

Dear Quincy University community:

Today's message is the 100th update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We very much wish that 100 of these hadn't been necessary.

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

1. Because of new requirements for the State of Illinois, last week marked the beginning of expanded COVID-19 testing for unvaccinated and partially vaccinated members of our community. This latest and expanded round of surveillance testing, involving 192 students, faculty, and staff, largely took place on Wednesday, September 22, and Thursday, September 23. **All known test results were negative.** Some tests were conducted at off-campus testing sites and are not yet included in our totals.
2. **Six students have tested positive for COVID-19 since the semester began.** One of those students took only online courses. Any student with an active infection is quarantined, whether on or off campus. **As of today, there are no active student cases at QU.**
3. There currently are **no students in quarantine** at QU.
4. In the typical day QU is testing several students, faculty, and staff for COVID-19 because those community members report one or more COVID-19 symptoms, such as a headache or congestion. Most test results for such symptomatic testing are negative, but not all.
5. QU's all-community vaccination rate is now **81%**. We will update vaccination rates on occasion throughout this academic year, but the bottom line is that the great majority of QU students, faculty, and staff have been vaccinated. The remainder, as noted below, should have applied for exemptions or deferrals.
6. **All unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students, faculty, and staff are receiving separate information about weekly COVID-19 testing,** as now required by the State of Illinois. QU should now have received completed **Vaccination Declination Deferral and Request** forms from all unvaccinated members of our community. Please direct questions about these forms and State of Illinois requirements to Dr. Tracy.
7. We know that some QU students may be required to participate in **COVID-19 surveillance testing provided through their local employers in Quincy or nearby communities.** We ask all students to report their test results to Dr. Tracy.
8. For the current semester, we are aware of **two COVID-19 cases for QU faculty and three cases for staff,** including our business partners. **As of today, there are three active cases for faculty and staff.** Anyone with an active infection is quarantined, and no one in off-campus quarantine is permitted to return to campus until that person's quarantine period is complete.
9. Faculty, staff, and business partner employees should continue to **seek out COVID-19 testing** when they have one or more COVID-19 symptoms. Those faculty, staff, and business partner employees seeking to arrange a rapid COVID-19 test on campus should contact Dr. Tracy directly.
10. By far, the best way to reduce our risk for COVID-19 infection and serious illness is vaccination. **Masking, distancing, and good hand hygiene** also can be important ways to reduce risk. All members of the QU community should continue to follow public health safety guidelines.
11. 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.**
12. 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.
13. 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 well 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)**, 15 new COVID-19 cases are being reported. There are 18 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 148 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/>.

## **Announcements**

Today is **National Pancake Day**. While President McGee's preference for waffles is well known, he has had his celebratory pancakes for the weekend. This morning edition of the COVID-19 email update might inspire you to do the same.

Enjoy this beautiful week, Hawks.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development