

Dear Quincy University community:

Because of Holy Week and Passover, we have our first three-day weekend of the 2020-2021 academic year. For some of us, this is great news and provides a wonderful opportunity to see family and friends, while remaining aware of the need to still take precautions against COVID-19 transmission.

This message is the eighty-seventh 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 active COVID-19 infections on campus.**
2. **There are no QU students in quarantine**, whether on or off campus.
3. Student, faculty, staff, and vendor employees continue to **get vaccinated** each week. A great many members of our community already have been vaccinated.
4. During the spring semester, approximately **200-300 COVID-19 tests** have been administered on campus each week as part of our programs for surveillance testing. We haven't had a positive COVID-19 in our surveillance testing in the past two weeks.
5. There have been a total of five COVID-19 cases on campus since the start of the spring semester in January, with four student cases and one staff case. None of those infections is active.
6. 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.
7. 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 one COVID-19 infection involving a faculty, staff, or vendor employee during the spring semester.**
8. 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.
9. 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.**

10. **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.

11. 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.

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 over a year 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 18 active cases at present. There are seven 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 115 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**

With each week of 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has seemed less threatening in Adams County and Western Illinois. With an increase in vaccination, with far more COVID-19 testing, and with a sharp decline in active infections, we are right to feel good about our progress in fighting the disease. However, we caution you that the

great majority of our protections need to remain in place, including those for masking and social distancing. **The pandemic is NOT over**, and disease rates are increasing in several parts of the country. We do not want to see a sudden surge in infections wipe out our remaining campus activities for the semester or prevent us from holding our commencement ceremonies in May. For your own health, and for the good of our community, please continue to take precautions both on and off campus.

For those members of our community who are vaccinated, we strongly encourage you to take good care of your COVID-19 vaccination record card. This card shows that you have been vaccinated, and future participation in some events and activities in Illinois may require you to provide proof of vaccination. The Office of Student Development in Francis Hall can laminate your record card, as Dr. Tracy previously communicated to members of the QU community.

We read that today, March 30, has been national Turkey Neck Soup Day, which celebrates (if that's the right word) the role of turkey necks in making a tasty soup. Even by the standards of made-up holidays, this one has been something of a stretch. But, hey, we won't stick our necks out by calling for the elimination of obviously superfluous holidays.

Meanwhile, Star Trek fans will mark April 5 as First Contact Day, the fateful date in 2063 when fictitious future humans will first meet equally fictitious space aliens from the planet Vulcan. So, you ask, is there a day for special programming honoring an imaginary event 42 years in the future? Why, yes, there is. <https://www.startrek.com/news/join-startrekcom-for-first-contact-day>.

Be well, Hawks. Happy Easter. Chag Pesach samech.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development