

Dear Quincy University community:

Congratulations to our amazing students, faculty, and staff, who successfully negotiated our first-ever all-online teaching day at QU! We are proud of all those who worked to make this day a success, despite all the challenges along the way.

This message is the fourteenth update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are a member of the QU community and have not read the previous update messages, we encourage you to search them out in your email folders or read them at <https://www.quincy.edu/coronavirus/>.

The QU coronavirus website also includes a link to our Q&A document, which was updated today.

As of today, Monday, March 23, the Adams County (Illinois) Health Department has previously confirmed one COVID-19 case, the first and, thus far, the only case in our region. To the best of our knowledge, the infected person was not connected to QU in any way. This is the same case we have mentioned in several previous email updates.

As many news sources indicate, we are still seeing a steady increase in the number of such cases reported in Illinois, in Missouri, across the nation, and around the world. There are now 1,285 COVID-19 cases in Illinois, with the great majority of those cases in the greater Chicago area. We remind everyone that no part of our nation is likely to avoid COVID-19 cases. The growth in the number of cases for Illinois in the past day can be attributed in part to the increased availability of COVID-19 testing. 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>. Much misinformation about COVID-19 is now circulating on the internet, including social media, and members of our community are encouraged to pay attention only to advice provided by reputable health professionals.

Illinois, including Quincy, continues to operate under a "stay at home" order until the end of the day on April 7. Quincy University's residence halls and cafeteria remain open and will remain open for the semester. The campus Facilities team will continue the deep cleaning and sanitizing of our buildings, using cleaning products approved by the CDC. Essential staff will be allowed to come to campus in order to care for our students and ensure the support of our online classes.

Because of the recent order from the State of Illinois, the earliest day we can return to face-to-face instruction at QU is Wednesday, April 8. The QU community should expect an announcement on Wednesday, March 25, about any updates to our schedule for teaching online, following a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Quincy University Board of Trustees.

A few communications went out to some or all members of our community earlier today. A survey went out to graduating students for their opinions about alternatives to the May Commencement in case postponement is necessary. To be clear, no decision has been made about the date for commencement or the possible postponement of commencement, other than to say categorically that commencement will NEVER be canceled. Every graduating student will have one or more chances to participate in a commencement ceremony.

In other messages sent out today, we indicated that the last day to withdraw from one or more courses has been extended for this semester to the last day of classes. Also, undergraduate students can choose to make one of their courses pass/fail by the last day of classes, with academic advisor approval. Much more information on these topics was provided in the original emails sent to our community.

Students who have been away and now need to return to QU to live in the residence halls, to remove some belongings from their residence hall rooms, or to use campus facilities are more than welcome to do so, but they will need to contact Dr. Tracy at tracych@quincy.edu before arriving or, for that matter, getting on the train or in a car to make the trip. She is doing a health assessment for every student who comes on campus, even temporarily.

Though many campus offices are open by appointment only or through email, campus security is still open and available for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If any student needs to speak with security, please contact the security office at 217-228-5600.

If students are struggling to secure reliable internet access, wherever they live, they should contact Dr. Tracy or one of our Success Coaches to help identify possible solutions.

The new office hours for QU's mailroom will be Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please have any mailings brought to the QU Mailroom between these hours. Any mail brought to the mailroom after 2:00 p.m. will not go out until the next business day. Departments will need to pick up their mail during this time also. Contact wingesh@quincy.edu for mailroom information. Even though the office hours are changed, an email message will be responded to from Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

This should be the punchline to a really bad dad joke, but it definitely is not: For the fourteenth time, each of us needs to wash hands, use hand sanitizer, and maintain a physical distance of six feet when we must be out in public. Thank you for doing this.

If you are looking for more campus news, you are encouraged to follow @Quincy_U and @Quincy_UMcGee on Twitter. Resources are always available at www.quincy.edu and at <https://www.quincy.edu/coronavirus/>.

The tater tot casserole (really) in the QU cafeteria was terrific today at lunchtime, as was tonight's orange chicken. There was some actual student dancing in celebration of the dinner menu, all from a safe six-feet away. In addition to occasional dancing, there are many healthy food options. Well done, food services team! And, for those of you who aren't on campus this week, we promise lots of good food in the cafeteria whenever you return.

Be well, Hawks.

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