

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

As a health care community, we have an obligation to take the health and welfare of everyone as a top priority. While the longevity of this pandemic is certainly worrisome, let us kindly remind ourselves and take to heart that all the initiatives and actions we undertake to protect our community are daily acts of showing care and concern for the well-being of ourselves and others.

Together, as a tightly-knit community of faculty, staff and students, we have a responsibility in our daily lives, even when others around us choose otherwise, to follow our protocols and guidelines that are meant to keep us protected, healthy and slow the spread of COVID-19. Cases are rising in 44 states around the country including both the State of Illinois and the State of Arizona. Unfortunately, we have seen a rapid increase of positive cases within our own community, an increase that is higher than any time since March, 2020. Over the past week we have identified 6 faculty and staff that have tested positive, with 3 on the Downers Grove campus and 3 on Glendale campus. The student cases are very concerning. We have been notified that 17 students have tested positive, with 14 from the Downers Grove campus and 3 from the Glendale campus. I can report these cases are mild and fortunately the individuals are recovering quickly. We have not been notified of any hospitalizations as of the writing this Evening Update. While we had five of these positive student cases come to campus over the past week, these were minimal exposures and those who did come in contact with these students have already been personally called and quarantined. I wish to remind everyone that if you have been exposed you will be contacted.

Many of the impacted individuals have been off campus in social settings, traveling and even attending weddings and parties. Again, even when interacting with others around us who choose otherwise, it is important to always wear a mask and stay socially distanced, especially when getting together to study, attending social events, and being in public and common areas.

COVID-19 Reporting Requirements

- If you are ill, accurately and honestly report this on your Daily Screening questionnaire, and please stay home to await further information. When you don't pass, both our Risk Management Clinical Specialist, Dr. Debra Sullivan, as well as your Dean/Program Director (students) or Supervisor (employees) are notified.
- If you become ill after taking the Daily Screening questionnaire, or if you are notified of an exposure via formal contact tracing process, please go back and retake your Daily Screening so the system registers that a change has occurred. All members of the Midwestern University community should notify the appropriate person, as set forth below, if they are diagnosed with COVID-19:
 - **Students**
Students should email the Student Services COVID Response team at StudentCOVIDTeam@midwestern.edu. The Clinical Specialist or designee will contact the student to gather information to assist us in conducting contact tracing and initiating quarantine when appropriate.
 - **Faculty and Staff**
Faculty and staff should notify the HR COVID Team at HRCOVIDTeam@midwestern.edu.

You will be requested to complete an Intake Form to provide information regarding your on-campus activities to assist us in conducting contact tracing.

- If you become ill over the weekend, please still take the Daily Screening questionnaire, and send an email message to one of the aforementioned contacts if you test positive for COVID-19.
- If your physician has you tested for COVID-19, send an email message to one of the aforementioned contacts, and confirm the results of your test once the results are available.
- **Important Notice:** Contact tracing will begin as soon as any member of this community reports their positive testing results. Dr. Sullivan, in coordination with key Human Resources and Student Services personnel, identifies and tracks everyone in the University community who tests positive for the novel coronavirus or has been in close contact with someone who has. Unless you have an urgent question or concern that needs to be immediately addressed, you do not need to call or email Dr. Sullivan, Human Resources, Student Services, or your program to ask if you have been in “close contact” or exposed. Dr. Deborah Sullivan, or a member of the Human Resources or Risk Management Departments will begin contact tracing protocol when necessary, and individually and confidentially identify and call impacted individuals as early as possible to isolate them from the broader community.

Daily Health Screening Update

We hope that the Midwestern University Daily Health Screening process has become an important part of each person’s daily routine and that everyone is thinking about their own health and whether they are well enough to come to campus. As a reminder, you can access your Daily Health Screening by doing any of the following;

1. Daily reminders are sent early each morning, Monday through Friday, to your Midwestern University email address. This email contains a personal link that each person can use to complete the health screen without first needing to log in to the portal. The reminder email also contains information about opting in to receive your daily reminder by text message and instructions for adding the health screen to the home screen of your mobile phone.
2. Please click the link for the health screen that you have added to the home screen of your mobile phone.
3. Click the link in your daily text message reminder, once you have opted in and picked your preferred time to receive the text message reminder.
4. Log into the student or employee portal and click the Daily Health Screening link from the top menu.

5 Step Plan for Diversity and Inclusion

- My sincere thanks to the Downers Grove Black Student Alliance for their excellent fundraising event. The students, under the guidance of Dr. Lendell Richardson, raised approximately \$3,000.00 for the Minority Scholarship Fund through the help of the entire campus who purchased their Black Lives Matter T-shirts. Their actions highlight the importance of involving our campus community in working together to provide additional scholarship opportunities.
- The College of Veterinary Medicine VOICE (Veterinarians as One Inclusive Community for Empowerment) and the college Diversity Task Force has announced the first Annual Midwestern University, Glendale campus Diversity Art Competition. Everyone is encouraged to create an artwork that celebrates diversity in our community. This fundraising event is one additional way to encourage participation in our Five Point Plan for Diversity and Inclusion. Look for the details and flyer in the Midwestern University Weekly Bulletin.
- Many colleges and departments have implemented excellent diversity action plans. Our Finance Department, which includes Student Financial Services, Clinic Finance, Business Services, Registrar, and all members of the Institute for Health Care Innovation and Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, is holding their virtual Inaugural Event to celebrate Global Diversity Month with food, games, prizes and an educational program. Their proactive and creative steps highlight the importance of embracing different cultures and perspectives.

New Study and Lunch Rooms

- Midwestern University has constructed and opened a new Lunch/Study room on the first floor of White Oak Hall on the Downers Grove campus. This study room is available between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M., and open to the entire campus community to use.
- On the Glendale campus, the new Lunch/Study room on the first floor of the Companion Animal Clinic is now available to students as well as faculty and staff. Please note access to this space is from the rear of the facility and not through the lobby. Directions to enter this facility are found on the online portal.

I believe that there is a new sense of fatigue facing everyone who feels that this pandemic has gone on way too long, and all of us are desperate to get back to familiar life styles and regular social activities. But desiring this does not mean we can pretend everything is actually back to normal or will be anytime soon. So please, take the detailed safety protocols seriously. Take care of your health and that of your family. We will get through this together if we all just take the steps needed to support the health and wellbeing of each other.

Be well.

Dr. G.

Kathleen H. Goepfinger, Ph.D.

President and Chief Executive Officer