



Dear Loras Students, Faculty, and Staff,

7/28/2020

It is hard to believe that students will be on campus in less than a month. It's been a long few months so we are looking forward to the start of the new academic year.

Please note below a series of updates.

COVID-19 Area Status:

In the State of Iowa, 458,792 individuals have been tested and 42,738 were positive. Of those who have been tested, 30,476 have recovered. Sadly, 836 have passed away due to the virus.

In Dubuque County, 18,668 individuals have been tested and 1,377 were positive. Of those who have been tested, 530 have recovered. Sadly, 26 have passed away due to the virus.

Preparing for the Classroom:

So that you are prepared for the hybrid learning experience, please be sure to bring a set of headphones or earbuds, equipped with a mic, that can connect to your laptop. You will likely need these when you are joining a class remotely or when your instructor wants you to join a breakout room on Zoom or Teams. These need not be sophisticated or expensive devices. The headphones or earbuds you use with your phone should be sufficient so long as they allow you to hear, speak to others, and can connect with your laptop.

Return to Campus:

As we near the start of the academic year, I urge us all to begin the daily practices we are requiring throughout the Fall Semester. It is important that these practices become routine. To that end, I strongly recommend that all members of the campus community begin taking the following daily steps at least 10 days, if not sooner, prior to returning to campus:

- Take your temperature and be sure to test less than 100.4 F;
- Wash your hands thoroughly and with regularity throughout the day;
- Wear a mask in all indoor public spaces;
- Practice personal distancing of at least six feet or more when interacting with others;
- Avoid personal interactions with others when without a face covering;
- Monitor key symptoms (e.g., fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat) and act accordingly.

For students, please reference the complete set of “Return to Campus” guidelines that were sent to you on July 7. The same information is also posted on the Loras website. If you have questions about any of our health protocols, please contact our Health Center at 563-588-7142.

Testing and Quarantining:

As previously communicated, Loras continues to partner with State of Iowa and Dubuque County Public Health officials. In addition, we are doing the same with Unity Point Finley and Mercy One hospitals in Dubuque.

We have identified some spaces on campus so that students who are required to quarantine can do so safely. To mitigate virus contraction, we have reduced the residential living density in Rohlman, Beckman, and Binz Halls. The quarantine spaces will be primarily reserved for students occupying Beckman and Rohlman.

Students living in Binz, campus apartments, and campus-owned homes will be treated as “family units” per CDC guidelines. In this regard, most students living in these facilities will be able to quarantine “in place.”

The college will continue to add quarantine space, but it is worth noting that students will be asked to return home if we run out of adequate quarantine spaces. To that end, it is a good reminder to practice the guidelines mentioned above and in our previously shared document.

At this time and from a testing perspective, Loras will have a limited number of tests available through our Health Center. Beyond this, please note current area test sites:

Local COVID-19 Test Site Information

- Test Iowa @ Epic Health: 563-583-6595. Testing by Appointment. 1075 Cedar Cross Road, Suite 1
- Grand River Medical Group: 563-557-9111. Daily 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. 1515 Delhi, Dubuque, IA
- UnityPoint Clinic Urgent Care: 563-589-4960. Daily 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. 1550 University Ave., Dubuque, IA or 2255 JFK Rd., Dubuque, IA
- UnityPoint Health – Finley Hospital Emergency Room: 563-582-1881. Open 24/7. 350 N Grandview, Dubuque, IA

Unpopular, but Deeply Caring Recommendation:

The initial surge of COVID-19 positive tests occurred among individuals in food processing plants and senior living facilities. In recent weeks, the positive cases have significantly increased among young people between the ages of 18 – 40 (53% in Dubuque County). This age group represents the majority of our campus community.

While symptoms, hospitalizations, and deaths within this age group are relatively low (to date), the continued spread is directly related to this cohort. It appears well substantiated that crowded bars, house parties, and indoor restaurant experiences are common denominators for those contracting and spreading the virus.

To those within this age group especially, I strongly encourage you to practice restraint, care, and selflessness. Please resist the urge to visit bars, attend or host house parties, and/or eat in restaurants. You are all young enough that I can suggest sacrifices over a few months are nothing given the long life you ought to expect to enjoy. Mostly, even if you think you are invincible, your contracting the virus puts others at risk. Please join me in refraining from “high risk” behavior (e.g., bars, house parties, indoor restaurant dining)! Not doing so defies what Loras and the common good are all about. Further, face coverings and personal distancing are great things, too.

Intercollegiate Athletics:

The American Rivers Conference Presidents’ Council met on Friday afternoon. We adopted a comprehensive set of health and safety guidelines which we are all committed to following. We agreed to move forward with fall sports, but in a limited fashion. While institutions will have the autonomy to compete with non-conference programs, the American Rivers Conference will schedule a single round robin set of competitions. Football will compete in no more than five conference contests, as most sports will have their conference seasons cut in half. A revised schedule for all conference sports will be available this week.

Important Dates:

While many of you have already received separate communications with regard to key dates, I offer the following:

August 5 - Resident Assistants return to campus

To Be Determined – Once the American Rivers Conference issues a revised schedule this week, fall student-athletes will be contacted by their respective program’s coaching staff

Thursday, August 20 - Faculty/Staff Opening Day Programming

Sunday, August 23 - Launch into Loras/New Student Move-In

Tuesday, August 25 – Returning Student Residential Move-In

Wednesday, August 26 - First Day of Classes

Conclusion:

I hope you and your families are able to enjoy the remaining summer days. Take time to count your blessings and express gratitude to those who positively impact your lives.

God Bless,

James E. Collins '84
President

