

Dear Quincy University community:

We hope you had a bit of fun on this St. Patrick's Day. As QU's Irish-American president, President McGee previously declared that green would be our honorary third university color for the day, joining brown and white. We had plenty of green in Francis Hall for St. Patrick's Day, and dinner in the QU cafeteria included corned beef.

An influential 17th century Irish and Franciscan priest, Luke Wadding, gets the credit for Catholic recognition of the feast day of St. Patrick on March 17, so the day is even more special for us at Quincy University, with our Franciscan heritage.

This message is the eighth 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 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 posted yesterday, March 16.

As of today, March 17, there are no media reports of COVID-19 cases in Quincy, Illinois, or in the region. However, there has been a steady increase in the number of such cases reported in Illinois, in Missouri, across the nation, and around the world. There are now 160 COVID-19 cases reported in Illinois, with infections noted for individuals with an age range from 9-91. No part of our nation is likely to avoid COVID-19 cases.

Today, several Quincy-area public facilities or businesses announced restricted hours or other accommodations to the pandemic. The Hy-Vee grocery stores in Quincy, for example, will now be open 12 hours a day.

Our dedicated faculty are continuing to attend workshops designed to share tips, experience, and tools for online teaching, as they prepare for exclusively online teaching at QU, beginning March 23. Classes will be offered online until at least April 3. The faculty workshops will be repeated on Wednesday, March 18, consistent with the announced schedule, and faculty can sign up for those workshops by contacting the Office of Academic Affairs. All our faculty have the thanks and gratitude of President McGee and Dr. Reed for their extraordinary effort and professionalism.

As our extended spring break continues at QU, most of our students remain away from campus. However, dozens of students currently are living on campus, and more have told us they will be returning to campus when our courses resume in the online format. Today, our staff spoke with every student presently on campus, checked each residence hall room, and sanitized every door knob in the residence halls.

Students who have traveled more than 50 miles away from Quincy, Illinois, must complete a simple health screening at the time they return to campus. More information on this topic has been provided to students in an email from Dr. Tracy.

To facilitate very frequent cleaning of key areas, we are restricting door access to various campus buildings for the next few weeks. In Francis Hall, please use either of the two handicapped entrances on the north sides of the building or the main entrance on the south side of the building. All other doors will serve as emergency exits only, and key card access is restricted. Signs for entrance restrictions also are posted on doors in some other campus buildings.

As you probably know, we have repeatedly provided important information in previous email updates about frequent handwashing and other practical steps every one of us can take to stay healthy, including yesterday's handout on social distancing. Please continue to follow this basic advice from public health professionals. We are continuing our ongoing and aggressive efforts to clean key areas on campus frequently, using approved cleaning products. As one QU employee noted earlier today, you can smell cleaning products nearly every time you walk down a hallway in Francis Hall.

If you are looking for more campus news, you are encouraged to follow @Quincy_U and @Quincy_UMcGee on Twitter. President McGee's Twitter account will continue to repost area COVID-19 news and scenes from Quincy and the QU campus. Resources are always available at www.quincy.edu and at <https://www.quincy.edu/coronavirus/>.

We continue to hear reports from QU students who are away from Quincy and preparing for the start of online classes. We love learning how people are making the best of what for all of us is an exceptionally challenging situation.

Thank you, as always, for your patience and generosity. At this most difficult of times, the goodness and decency of the people of Quincy University continue to inspire us.

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