

Dear Quincy University community:

It's a Labor Day weekend, complete with plenty of on-campus events and intercollegiate athletic competition. Have a great holiday weekend, Hawks.

Today's message is the ninety-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. Our last round of surveillance testing, involving 102 unvaccinated students, took place on Wednesday, September 1. **All test results were negative.**
2. **Five students have tested positive for COVID-19 since the semester began.** One of those students takes only online courses. Any student with an active infection is quarantined, whether on or off campus.
3. Five additional students currently are **quarantined for close contact**, three of those students leaving quarantine this weekend. As a reminder, students who are quarantined for close contact have not tested positive for COVID-19 and may never have a positive test.
4. In the typical day QU is testing three or more students, faculty, and staff for COVID-19 because those community members report one or more COVID-19 symptoms, such as a headache or congestion. Most test results for such symptomatic testing are negative, but not all.
5. We are continuing to get new information about student, faculty, business partner, and staff vaccinations. **At present, 73% of QU students** are partially or fully vaccinated. The great majority are fully vaccinated. **90%** of full-time faculty and staff (and those part-time staff categories for whom we have usable data) are partially or fully vaccinated. The great majority of the vaccinated faculty and staff are fully vaccinated. **Our all-community vaccination rate is presently 75.5%.**
6. We know that some QU students may be required to participate in **COVID-19 surveillance testing provided through their local employers in Quincy or nearby communities.** We ask all students to report their test results to Dr. Tracy.
7. For the current semester, we are aware of **no COVID-19 cases for QU faculty. So far this semester, two full-time staff members and one part-time staff member have tested positive for COVID-19.** Two of those three cases currently are active infections. Anyone with an active infection is quarantined, and no one in off-campus quarantine is permitted to return to campus until that person's quarantine period is complete.
8. Faculty, staff, and business partner employees should continue to **seek out COVID-19 testing** when they have one or more COVID-19 symptoms. Those faculty, staff, and business partner employees seeking to arrange a rapid COVID-19 test on campus should contact Dr. Tracy directly.
9. By far, the best way to reduce our risk for COVID-19 infection and serious illness is vaccination. **Masking, distancing, and good hand hygiene** also can be important ways to reduce risk. All members of the QU community should continue to follow 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.

September 4, 2021

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/>. We suggest focusing on the updates with prime numbers. (Yes, 97 is a prime number. Thank heavens for the Sieve of Eratosthenes.)

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 well 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)**, 103 new cases were reported yesterday. There are 41 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 141 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

On September 3, Governor Pritzker of Illinois modified his Executive Order dealing with vaccinations, extending the original deadline of September 5 to a new deadline, September 19, at the request of advocates for K-12 schools and healthcare organizations.

QU was fully prepared to comply with the Governor's original deadline. However, because QU works with many other partners in healthcare and higher education who may make changes in their own testing schedules, **we will likely modify a portion of the COVID-19 testing schedule previously sent to unvaccinated or partially vaccinated members of our community. Those of you who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated will receive an email update from QU about COVID-19 testing no later than the evening of Tuesday, September 7.**

As a reminder, if you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated, you have already received information about **expanded weekly COVID-19 testing**, which was originally scheduled to begin next week. If you are fully vaccinated, you did not receive this information. Please don't worry about it. If you believe you should have received this information about expanded testing and did not, please contact Dr. Tracy at tracych@quincy.edu. Again, if you received this information, you will soon receive updated information from QU as a result of the Governor's latest decision.

Those of you who are filing the **Vaccine Declination or Deferral Request** form should **still do so by September 7, as originally announced**. We thank the over 60 of you who have already completed the form and returned it to us at covid@quincy.edu.

A state-ordered facemask mandate remains in effect for public indoor spaces on the QU campus. Facemasks are not required outdoors, though community members are welcome to mask in crowded outdoor spaces. Further, members of our community should wear their facemask off campus, when in indoor public spaces.

September 4, 2021

So, here's the summary, Hawks: (1) Whether you are vaccinated or unvaccinated, wear a mask indoors. (2) Vaccinated people are not affected in any other way by the Governor's recent Executive Orders. (3) By September 7, unvaccinated people need to submit the "Vaccine Declination or Deferral Request" form OR get their initial vaccination. (4) People who are not fully vaccinated by September 7 soon will receive more information from QU via email about testing.

Enjoy your Labor Day weekend, Hawks! And, if you'd like, consider spending a few moments contemplating the importance of prime numbers.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development

September 4, 2021