

# Wabash.

September 21, 2020

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

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Congratulations, Wabash! While we must remain vigilant in every aspect of our learning and living activities, we should also take some pride in what this community has achieved together – Wabash Together – so far. We have now completed 40% of the semester’s classes, and held some signature events of our College this week, including a creative and interactive production of *The Race*, a moving talk by Dr. Clint Smith, Chapel Sing competition, and some structured athletic team activities. Remind yourself how low the odds of such a week seemed at the beginning of the year and take a moment to pat yourself on the back for the part you played in bringing us to this point.

All across campus, in a hundred different ways large and small, the Wabash community is showing resilience and adaptability that are allowing great things to happen. Students are working on fellowship applications, learning new laboratory techniques, engaging in the difficult conversations that Clint Smith framed for us, and stepping up as leaders where we critically need it. The last point deserves some emphasis. We are where we are today because more than 40 young men stepped up as CARE Team Leaders and Managers. We had a Chapel Sing because student leaders came forward with a plan built on critical thinking and responsibility. We have a Crawfordsville community that is supporting us, which is not the case in many college towns right now, because our students have gone into this community to volunteer each of the past four Saturday mornings. Thank you.

Last week we focused our surveillance testing on Chapel Sing participants. While not a random sample, this was the largest sample we have attempted and we were prepared for a higher-than-usual number of asymptomatic positive cases. We are thrilled to report 100% negative test results. Also promising, we had no positive test results among symptomatic students this week. At this point, no students are in isolation (on campus or at home) and only a handful remain in quarantine due to COVID-19. It is worth noting that there are non-COVID reasons that a student may need to isolate, such as strep throat, which is common on campus even during good weather months.

The bottom line is that we must continue to execute our COVID-19 mitigation plan at a very high level. We must do the three W’s – wash your hands, wear your mask, watch your distance – and avoid the three C’s – confined spaces, crowds, and close quarters. Colder weather will bring new challenges that we must be ready for. Our success cannot make us complacent. Rather, it must demonstrate the power of our behaviors to modify the course of the disease and motivate us to find new ways to address the challenge of more indoor living during the pandemic. This work is critical for maintaining residential education this semester and also will determine what we are able to plan for the spring semester.

Thanks to all who showed public health leadership by coming to our first flu clinic last week and thanks to the incredible staff who organized and implemented this event. If you still need a flu shot, mark your calendar for October 1 to take this important part of our healthy campus plan.

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

