

Dear Quincy University community:

We hope members of our community are enjoying time away from classes and the academic routine! We also wish the best of luck to students taking final exams at Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences.

This message is the eighty-first update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The great majority of Quincy University students are not currently taking courses and are not presently living on campus. Some students currently are taking final examinations at BCRN and are still living in QU student housing this week. Some student athletes and students with special circumstances also are living on campus at present.

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

1. There are **no current COVID-19 infections on campus for QU students**. There are **no students in quarantine on the QU campus**. Quarantine facilities are available on campus, in the event they are needed.
2. Surveillance testing for COVID-19 is being conducted for student athletes presently living on campus and who are in their sports season.
3. We are aware of one QU student who is away from campus and has tested positive for COVID-19.
4. We are aware of no current COVID-19 infections among QU faculty, staff, or vendor employees.
5. 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 over the holidays.
6. Over the holiday break and during J-term, limited campus dining services are now available, as previously announced in other messages addressed to the university community. 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 eat-in dining opportunities, both on and off campus.
7. For any student living on the QU campus over break and for all employees, 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.**

8. **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. For those remaining in the Quincy region, the Adams County Health Department is currently offering free, rapid COVID-19 testing in the parking lot of the former Shopko on Broadway, just a few minutes from campus, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (Monday-Friday). While any QU community member should feel free to take advantage of this testing in Adams County, it is important that anyone using this resource (or testing elsewhere) contact Dr. Tracy at tracych@quincy.edu.

9. New guidance regarding COVID-19 testing, safety, and quarantine protocols continues to be announced by federal, state, and county sources. **QU will update its COVID-19 policies and procedures for Spring 2021** in response to the latest guidance provided to colleges and universities. Updates to our policies and procedures will be announced by email as those updates are available, including any information we might receive about COVID-19 vaccines.

If you are a member of the QU community and have not read the previous update messages – all 80 of them -- you could search them out in your email folders or read them at <https://www.quincy.edu/coronavirus/>. The next COVID-19 email update from the university is anticipated no later than January 4, 2021.

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 5,071 COVID-19 cases have been reported in the **Quincy region (i.e., Adams County)**, with 420 active cases at present. There are 51 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 50 Adams County residents.

There have been 796,264 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

At present, the State of Illinois is under Tier 3 mitigation measures to control the spread of COVID-19. It is essential that all of us do our part to reduce the spread of the disease. Please be very diligent in masking, distancing, using good hand hygiene, and in avoiding unnecessary travel, shopping, and face-to-face gatherings. While all of us should be encouraged by the good news that safe and effective vaccines likely will be available by mid-2020, we are many months away from being able to let down our guard. Keep your masks ready for use, Hawks.

For Christians, the **Advent Season** began on November 29 and runs through December 24. An Advent Calendar is available from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/advent>. The Christmas Season begins on December 25 and concludes on January 10.

For Jews, **Hanukkah**, the Festival of Lights, begins on December 10 and runs through December 18.

For those who miss their QU campus squirrels, President McGee reluctantly recommends *The Great Rupert* (also called *A Christmas Wish*), a 1950 film featuring a dancing squirrel. The movie is in the public domain and available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOCIo5vfKiM>. The cheesy special effects and dated themes of this 90-minute family film are unlikely to inspire long debates at the dinner table. President McGee considers the film excessively pro-squirrel, but members of the QU community will see through this villainous attempt by squirrels to cultivate your sympathies. We leave it to you to assess the so-called dancing and the dubious fashion choices of this particular rodent.

More seriously, today, December 7, marks the seventy-ninth anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. We honor those whose lives were lost on this National Pearl Harbor Remembrance

Day. See <https://www.nps.gov/valr/learn/historyculture/national-pearl-harbor-remembrance-day.htm>.

Finally, Hawks, we are entering an even more difficult time in the pandemic. Infection rates for COVID-19 remain high in many parts of the country. For the moment, masking and distancing are the best way to stay safe. This remains a dangerous disease. Please be careful, for your sake and the sake of your family and friends.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development

P.S. We thank all those students who recently completed a faculty-designed survey on the student academic experience during the fall semester. Faculty, staff, administrators will use the survey results to make improvements in teaching and campus life for Spring 2021. We appreciate your help!