

Dear Quincy University community:

This message is the seventy-ninth update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here's the simplest possible summary for the current academic semester:

### COVID-19 Test Summary for QU Students (Fall 2020)

Number of Student Positive Tests, Active Cases	6
Number of Previous Positive Tests, Not Active Cases	223
<b>Total Number of Cases Following QU Entry for Fall 2020</b>	<b>229</b>

### COVID-19 Data

Here are some of the most relevant data points at present for Quincy University and COVID-19:

- **229** positive COVID-19 viral tests have been reported this semester for QU students after those students arrived at the university. One additional student who only takes online courses and does not live locally also has reported a positive COVID-19 test.
- **Six** of those 229 students currently have active COVID-19 infections and are in quarantine.
- **223** of those 229 students have completed their quarantine periods and are not active cases.
- **Forty-two** students are currently in quarantine, including all active positive cases and many other students who have not tested positive for COVID-19. Because of the different reasons for which people are quarantined, some people may only be quarantined for a few days, while others may be quarantined for two weeks or more.
- **Over 100 rooms** on campus currently are available for quarantine use.
- We are aware of **eight** positive COVID-19 tests in the current semester for non-instructional staff members, **three** positive tests for faculty members, and **four** positive tests for employees of QU vendors. Three of these 15 individuals are quarantined; 12 of these 15 are not active cases. We will continue to be transparent about the number of COVID-19 cases involving students, employees, and vendors, as we are notified about them. We have corrected for an error in our earlier update on employees and vendors.

*Note:* One additional student who only takes online courses and does not live locally has previously tested positive for COVID-19. This student is excluded from our

reporting of on-campus and local cases (see above), but we are concerned for the safety and recovery of all QU students.

## Surveillance Testing

We conducted a sixth round of surveillance testing today, Monday, November 16, for about 140 individuals. In addition to the students taking part in the scheduled surveillance testing on November 16, additional students and members of our community took a COVID-19 exam prior to the Thanksgiving and December holidays, with the aim of reducing the transmission of COVID-19 over the holiday period.

Quincy University has been conducting surveillance testing of students during the current semester and plans to continue doing so during the spring academic terms for students taking in-person courses. You may recall that surveillance testing is testing of people who do not currently have COVID-19 symptoms and have not been exposed to someone who is COVID-19-positive. Such testing helps us find people with infections who will never show symptoms (i.e., asymptomatic cases) or people who are not yet showing symptoms, though they are infected and will soon experience symptoms. Many other universities, including other universities in our region, are doing little or no surveillance testing, and their COVID-19 numbers are not comparable to ours. Some other universities, including a few in our region, conduct surveillance testing using different and potentially less sensitive tests.

## Our Current Situation

As the semester ends, here's our review of the current COVID-19 situation at Quincy University:

1. The best way to reduce our risk for COVID-19 infection is the consistent use of **masking, distancing, and good hand hygiene**. All members of the QU community should continue to follow these public health safety guidelines as the semester ends and during the holidays.
2. At QU, all available evidence continues to indicate that students have been contracting COVID-19 in their social and residential interactions. While students are being careful and behaving responsibly overall, the pattern is that students are contracting the disease in interactions with family, friends, and romantic partners, in both on- and off-campus settings. Thus far, it appears **students have not been contracting the disease in classrooms**,

**laboratories, or organized sports practices or games.** We remind all students that **violations of our COVID-19 protocols and campus rules may lead to sanctions under the accountability process**, as explained in the *Student Handbook*.

3. At QU, all available evidence also indicates that faculty, staff, and vendor employees are contracting COVID-19 in their social and residential interactions. For example, we have yet to trace a single COVID-19 infection to contact in a QU classroom. In contrast, we have traced many COVID-19 cases to family interactions and to some off-campus locations.

4. In previous COVID-19 updates, we **announced limitations on indoor dining and gatherings on campus, along with requests that all members of our community avoid use of indoor restaurant seating and minimize shopping trips. Those limitations and related requests will remain in place through at least Wednesday, November 25.** At present, **those on campus should eat outdoors or eat in residence hall rooms, either alone or only in the company of roommates.** The increase in recent weeks in COVID-19 cases in the Midwest, Illinois, and Adams County requires that we continue to restrict dining opportunities, both on and off campus.

5. We are using **contact tracing** and **quarantining** to find people who may have a COVID-19 infection, to keep them safe, to make certain the right people have testing and medical care, and to prevent those who may have the disease from infecting other people. Our quarantining decisions are made, when appropriate, in consultation with the Adams County Health Department.

6. As we have said many times in the past, 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.**

7. **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, **please contact Dr. Tracy immediately** with the details of your situation. Beginning today, the Adams County Health Department is offering free, rapid COVID-19 testing in the parking lot of the former Shopko on Broadway, just a few minutes from campus. While any QU community member should feel free to take advantage of this testing, it is important that anyone taking advantage of this resource contact Dr. Tracy at [tracych@quincy.edu](mailto:tracych@quincy.edu).

8. As a reminder, asymptomatic people who are infected with the virus pose very little risk to members of our community if all of us are wearing masks, practicing physical distancing, and committed to good hand hygiene.

9. End-of-semester guidelines for leaving campus and the Quincy region have been distributed via email to all members of the campus community. If you can't locate those messages, see QU's coronavirus website for a link to those guidelines.

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/>. The QU coronavirus website contains a video highlighting many safety procedures for the QU community. The website also includes a Q&A document. The next COVID-19 email update from the university is anticipated no later than November 23, 2020.

### 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. As of today, a total of 3,638 COVID-19 cases have been reported in the **Quincy region (i.e., Adams County)**, with 981 active cases at present. There are 76 current hospitalizations in Adams County linked to COVID-19. One Missouri resident has died in Adams County of causes related to COVID-19, as have 38 Adams County residents.

There have been 585,248 COVID-19 cases in **Illinois**. 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>. These QU updates on COVID-19 cases are taken from the public reports of state and county agencies.

**Missouri** reports its COVID-19 cases only 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/>.

### COVID-19 Recommendations

As the semester concludes, and as announced last week, QU has its lowest number of active student COVID-19 cases since early September. Our progress in reducing these case numbers at QU is a credit to the work of our students in following public health guidelines. Masking and physical distancing are not perfect, but they are very effective. Thanks to everyone who has worked to keep the QU community safe!

Unfortunately, COVID-19 case numbers are increasing nationally, including in Adams County. In much of the Midwest, including Quincy, we have what public health professionals call uncontrolled, community-wide spread. Most of those leaving Adams County at the end of the current semester will travel to places where conditions are similar. Extraordinary measures are now needed to control the spread of the virus.

For the safety of all QU students, faculty, and staff, we are once again asking every member of our community to avoid non-essential shopping and off-campus events and activities. Residential students should avoid leaving the QU campus for the remainder of the semester to the fullest extent possible. Students living off-campus should attempt to travel only from home to QU and back, along with travel to work and very limited shopping for essential needs.

As always, members of our community should avoid large gatherings and should always employ masking and distancing when with people other than their roommates.

-----

As the semester ends, we encourage students to continue reading their email carefully over the break. We will continue to provide important information about the return to campus in Spring 2021. We also will ask students to give us feedback in a survey on their academic experience during Fall 2020, as we look for new ways to serve students more effectively in the spring semester. It's possible there also will be the occasional update on the campus squirrel population, the science fiction preferences of certain people on campus, and President McGee's waffle fixation, but those topics are not required reading.

The COVID-10 situation in our region continues to evolve. Our November graduation ceremony is scheduled at present for November 25, but our ability to hold that important ceremony is dependent on the relevant state and local directives related to the pandemic. We anticipate providing an update about commencement no later than Thursday, November 19. Congratulations in advance to all those who are graduating. Well done!

We know you are working hard to prepare for your final exams. yIDo'!

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development

P.S. As we work to complete the semester, please don't forget to return textbooks to the bookstore. For this semester, students can use the following three options to return their textbooks to the QU Bookstore:

- (1) In-Person. The QU Bookstore will be open regular hours until its early closing at 1:00 p.m. on Nov. 25.
- (2) After store hours. The Bookstore has a drop box set up at the old Mailroom that students can use to return their rented books if it is after store hours.
- (3) Via Free Shipping. Students who need to return their books remotely can use the attached instructions to print out a free return shipping label to ship their books back to campus.