athletes** who are taking one or more courses on the QU campus. This is a new requirement for non-student athletes and is intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by those who are infected and asymptomatic. Dr. Tracy's emails to students have described this new surveillance testing requirement in detail, with about a third of eligible non-student athletes being tested each week. This rapid surveillance testing takes very little time to complete and does not involve physical discomfort for the student taking the test.
7. Some QU students are required to participate in **COVID-19 surveillance testing provided through their local employers in Quincy**. As a result, more testing of QU students is taking place than is reported in this email message. Again, we ask all students to report their test results to Dr. Tracy.
8. Faculty, staff, and vendor employees should continue to seek out COVID-19 testing when they have one or more COVID-19 symptoms, usually at the

Adams County rapid testing center, at the Blessing Hospital testing center, or on the QU campus. Those faculty, staff, and vendor employees seeking to arrange a rapid COVID-19 test on campus should contact Dr. Tracy directly. **We are aware of no COVID-19 infections involving faculty, staff, or vendor employees in the first four weeks of the spring semester.**

9. The best way to reduce our risk for COVID-19 infection is the consistent use of **masking, distancing, and good hand hygiene**. All members of the QU community should continue to follow these public health safety guidelines.

10. For any student currently living on the QU campus and for all employees, 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.**

11. **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, no matter where you are living right now, **please contact Dr. Tracy** with the details of your situation.

12. New guidance regarding COVID-19 testing, safety, and quarantine protocols continues to be announced by federal, state, and county sources. Updates to our policies and procedures will be announced by email as those updates are available.

13. For a variety of reasons, many QU faculty, staff, and vendor employees have received one or both shots of a **COVID-19 vaccine**. Some students also have received the vaccine, usually because of the nature of their employment or volunteer work. At Quincy University, we are grateful for the outstanding public health and healthcare professionals of Adams County, Illinois, as Adams County is leading the state in getting people vaccinated for COVID-19. We always feel fortunate to live in this great community, but we are amazed by the success of Adams County in getting people quickly and safely vaccinated.

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/>.

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. Because the pandemic was declared about 11 months ago, it is no longer useful to report total case numbers. We will continue to provide active case counts and current hospitalizations.

In the **Quincy region (i.e., Adams County)**, there are 115 active cases at present. There are 12 current hospitalizations in Adams County linked to COVID-19. Since the beginning of the pandemic, one Missouri resident has died in Adams County of causes related to COVID-19, as have 113 Adams County residents. Information about COVID-19 cases in Illinois, including county-by-county reports, is available at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>. QU updates on COVID-19 cases are taken from the public reports of state and county agencies.

Missouri reports its COVID-19 cases for the past seven days and does not provide daily updates to its COVID-19 summary. Information about COVID-19 in Missouri is available at <https://showmestrong.mo.gov/data/public-health/>.

Announcements

As the members of our community know, we now are allowing a limited number of seats for dine-in service in the cafeteria. My deepest thanks to all members of our community for following the dining rules and to our dining-service staff for their dedication and professionalism.

As we have noted in previous emails, and at the risk of oversimplification, it is the position of the Roman Catholic Church that the currently available COVID-19 vaccines in the United States are morally acceptable. If you have questions about the Catholic position regarding the current COVID-19 vaccines, President McGee and other members of our community with expertise on this question, including Fr. John Doctor, would be happy to discuss the matter with you.

We know many people continue to find new ways to entertain themselves in the middle of a global pandemic. When President McGee realized he had watched music highlights from the *Pitch Perfect* movies for four days in a row, he declared that enough was enough. No more fake a cappella groups for the rest of the week, folks.

More seriously, from the perspective of preventing COVID-19 infections, we at QU have had a very good start to the current academic semester. However, there are many universities where COVID-19 cases are on the rise. We will only continue to prevent COVID-19 infections if we consistently follow all the same rules for masking and distancing with which we are so very, very familiar.

Stay safe, Hawks. Tough though we might be in Quincy, we won't complain if some of the snow melts off this weekend.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development