

Wabash.

November 23, 2020

To: Wabash Community
From: President Scott Feller and Dr. Ann Taylor
Re: Community Update: Week 16

Thank you. Thank you, students, for your hard work in the classroom, in your living units, and all around campus. Your implementation of the public health requirements for the semester made it possible for us to be #WabashTogether for the whole semester. Thank you, faculty and staff, for how you modeled the liberal arts by applying skills and knowledge to new and challenging situations to provide an exceptional educational experience. Thank you, parents, for entrusting us with your sons. There were days you probably wondered if we could pull this off – we wondered that, too. Thank you, trustees, alumni, and friends of our College; your encouraging notes and support sustained us.

It was uplifting to hear, and hear of, expressions of thanks from students last week for the semester of residential education. While there is not enough space here to acknowledge all the people that we are thankful for, we would like to give a shout out to some campus heroes. The Student Health Center team – expanded by our Athletic Trainers, Sports Information Director, and Coaches – were the heart of the test, trace, isolate program that was key to our success. This team worked quickly and around the clock to keep us all safe, but with compassion and individual attention for every student. While many schools outsourced their COVID testing and related health services, our colleagues stepped up and it paid off for Wabash.

We also want to recognize the support provided by our IT Services team members, who created and integrated campus data systems, an area that turned out to be a major stumbling block at other colleges. And we want to thank each and every one of you who brought to campus flexibility, understanding, grace, and compassion. The efforts of every member of this community made this semester successful.

Instead of random surveillance testing last week, the Health Campus Task Force offered exit COVID-19 testing. While this can be one part of a plan to return home safely, we remind students that it is not a substitute for the mitigation tactics we have practiced all semester. A great gift we can all give this holiday is to teach our family and friends about the 3 W's (Wear a mask, Watch your distance, Wash your hands) and the 3 C's (avoid Confined spaces, Crowded places, and Close contact), and to continue practice them throughout the break. The Wabash experience shows that these public health measures work. Now is the time to lead your family, friends, and home communities to adopt these public health practices so that we can come back together in January.

This will be our last weekly update until classes begin. We anticipate several communications between now and then, so please continue to monitor your email over the break. We plan to spend the next several weeks reviewing, debriefing, and reflecting on this semester.

We take seriously the saying that one doesn't learn from experience, but rather from reflecting on the experience. We invite the entire community to join us in reflecting on the past semester with special emphasis on those aspects that can inform the spring semester. While we will reach out to many groups, we also welcome your individual thoughts at covid@wabash.edu.

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

