

Dear Quincy University community:

Today's message is the 104th update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. That's 104 separate and exciting email messages, brought to Hawks everywhere by QU's official public health desk.

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

1. Because of new requirements for the State of Illinois, this week is the seventh week of expanded COVID-19 testing for unvaccinated and partially vaccinated members of our community. Since our last COVID-19 update, the last two rounds of surveillance testing have been conducted for the relevant students, staff, and faculty, and over 250 tests have been administered. **All known test results were negative.** Some tests were conducted at off-campus testing sites and are not included in our totals.
2. **Fourteen students have tested positive for COVID-19 since the semester began.** One of those students took only online courses. Some of the remaining students did not have full-time course schedules on the QU campus. Any student with an active infection is quarantined, whether on or off campus. **As of today, there are no active student cases for QU.**
3. There are currently no **QU students in quarantine** for a close contact with an infected person.
4. In the typical day QU is testing several 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. QU's current all-community vaccination rate is **83%**. We will update vaccination rates on occasion throughout this academic year, but the bottom line is that the great majority of QU students, faculty, and staff have been vaccinated. The remainder should have applied for exemptions or deferrals.
6. **All unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students, faculty, and staff are receiving separate information about weekly COVID-19 testing**, as now required by the State of Illinois. QU should now have received completed **Vaccination Declination and Deferral Request** forms from all unvaccinated members of our community. Please direct questions about these forms and State of Illinois requirements to Dr. Tracy.
7. 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.

8. For the current semester, we are aware of **two COVID-19 cases for QU faculty and three cases for staff**, including our business partners. **As of today, there are no active cases for faculty and staff.** 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.**
12. **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.
13. 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. QU updates on COVID-19 cases are taken from the public reports of state and county agencies.

Effective October 31, 2021, **Adams County, Illinois**, no longer maintains a COVID-19 tracking dashboard. Information about COVID-19 cases in **Illinois**, including

county-by-county reports, is available at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>.

**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**

Before the 2021 Fall Semester began, unvaccinated QU students were notified of the possibility that they would be charged for weekly surveillance testing after November 2021. *As announced on October 25, 2021, there will be no charges for COVID-19 testing at QU prior to March 1, 2022.* Further, we will do everything we can to avoid any testing charges during the current academic year. New information will be provided on this topic when the information is available.

If you are a member of the QU community, please check your email for a message from Dr. Tracy dealing with next week's COVID-19 vaccine **booster shots**.

Enjoy the fall weather, Hawks! The changing trees make campus especially beautiful at this time of year. It's time to dig out the sweatshirts and heavy jackets, if you haven't already done so. Yes, we know, those of you from Wisconsin, Saskatchewan, and other points north will keep telling us how warm it is in Quincy. Please don't feel the need to keep wearing shorts to confirm for us how tough you are.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development