

Wabash.

October 5, 2020

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

We have reached week nine in the fall semester of residential teaching and learning, and it's understandable if you didn't expect to be receiving an update this far into the semester. From the beginning, the scientific evidence underlying our plans was strong, but there was great uncertainty about whether our community could adopt the best practices while maintaining the Wabash experience. At this point, the data supporting the foundational elements of our plan – masking, physical distancing, symptom monitoring, testing, and contact tracing followed by isolation and quarantine – is even stronger.

Even better, each week brings more evidence that students, faculty, and staff are finding ways to create events that will be remembered long after the pandemic has ended, such as last week's Mid-Autumn Festival and the Homecoming float competition. Thank you for your contributions of creativity and hard work that are helping us exceed all of our expectations for this semester.

We can again report 100% negative test results from our weekly random surveillance testing, students seen at the Health Center as a result of symptom monitoring, and wastewater testing sites.

While testing (when accompanied by isolation and quarantine) is an important mitigation tactic, it is not a replacement for masking and distancing. Obvious examples are the outbreaks at the White House and on the Notre Dame football team that occurred despite comprehensive testing programs. The [stochastic nature](#) of COVID-19 transmission means that a relatively small fraction of cases produces most of the spread, often when people have left their guard (and their mask) down.

We must maintain our vigilance in distancing and masking, and avoid high-risk contact situations, such as close, crowded indoor situations.

As you may have heard, Wabash was again nationally ranked for “Most Accessible Professors” by the Princeton Review. This ranking is due to the enduring relationships formed on campus that are built on authenticity and empathy. It's ok to reach out to those around you, share how you are feeling, or just have fun. If you are struggling in a class, talk to your professor or classmates, or take advantage of Supplemental Instruction and the tutors in the Quantitative Skills Center and Writing Center. While we are striving to maintain physical distance, we can still [find ways to connect](#). Wabash's strength is its community and we must continue to nurture it.





Thanks for the big turnout at last week's flu shot clinic. Students who did not attend the first two clinics should report to the Knowling Fieldhouse this afternoon between 4 p.m. and 7 pm today! If you were vaccinated off-campus, submit your documentation to the Student Health Center immediately.

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

