

To: President's Cabinet
From: Denise M. Trauth
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting
October 12, 2020

Impact of COVID-19 (#770)

Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic at the state and local levels. There has been an uptick in cases and positivity rates across Texas. However, it remains yet to be determined if this is normal week-to-week variation or if these numbers, indeed, show an upward trend. When comparing the week of October 5, 2020, to the week of September 28, 2020, in Texas, the seven-day moving average daily case count increased from 3,148 to 3,365 cases per day, and the positivity rate increased from 6.45 percent to 6.9 percent. In Hays County, the seven-day moving average daily case count increased from 11 to 12.3 new cases per day, but the positivity rate decreased from 17.9 to 16.8 percent. In Williamson County, the seven-day moving average daily case count increased from 20 to 29.7 cases per day, and the positivity rate increased from 0.7 percent to 3.5 percent.

Of the 1,192 tests performed at Texas State by the Student Health Center and Curative, Inc., 30 tests returned positive for a positivity rate of 2.5 percent. This is up from a positivity rate of 1.6 percent during the previous week. Curative, Inc., performed 951 tests and 26 tests returned positive for a positivity rate of 2.7 percent. Active cases decreased by 22 from 74 to 52 cases. The number of students housed in isolation is 10 and in quarantine is four. Contact tracing has yet to reveal evidence of transmission in classrooms, residence halls, or offices. Transmission continues to occur primarily during off-campus social gatherings involving friends and family.

Dr. Carranco provided a COVID-19 update for other universities. During the week of October 5, 2020, at The University of Texas at Austin, of the 3,076 tests performed, 19 returned positive for a 0.6 percent positivity rate. Compared to the previous week, the positivity rate remained unchanged. At Texas A&M University, of the 1,642 tests performed, 63 returned positive for 3.8 percent positivity rate. Compared to the previous week, the positivity rate increased from 1.6 percent. Texas State lies somewhere in the middle of where other major universities are in terms of positivity rates.

Pandemic/Post Pandemic Work Groups (#771)

Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco discussed responses to the recent thematic feedback survey. Four primary suggestions were conveyed in the surveys and Cabinet members discussed ways to address the concerns. First, many respondents requested the Dashboard be expanded. Recently, active case counts and the seven-day rolling average were added to the Dashboard. Curative, Inc., testing data will be added to the Dashboard. Dr. Marc Turner, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research, is involved in the discussion and will redesign the Dashboard to make room for the additional metric. To remain transparent, more information will be added to the Dashboard as it becomes available.

Second, the Roadmap has a lot of information, making it difficult for the reader to know when new information is added. Dr. Lloyd will ask University Communications to include the date when a webpage is updated.

Third, respondents to the survey requested to make reporting required as opposed to voluntary. With a voluntary system, there is concern that information is not being captured. Cabinet members agreed to continue to expand testing, promote testing, and raise public awareness of its importance. The Student Health Center sends out more than 4,000 emails per week inviting a random sample of faculty, staff, and students to get free COVID-19 testing.

Fourth, respondents requested more messaging. Dr. Carranco will increase the frequency at which he sends out COVID-19 updates.

Dr. Bourgeois discussed the misconception that when students, who are asymptomatic, are placed in quarantine or isolation; they are not expected to complete their assignments. Indeed, they are required to complete their assignments on time.

RTA: 10/15/20 Guest: Ms. Sandy Pantlik Discuss the next steps for COVID-19 communications.

2020 Elections Task Force (#774)

Guest Dr. Sherri Benn provided an update on the Elections Task Force activities. The Task Force work has been both educational and practical. Informative content was developed to maximize student engagement and opportunities to participate in the electoral process. The Task Force work has been student-centered, student-driven, and innovative with the potential to establish Texas State as a model campus for political and civic engagement. The Task Force work was rolled out in a three-phase "TX State Vote" campaign, with the slogan "Vote. The rest is just noise." The three phases focused on: 1) registration, 2) voting, and 3) post-election processing. Marketing materials for the three-phase campaign saturated campuses with voter education information that had a contemporary, upbeat fun, and uniform look.

The Task Force completed a number of initiatives, including:

- Development of promotional voting materials and platforms, including social media messaging and a voter information hub (<https://www.txstate.edu/vote>).
- Application submission for a Voter Friendly Campus award, which resulted in recognition and a monetary grant from the Campus Vote Project for non-partisan promotional video on voting produced by one of our student organizations (Hip Hop Congress).
- Sponsored National Voter Registration Day and National Voter Education Week programs and activities, including two election town halls, voter education programs, an artistic creative contest on civic and political engagement, and voter registration drives including a voter drive-in registration event with student athletes; 10,000 voter registration cards were provided to students and 1,000 individuals were registered during the events.

Currently, the Task Force is focused on promoting early voting; election watch party and destress events with giveaways, and post-elections debriefing events and activities. Dr. Trauth suggested to hold events on Inauguration Day.

Dr. Trauth lauded the work of the Task Force.

Cabinet members discussed sign placement from the University Events Center to the Performing Arts Center directing people where to vote, the times to vote, and where to park. Dr. Benn shared that the Election Judge will hand out tickets for free parking.

HEF/Capital Allocations (#140)

Mr. Pierce discussed allocations for Higher Education Funds (HEF). During spring 2020, the Division of Information Technology leadership revisited priorities in light of challenges within the current fiscal climate and shared those priorities with members of the President's Cabinet. Dr. Trauth reminded Cabinet members that HEF funds are institutional funds, not divisional funds to be used for funding new positions.

President's Update (#556)

Mr. Pierce announced that on October 9, 2020, Texas State received and graciously accepted an invitation to join the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). This is a monumental occasion for our libraries and for Texas State. Texas State will communicate this news to the university community via email on October 12, 2020, and ARL is expected to have a press release on October 13, 2020. Mr. Pierce will follow up with a "From the Hill" article.

Mr. Alge led a discussion on bonuses paid to staff out of an institutional account. During the budget planning cycle, the staff performance award allocations were reduced by 50 percent. There is some carry forward that may be used by each Vice President to back fill the reduction.

Significant Issues (#01)

Dr. Breier announced that Mr. Sergio Rodriguez, representing the Hector and Gloria Lopez Foundation, will be visiting the San Marcos Campus on October 16, 2020. Mr. Rodriguez will meet with key stakeholder groups that provide services and support to first generation students.

Mr. Alge announced that food services will be provided to students housed in quarantine and in isolation during the Thanksgiving break.

Dr. Lloyd suggested the in-person fall 2020 commencement survey should be disseminated to staff in addition to spring and summer 2020 graduates, fall candidates, and faculty.

DMT:ta

Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on November 10, 2020.