

Dear Quincy University community:

Today's message is the 103rd update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yes, we know, this report is almost as uninteresting as the 102nd report. But, hey, here you go.

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 was the fifth week of expanded COVID-19 testing for unvaccinated and partially vaccinated members of our community. This latest and expanded round of surveillance testing, involving about 130 students, faculty, and staff, largely took place on Wednesday, October 20, and Thursday, October 21. **All known test results were negative.** Some tests were conducted at off-campus testing sites and are not included in our totals.
2. We have received some new (but mostly old) reports about COVID-19 cases this semester and can now confirm that **twelve students have tested positive for COVID-19 since the semester began.** One of those students took only online courses. A few others with positive tests did not have full-time course schedules on the QU campus. Any student with an active infection is quarantined, whether on or off campus. **As of today, there is one active student case for QU.**
3. There is currently **one QU student in quarantine** for a close contact with an infected person. As a reminder, students who are quarantined for close contact have not tested positive for COVID-19 and may never have a positive test.
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 current all-community vaccination rate is **83%**. 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 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 no 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)**, three new COVID-19 cases are being reported today. There are 13 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 153 Adams County residents.

Note: After October 31, 2021, Adams County, Illinois, will no longer maintain a COVID-19 tracking dashboard. We will continue to supply data on local COVID-19 cases only if such data are regularly available.

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

Before the 2021 Fall Semester began, unvaccinated QU students were notified of the possibility that they would be charged for weekly surveillance testing after November 2021. *We are pleased to report there will be no charges for COVID-19 testing prior to March 1, 2022.* We will do everything we can to avoid any testing charges during the current academic year. New information will be provided on this topic when the information is available.

New information is becoming available for members of our community who want COVID-19 vaccine booster shots. We will provide that information to you as we receive it.

For those who are curious, we can confirm that President McGee is aware of *Prodigy*, the new *Star Trek* animated series. Yes, he will watch it, just as he watched the original *Star Trek* animated series when it first was shown on NBC. That original animated series air date was September 8, 1973, when President McGee was six years old. Yes, we should all be excited about the new series. *Qo'laHlaHbe'!*

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development