

Dear Quincy University community:

There are some important changes ahead in the State of Illinois, all of which we are confident we will manage successfully at Quincy University. You'll read more about that below.

This message is the eleventh 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 posted on March 16 and will be updated on March 23.

As of today, March 20, 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 mentioned in yesterday's email update.

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 585 COVID-19 cases in Illinois, with over 500 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>.

About six hours ago, the Illinois governor announced an executive order directing Illinois residents to "stay at home" or "shelter in place" in order to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This order takes effect on Saturday, March 21, at 5:00 p.m. and runs through the end of the day on Tuesday, April 7. The order to shelter in place does not prevent people from going to the grocery store, picking up prescription drugs, buying gasoline, or taking a walk. The order does continue to limit restaurants to filling drive-through orders and will close many businesses and other community attractions until April 8, including bowling alleys, arcades, and playgrounds. Restaurants and bars in Illinois continue to be closed to dine-in service.

Under the executive order, essential staff at Quincy University can come to campus to maintain our buildings and equipment, to ensure our continued online-education operation, and to see to the health and safety of our students on campus. Our residence halls and cafeteria 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.

Most importantly, **all classes will resume on Monday, March 23, as previously scheduled, and will be taught exclusively online.** Because of the new order from the State of Illinois, the earliest day we can return to face-to-face instruction at QU is Wednesday, April 8. As mentioned in today's campus news email, the QU community should expect an announcement on March 25 about our schedule for teaching online, following a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Quincy University Board of Trustees.

Today, we visited every currently occupied residence hall room at QU, and we have spoken with almost all of our students on campus. We assured them they continue to be welcome on campus and that we would continue to support them in meeting their personal and educational needs. While QU buildings are closed to the public, our students and our essential faculty and staff are very welcome to be in them. Whether our students take their online classes from a residence hall room, from a house or apartment in western Illinois, or anywhere else in the world, we are eager to welcome them back to the important QU business of teaching and learning.

Through the rest of the semester, at a minimum, students who plan to sleep away from their residence hall rooms, or who plan to return to a residence hall after being away, even for one night, must contact Dr. Tracy via email at tracych@quincy.edu. At this time, we need to be aware of travel plans, including local travel plans for the safety and protection of our community. Of course, travel during the shelter-in-place period should be severely restricted.

For March 21 through April 7, during the Illinois shelter-in-place period, our faculty and staff will generally work from home, unless they have an unavoidable need to be on campus. **Students and others who want to make contact with a faculty or staff member should use email, rather than calling campus telephones, in order to make contact.** While some campus phone numbers will be answered promptly, others will go to voicemail, and some voice messages may not be picked up for several days. This strong preference for email is a change from yesterday's update message.

Faculty and staff should speak with their supervisors before coming to campus. Some faculty and staff will be designated as essential employees and come to campus at least occasionally to perform necessary work. All other faculty and staff will work from home and will be in regular contact with their supervisors about that work.

To be clear, campus is closed to the public. Until further notice, there will be no public masses in the QU Chapel. Visits to campus by prospective students are being rescheduled for dates after April 7. Members of the public are asked not to enter the library, the cafeteria, or the Health and Fitness Center. Access to some classrooms and other spaces on campus will be restricted. Some spaces available to students on campus will have limited hours, as noted in an earlier message today. Daily cafeteria hours will be restricted to 11:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m., beginning on Saturday, March 21, and the hours for student and essential employee use of the Health and Fitness Center will be 12:00-4:00 p.m. daily, also effective Saturday, March 21.

Two days ago, our faculty and staff received an email message announcing the university's temporary COVID-19 policy. Because of new legislation passed by Congress and signed into law today by President Trump, our temporary policy will be revised. We will supply the revised policy to faculty and staff as soon as updates to it are complete.

Faculty, staff, and students received some emails today that were specifically intended for them and which came from several different campus offices. Please read your email every day for the remainder of the semester. While we think we write a good daily update, these email messages don't contain all the information you need.

We know it's hard to believe, but we have heard that, even now, after all the COVID-19 news, there are still some people who do not wash hands regularly, use hand sanitizer, and practice social distancing. Anyone now on the Quincy University campus should expect anyone they meet to remain at least six feet away during conversations.

Come on, people. Practice good hygiene and reduce the risk of infection.

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 occasional scenes from Quincy and the QU campus. Resources are always available at www.quincy.edu and at <https://www.quincy.edu/coronavirus/>.

Once again, we are asking students and other community members to tell us their strangest or most amusing stories about experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have a story you can't wait to share, please email President McGee directly at president@quincy.edu. Some stories may be shared via *QUniverse* or social media.

This has been one of the most eventful weeks in the modern history of Quincy University. We got through it. And now we will see if some rest is possible over the weekend. Perhaps President McGee will have time to hum a few bars from the QU alma mater, and Dr. Tracy will put down her phone for a few minutes.

This is a time to care for one another, Hawks. Whether you are sleeping tonight in Illinois or Ohio, Peru or Israel, Missouri or Wisconsin, Italy or Canada, Florida or Indiana, we have your back. The great pandemic of 2020 will not weaken our resolve or break our spirit. Sleep well and live well, wherever you are.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development