

To: President's Cabinet
From: Denise M. Trauth
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting
February 8, 2021

Impact of COVID-19 (#770)

Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco compared data from the week of January 25, 2021, to data from the week of February 1, 2021. In Texas, week-to-week comparisons revealed a decrease in the average daily case counts from 13,657 to 11,814 cases per day, and a decrease in the average daily positivity rate from 14 to 11.7 percent.

In Hays county, the average daily case counts decreased from 174 to 98 cases per day. By meeting time, Hays county had yet to release the positivity rate for the week of February 1, 2021.

In Williamson county, the average daily case counts increased slightly from 325 to 327 cases per day, while the average daily positivity rate decreased from 13.1 to 12.3 percent.

Texas State conducted 1,933 tests, with 74 returning positive for a positivity rate of 3.8 percent.

As of February 8, 2021, there were 195 active cases at Texas State, and nine students were in isolation and 10 were in quarantine.

In comparison to other Texas institutions of higher education, for the week of February 1, 2021, The University of Texas at Austin reported 89 positive results out of 4,073 tests for a positivity rate of 2.2 percent. For Texas A&M University, Dr. Carranco reported a different set of metrics. For the start of the semester, Texas A&M required testing of faculty, staff, and students. Over a two to three-week period, 23,996 COVID-19 tests were conducted, with 460 returning positive for a positivity rate of 1.9 percent.

Dr. Carranco discussed the variant strains of COVID-19 emerging from other countries, including Brazil, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. Preliminary data suggests that the current vaccines can prevent serious illness requiring hospitalizations; Pfizer and Moderna seem to be the most effective in reducing symptoms and preventing illness from variant strains. Dr. Carranco reported that Johnson & Johnson is expected to receive emergency use authorization for its one-dose COVID-19 vaccine by the end of February 2021. Despite more vaccines coming online, Texas State will continue to adhere to its [12 primary health and safety guidelines](#).

The San Marcos Campus has two COVID-19 testing locations that, combined, can perform 1,600 to 2,000 tests per week. To ensure that 2,000 tests are performed each week, University Advancement-Communications and the Student Health Center are working together to raise awareness of free testing and to promote the habit of getting tested on a regular basis. For

example, on February 10, 2021, a tabling event will take place on the San Marcos Campus, with giveaways to encourage faculty, staff, and students to register for testing.

The Round Rock Campus has one testing location. A new vendor, Spartan Medical, began providing free COVID-19 testing on February 1, 2021. Dr. Carranco will request from the vendor, test data for the purpose of reporting on the [Texas State COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

Dr. Carranco discussed the Texas Coronavirus Antibody Response Survey (Texas CARES). Texas CARES is a statewide study, conducted by researchers at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston in collaboration with the Texas Department of State Health Services, to better understand the antibody response to the SARS-CoV-2. The Texas State Student Health Center has been asked to administer free COVID-19 antibody tests to university-affiliated and nonaffiliated individuals. Cabinet members approved.

President Trauth asked Dr. Carranco to include the vaccine registration portals of local counties on the [COVID-19 Vaccination Information](#) webpage.

Dr. Lloyd sought clarification on Workplace Modifications (WPM). Managers cannot require employees with an approved WPM to return to work after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. To do so would require managers to ask employees for medical information. WPM's for those under 65 were approved based on medical documentation; thus, the decision to cancel or modify existing plans should also be reviewed by a medical professional. With that said, all WPM approved through May 31, 2021, will be honored. The decision whether or not to extend modifications beyond May 31, 2021, will be made later in the semester.

Dr. Hernandez continued the discussion regarding spring break and whether additional mitigation strategies will need to be implemented. Dr. Hernandez will meet with various constituents and be prepared to make recommendations during the February 22, 2021, President's Cabinet meeting.

Dr. Teis and guest Dr. Mary Ellen Cavitt discussed whether to hold camps during summer 2021. To be able to make a decision, President Trauth asked Dr. Teis and his staff to take the lead in benchmarking against other institutions and developing standard operating procedures.

RTA 2/15/21 Discuss resumption of summer athletic camps.

Family Campaign (#696)

Dr. Breier and guest Dr. Dan Perry, Associate Vice President for University Advancement, provided an update on the 2021 Family Campaign plans. The official kick-off is set for February 25, 2021, and will conclude April 29, 2021. Any gift given in the current fiscal year will count in the Family Campaign.

Current Student Profile and Characteristics

Dr. Hernandez and Dr. Silva discussed Texas State's current student profile and characteristics. Texas State became a majority-minority university in 2016. Currently, Texas State's student demographic breakdown by race and ethnicity is 43 percent white, 39 percent Hispanic, 11 percent black, and one percent international. The remaining six percent of Texas State students are of other race or multiracial, or their race/ethnicity is unknown. About 60 percent of Texas State students are female and 40 percent are male.

About 75 percent of Texas State students were born between 1995 and 2010 and fall in the demographic cohort known as Generation Z. Individuals in Generation Z: are more racially and ethnically diverse than previous generations; are entrepreneurial; were born after the advent of the internet and, thus, are connected and communicate with others through technology; are overwhelmed, stressed, anxious, and lonely at times; are progressive; and are socially conscious and feel strongly about racial equality and saving the environment. Generation Z college students: desire practical skills with their education, are concerned about the cost of education, and are exploring alternative/cost-effective ways to get an education; value input from their peers more than their parents or other role models; and enjoy one-on-one, face-to-face interaction/conversations and do not prefer to communicate via email. Like no other generation before, Generation Z believes that they can bring about systemic change through expressive activities. Cabinet members discussed developing a strategic plan to support safe and healthy expressive activity.

President's Update (#556)

President Trauth discussed how the personnel actions will be presented during the February 2021 Texas State University System Board of Regents meeting.

Provost Bourgeois announced that Dr. Thorne will reconvene the ad-hoc committee appointed to develop a protocol for lighting the Victory Star on the side of the University Events Center. Given the limited lighting options, the committee will revise the protocol.

President Trauth began discussion on whether high-paid faculty and staff should contribute back to the university a portion of the three percent bonus.

Significant Issues (#01)

Provost Bourgeois announced that registration for New Student Orientation (NSO) began on February 8, 2021. NSO programs are online, and include a one-day, face-to-face optional program.

Mr. Algoe has tasked Ms. Nancy Nusbaum to meet individually with the Vice Presidents and the Director of Athletics to better understand post-COVID-19 space needs in their respective divisions.

Mr. Algoe provided clarification regarding needlepoint ionization air treatment systems. Texas State is piloting needlepoint ionization in an HVAC renovation project in JCK, two new construction projects in the Film and Television Studios building and the UPD building, as well as an HVAC retrofit project in the Student Health Center project.

Mr. Algoe discussed the second phase of Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding. Messaging announcing how students can access funds will go out during the week of February 8, 2021.

Mr. Algoe announced that the Texas Department of State Health Services may begin utilizing university campuses as mass vaccination sites. Mr. Algoe will gather more information for discussion at the next President's Cabinet meeting.

Dr. Hernandez announced that the Counseling Center is committed to continuously looking for ways to support students, especially those who are struggling during this COVID-19 crisis.

Dr. Lloyd initiated a discussion on how best to ensure health and safety guidelines are followed during demonstrations and other forms of expressive activity. Over the last two years, a key group of personnel have gone through a lengthy process to formalize and improve Texas State's approach to demonstrations and other forms of expressive activity. That process resulted in the creation of a Demonstration Team. Members of this team are trained regularly on relevant policies and procedures. Furthermore, they actively discuss different situations to determine if any of the current policies and procedures need to be amended.

There is no law about wearing masks outdoors in Texas. When a person is engaged in an expressive activity and refuses to wear a mask, they are not breaking the law and, thus, it is not a law enforcement issue. At the root of Texas State's approach is an acceptance of the fact that there is no one hard-and-fast set of rules that will be followed in these dynamic situations and that multiple constituencies need to be included in the decision-making process. Texas State's goal is to balance public safety concerns with First Amendment rights. For that reason, personnel, who are trained and empowered, are at the scene to make moment-by-moment decisions about how to deal with each unique situation.

RTA 3/8/21 Discuss enforcement of health and safety guidelines during demonstrations and other forms of expressive activity.

Dr. Lloyd discussed Texas State's recent partnership with Life Anew, external consultants hired to help increase equitable relationships across the university.

Dr. Silva proposed a tagline to be used by the Talent Acquisition Team in recruiting and marketing to potential candidates. President's Cabinet members provided feedback.

Dr. Teis and President Trauth informed Cabinet members that Texas State, in conjunction with the NCAA, announced that the University Events Center will be one of five venues to host the

2021 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship. The tournament will be played in San Antonio and the surrounding region beginning March 21, 2022.

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Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on February 24, 2021.