

Wabash.

February 8, 2021

To: Wabash Community
From: President Scott Feller and Dr. Ann Taylor
Re: Community Update

We enter our third week of classes at a pace of activity that resembles more normal times. While our fall semester began by necessity with very few activities, spring has included theater auditions, a meeting of the Board of Trustees, Chapel Talks, and multiple athletic competitions (big congratulations to the volleyball team for notching the first victory for this new program).

A busy Wabash is a sign of progress toward normalcy but we are at a tipping point, as both a College and a nation, with vaccinations and variants pushing us in opposite directions. This tipping point makes it critical that we are consistent in wearing masks, washing our hands, and watching our distance. We expect conditions to fluctuate throughout the semester, which led to the development of a campus color code and a corresponding set of guidelines around events, visitors, and College-related travel. Please take time to review the [document](#), which is posted on our [COVID-19 documents page](#).

One place on campus that is especially busy is our COVID-19 testing facility, which continues to ramp up. Last week the nurses and trainers tested over 50% of susceptible students and are working toward testing every student every week. As we described last week, the positivity rate is the dominant factor in the determination of the campus color code, along with the other key metrics:

Surveillance Positivity	Montgomery Co. Score	COVID Pass Use Rate	Campus Status
1.8%	2.0 (Orange)	90.8%	ORANGE

As examples of how we operate under ORANGE status, Wabash student visits between living units are allowed, but individuals outside of the COVID Pass symptom monitoring app may not enter living units. Events on campus will prioritize student performances, with virtual participation options encouraged (since the county is also in the ISDH orange category, events are limited to 25% of venue capacity). For athletic events, team members may invite two guests who are using the COVID Pass symptom monitoring app.

This week we call your attention to a recent [blog post by Dr. Lynne Westfield](#), Director of the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, that reminds us that grief can show up in lots of ways, and that sometimes others can see our grief more obviously. We are all dealing with the ambiguous loss that is triggered by the changes in routine brought on by COVID. For some of us, COVID adds additional layers onto the loss of loved ones. Grief is not a linear process; denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance can appear and disappear on their own schedule, and the mental space consumed by grief can make focusing hard. Look out for one another and help each other navigate this tender time. We should all strive to set a schedule that includes times for sleep, study, exercise, and things that feed your soul, such as creative activities, spiritual practices, and connecting with loved ones. None of us has time for these things; we make time for them.



With gratitude for you and all you bring to campus,

President Scott Feller

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

