



December 17, 2020

To: Wabash Students, Faculty, and Staff

From: Ann Taylor, Special Assistant to the President for COVID Planning and Response

Re: Fall COVID Operations Reflection Summary

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Over the course of the last few weeks, Marc Welch, Jim Amidon, and I gathered people's reflections from the fall semester regarding:

Academic Support  
Building Operations  
CARE Team  
Case management  
Classroom operations  
Communications  
Compliance  
COVID Pass App  
Event Management

Fraternity Life  
Healthy Campus Task Force Operations  
Human Resources  
Independent life/Dining  
Mental Health  
Quarantine & Isolation Protocol  
Return Testing  
Student Activities  
Surveillance Testing

Over 125 different faculty, staff, and students participated in these discussions. Some were done as focus groups, while others were individual conversations or surveys. Surveys were sent to students who were in quarantine or isolation this semester and to faculty about technology in the classrooms. We will also use data from the HEDS COVID-19 fall 2020 student survey for a broader understanding of the student experience.

The Healthy Campus Task Force is continuing its discussions on the debriefing sessions, but some initial impressions are:

- There was gratitude for the quality materials developed by our Information Technology Services department, including but not limited to the COVID Pass App, an easier way to integrate health insurance data onto the test submission platform, and the sign-up system for the Allen Center.
- Communications to students need to be concise, limited per day, and timed so that they are read. The weekly updates each Monday were appreciated.
- While Zoom keeps people safe, it does not provide the same level of interaction. In-person events are preferred.
- Students really want to be able to have guests on campus.



- Necessity is the mother of invention: some of the systems we developed were things we needed to do anyway, and others can be used more broadly across campus (such as the Allen Center sign-up system possibly being used for reserving music practice rooms).
- There is a concern about staff depth in key positions and increased data management needs, especially if there is more testing in the spring semester.
- There is significant concern about the rise in community spread and the impact it could have on staffing, especially if local K-12 schools go fully virtual or if there is an increase of young children in quarantine.
- The expectations for spring will be higher than for fall; managing these expectations will be a challenge because of the rise in infection rates in our local community and state-wide.

This is just a sample of the themes that emerged from nearly 40 hours of conversations. We heard much more and are working in a variety of areas to address other items related to maintaining the health of the Wabash community. The Healthy Campus Task Force will be reviewing these reflections and others, prioritizing identified needs, and making lists of what needs to be completed at various dates before students return and classes begin on January 25.

In the meantime, I encourage you to listen to the [Wabash On My Mind](#) podcasts that provide an interesting perspective on how our campus responded to COVID in the fall semester. Two podcasts on this topic are available now and two more will be released in the coming weeks.