

Dear Quincy University community:

The spring semester for undergraduates is nearly complete! We have one more week of classes, Hawks.

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

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

1. **There are four active COVID-19 student infections at present.** Two of those students are quarantined on campus, with the two remaining students quarantining away from campus.
2. **There are 36 QU students currently in quarantine,** whether on or off campus. This total includes the four active COVID-19 infections mentioned above. The great majority of students in quarantine do not have COVID-19 and will not develop COVID-19.
3. An additional 38 students were recently exposed to COVID-19 but **did not have to go into quarantine** because they had no symptoms and already had been fully vaccinated.
4. Students, faculty, staff, and vendor employees continue to **get vaccinated** each week. About 85% of faculty and staff at QU have been vaccinated. Nearly half of residential students at QU have been vaccinated.
5. During the spring semester, approximately **200-300 COVID-19 tests** have been administered on campus each week as part of our programs for surveillance testing.
6. There have been a **total of nine** COVID-19 cases on campus since the start of the spring semester in January, with eight student cases and one staff case.
7. Some QU students are required to participate in **COVID-19 surveillance testing provided through their local employers in Quincy.** As a result, more testing of QU students is taking place than is reported in this email message. Again, we ask all students to report their test results to Dr. Tracy.
8. Faculty, staff, and vendor employees should continue to seek out COVID-19 testing when they have one or more COVID-19 symptoms. Those faculty, staff, and vendor employees seeking to arrange a rapid COVID-19 test on campus should contact Dr. Tracy directly.
9. 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.

10. For any student currently living on the QU campus 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.**

11. **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.

12. New guidance regarding COVID-19 testing, safety, and quarantine protocols continues to be announced by federal, state, and county sources. Updates to our policies and procedures will be announced by email as those updates are available.

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/>.

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. Because the pandemic was declared over a year ago, it is no longer useful to report total case numbers. We will continue to provide active case counts and current hospitalizations. In the **Quincy region (i.e., Adams County)**, there are 122 active cases at present. There are 11 current hospitalizations in Adams County linked to COVID-19. Since the beginning of the pandemic, one Missouri resident has died in Adams County of causes related to COVID-19, as have 117 Adams County residents. Information about COVID-19 cases in Illinois, including county-by-county reports, is available at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>. QU updates on COVID-19 cases are taken from the public reports of state and county agencies.

Missouri reports its COVID-19 cases 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/>.

Planning for Fall 2021

As the current semester concludes, we have had several questions about our plans at QU for the 2021 fall terms and the next academic year. Here's what we can tell you right now:

1. QU currently plans to operate using a typical academic calendar for next year, complete with both fall and spring breaks and the usual holiday schedule. The calendar for the 2021-2022 academic year is available at <https://www.quincy.edu/academic-calendar/>. In other words, **we will have a very normal academic calendar during 2021-2022.**
2. While QU will continue to offer many online course sections, the great majority of QU courses for undergraduates in Fall 2021 will be **taught in a face-to-face format**, as has been the case during the current year.
3. We expect that free **COVID-19 testing** will continue to be readily available on campus and in the Quincy community. COVID-19 vaccination will also continue to be available at no cost to students or other members of our community.
4. QU will continue to **very strongly encourage COVID-19 vaccination** for all eligible members of the Quincy University community. While no vaccine is perfect, COVID-19 vaccinations are very safe and highly effective. When you are vaccinated, you are protecting yourself and your loved ones. You also are pursuing what Catholic teaching would describe as the "common good," by protecting all members of the community. Dr. Tracy and Dr. McGee have been vaccinated, as have all eligible members of their immediate families. If medically possible, we urge you to do the same.
5. **QU does NOT require proof of COVID-19 vaccination in order to enroll for the 2021 Fall Semester.** Until further notice, you may assume that **COVID-19 vaccination at QU will continue to be voluntary**, though, again, it will be very strongly encouraged. A change in Illinois law, a severe COVID-19 outbreak, or new guidance from the Catholic Church might lead us to revise QU's vaccination policy.

There are many details of campus life for Fall 2021 that cannot be finalized yet. In general, we expect campus life to be **much more normal in August than it is today**, but there still may be some COVID-19 restrictions in effect. We will provide more details about Fall 2021 as we are able to do so.

Announcements

COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at preventing COVID-19 infections. In the rare cases when vaccinated people do get COVID-19, they will almost always have very mild cases or be asymptomatic. This week, we had some experience with asymptomatic infections of vaccinated students. Ultimately, you should be vaccinated – and many, many of you have been -- because the vaccine prevents serious illness in nearly all cases.

This week, it was announced that *Star Trek* alumnus LeVar Burton will be a guest host on an upcoming episode of *Jeopardy!* We will lean out on a limb and guess there might be a Star Trek question or two read by Burton. And, based on our previous correspondence, several Hawks will be watching that *Jeopardy!* episode and get all the right questions.

Have a great weekend, Hawks. You deserve one.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development