

To: President's Cabinet
From: Denise M. Trauth
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting
September 14, 2020

Impact of COVID-19 (#770)

Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic and the strategies in play to mitigate the spread. Risk assessment indicates that the conditions are improving. State-wide, the weekly case count and the positivity rate are improving. At the local level, numbers have stabilized. Case counts are up three cases from the previous week (93 cases versus 90 cases). The positivity rate at the Student Health Center (SHC) is up slightly (6.1 percent) from the previous week (5.4 percent).

The goal of our contact tracers is to trace positive cases in 24 hours. Occasionally, this takes longer.

Cases in residence halls and across both Texas State campuses are scattered. There has been no evidence of transmission in any residence hall or classroom; most exposures are occurring from small social gatherings. At present, 28 students are in isolation and 46 are in quarantine.

Active cases have been added to the Dashboard. The Office of Institutional Research is working on adding the seven-day moving average of new cases and the positivity rate to the Dashboard.

The faculty and supervisor question web app will be expanded to include a place to report when an employee believes that a student or another employee has tested positive, or has been identified as a close contact, and has not reported to Bobcat Trace.

Dr. Carranco provided an update on the COVID-19 testing strategy. Surveillance testing has been renamed proactive testing and will be expanded to include a random sampling of faculty and staff in addition to students. Proactive testing refers to the testing of asymptomatic persons and is being implemented to assess the incidence of COVID-19 in our university community.

All five rapid testing machines have been delivered; however, the Department of Athletics and the SHC are waiting for test kits to arrive.

Dr. Carranco provided an overview of the testing protocol for student-athletes. Dr. Carranco discussed the need for a protocol to address false positives. False positives typically result from contamination in a lab. In the event a false positive is suspected, Dr. Carranco will recommend to the Sun Belt Conference that two negative tests will be needed to override a false positive. Dr. Carranco suggested that a communication strategy is needed when a player sits out of a game for testing positive or being identified as a close contact. The strategy may be as simple as explaining that the player is out of a game due to the COVID-19 protocol or for medical reasons. Dr. Trauth asked Drs. Breier and Teis to develop a communication strategy for future games.

Dr. Carranco clarified that close contacts cannot test out of quarantine, but players suspected of false positives may test out of isolation provided a Sun Belt Conference-approved protocol is in place.

Dr. Carranco shared that research suggests that reinfections do not occur within 90 days of infection.

Mr. Algoe revisited the discussion on renting university facilities to external groups. Dr. Cavitt made an exception to a small group, primarily consisting of students, that meet on Sundays. For the foreseeable future, Cabinet members agreed to refrain from renting university facilities to external groups.

Mr. Algoe announced that Sewell Park will remain closed through at least the end of the fall 2020 semester.

Provost Bourgeois discussed the spring 2021 course schedule. The spring 2021 breakdown of online, hybrid, and face-to-face classes will look very similar to that of fall 2020. Provost Bourgeois recommended for the schedule of classes to go live on September 22, 2020. Cabinet members approved.

Cabinet approved expanding the workplace and academic modifications issued by the ADA Compliance Coordinator and the Director of the Office of Disability Services, respectively, through to the end of spring 2021.

Provost Bourgeois announced that the summer 2020 schedule will be rolled over and used as a starting point for building the summer 2021 course schedule. Based on a study conducted by Presidential Fellow Dr. Bill Chittenden, summer enrollment increases in 2019 appear to be attributed, in part, to the abundance of online course offerings. The fall 2019 schedule will be rolled over and used as a starting point for building the fall 2021 course schedule.

Commencement (#143)

Provost Bourgeois and guest Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman discussed the December 2020 commencement ceremonies and reviewed the final report on the fiscal year 2020 commencement budget. Cost saving measures were discussed and included reducing the number of programs printed to two programs per graduate. Cabinet members approved the total supplemental cost request of \$30,666.90.

Dr. Trauth led a discussion on hosting two commencement ceremonies at the football stadium in December 2020. Health and safety measures that would need to be implemented were discussed. The day following the in-person ceremonies, a virtual ceremony would be held, as well. Dr. Trauth requested that an executive producer be hired to oversee the production of the virtual ceremony. The Commencement Planning Work Group will be convened and a representative from the Department of Athletics will be added to the work group.

Pandemic/Post Pandemic Work Groups (#771)

Guest Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman discussed responses to the second thematic feedback survey. Analysis revealed: 1) 61.8 percent of the respondents rated the first week of fall 2020 as expected or better than expected; 2) online classes, flexible/prepared instructors, and compliance and protective measures, including mask compliance, were the most common thematic responses to "What went well during the first week of fall 2020?" 3) fully online/remote only, better compliance, including more social distancing in classrooms/campus, technology/microphones/connectivity, and instructor preparation/organization/communication were the most common thematic responses to "What could have gone better the first week of fall 2020?" Based on feedback, Dr. Sriraman recommended adding training sessions on how to optimize usage of Zoom and Canvas. The Continuity of Education Work Group will reconvene to examine fall 2020 instructional delivery methods to develop recommendations for spring 2021.

Enrollment Management (#9)

Provost Bourgeois and guest Mr. Gary Ray reviewed the fall 2020 enrollment report. President Trauth lauded Mr. Gary Ray for his success in ensuring a robust and healthy fall 2020 enrollment. Challenges to enrollment, ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to racial injustices, were discussed. Preliminary enrollment for fall 2020 is 37,849, which is a decline of 382 students (0.99 percent) compared to this time in 2019. Texas State enrolled the fourth largest freshman class, ending a seven year stretch of record-breaking fall freshman enrollment. On a brighter note, 4,000 graduate applications were submitted, which is the largest number of applications ever received.

President's Update (#556)

President Trauth discussed the status of the public art in the LBJ Student Center. Mr. Algoe announced that two art pieces are slated to be installed.

Significant Issues (#01)

This agenda item was not discussed.

DMT:ta

Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on October 21, 2020.