



September 7, 2020

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

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Last week we completed our 18<sup>th</sup> day of classes, over 25% of the semester. You might have missed this milestone due to your focus on the first exams and papers of the semester. This has been a semester like none other, and it is important to recognize our successes. We continue to witness, and hear reports of, meaningful learning experiences that are happening as a direct result of our residential nature. Thursday's demonstration on the mall by the men of the Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies was a particularly powerful example.

We continue random surveillance testing of on-campus students. This week's positivity rate of 2.4% is in line with our earlier on-campus and return-to-campus samples. The contact tracing investigation revealed that these students were connected to each other and had only a handful of close contacts. The small number of contacts is a positive change from previous weeks and one that must continue. Additionally, this week a student who had been quarantined due to contact with another case developed symptoms and received a positive test result. This is the reason we are committed to quarantining students who are close contacts and testing them five days after their potential exposure (or earlier if symptoms are observed).

As in the past two weeks, students who have been in quarantine or isolation will be returning to campus this week and attending their classes. The best way to determine if a student is approved to return to classes or campus work is his COVID Pass app. Students must display a green "GO" screen with the current date to be in class or at their campus job. We have engineered the app so that students who are placed in quarantine or isolation will continue to have a red "STOP" screen until they have been cleared to return. For more information on returning from quarantine or isolation, please see the [FAQs](#) and the [Important Documents](#) section of the COVID information page.

We recognize that moving into quarantine or isolation is stressful and believe that having a clear plan can mitigate it. To aid this process, the College created a quarantine [checklist for students](#) to complete and submit to their CARE Team Leader. The checklist asks students to communicate with their professors and work supervisors when they will miss class or work for quarantine or isolation, and to communicate a second time prior to returning to class. The checklist isn't perfect, but we hope that it will make it easier for students to communicate with their parents, CARE Team Leaders, professors, and living unit leaders, while coping with the stress of being put into quarantine or isolation. While acknowledging the disruptive effect of quarantine and isolation, we cannot back away from two of our most important mitigation tactics: surveillance testing of asymptomatic students and rapid quarantine



of every potential exposure. At this point, being small, nimble, and willing to act boldly are serving us well.

While you have heard often of our appreciation for our colleagues at the Montgomery County Health Department, we also want to recognize the important support from the Indiana State Department of Health, especially guidance about quarantine and isolation. As just one example, we have implemented the ISDH recommendation for testing quarantined students approximately five days following their close contact, regardless of a lack of symptoms. The state Health Commissioner, Dr. Kristina Box, made herself available to colleges very early on and her leadership has put Indiana in an enviable position with regards to COVID-19 testing. As a reminder, anyone can get a test at no cost through the state's partnership with Optum (<https://lhi.care/covidtesting>).

COVID-19, racial injustice, and divisions associated with the upcoming election have elevated stress levels for everyone. We encourage you to read the helpful emails from the Counseling Center and participate in the Mindful Monday activities that Jamie Douglas is leading on the mall. If you are interested in strategies for integrating social-emotional learning into your personal practices or classes, [Greater Good in Education](#) provides science-based practices for all ages and both individual and classroom settings.

Finally, we want express our appreciation for all that the Wabash community is doing to allow residential education to continue. We know it is a bit like an iceberg. We are overwhelmed by what we see but know that most of it is hidden. We would like to give a special thanks this week to Professor Dan Rogers, who has been translating these updates into Spanish, documents that we are posting to the COVID web page.

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