

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

Please join me in wishing our Jewish colleagues a Happy Hanukkah, which began at sundown on Thursday, December 10, 2020 and ends on December 18, 2020. Hanukkah, which means “dedication” in Hebrew, begins on the 25th of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar and usually falls in November or December. Often called the Festival of Lights, the holiday is celebrated with the lighting of the menorah, traditional foods, games and gifts.

This week we have experienced a brief downturn in new COVID-19 cases and are very hopeful that our faculty, staff and students continue to limit their travel and exposure risk over the upcoming holiday break. In Downers Grove campus, we have had 5 faculty and staff cases and 14 student cases. From the Glendale campus we have had 1 faculty and staff positive case and 17 student cases. We have one additional week prior to the holiday break, and it is important that we continue to maintain our social distancing, mask wearing and good hygiene practices.

Effective today, we are implementing the new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for those faculty, staff and students who are quarantined due to exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual but have no symptoms. They are as follows:

New Guidelines:

- If you have had contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes, less than 6 feet apart, and within 48 hours of the time they developed symptoms or were tested, then you are required to quarantine for this exposure.
- These CDC guidelines apply to those with an exposure who DO NOT have symptoms:
 - 10 days quarantined without being tested for COVID-19.
 - New: 7 days with a negative test. To release you from quarantine after 7 days, the test must be performed on day 5, 6, or 7 after an exposure.
 - Quarantines remain while awaiting test results (regardless of length of time to receive) for employees and campus/MWU clinic-based students.
 - Students on external clinical rotation will follow the guidelines of the site/preceptor.
 - If the site refuses to offer guidelines or does not have them available, authority will reside with the Risk Management Clinical Specialist and be determined based on the details of the case. All programs and colleges will accept and abide by the decision of the Risk Management Clinical Specialist.
- As a reminder, individuals in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their home state or local health department and the Student/HR COVID-19 teams. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out via email to the following:

Students- StudentCOVIDteam@midwestern.edu,
Faculty/Staff- HRCOVIDteam@midwestern.edu

5 Point Plan for Greater Diversity and Inclusion

- The wonderful Toys for Tots toy drive organized by our Safety and Security Departments has been very successful in collecting much needed gifts for children living in less fortunate homes and those who are homeless. Thanks to the generosity of our faculty, staff and students, many children will enjoy and cherish their new toys this holiday season.
- Our Campus Facilities Departments on both the Glendale and Downers Grove campuses, came together to organized a collection of holiday gifts, enough for over 30 stockings filled with presents for the UMOM New Day Centers, a remarkable organization that provides shelter and services to individual and families experiencing homelessness.
- Today, December 11, 2020, administration, faculty and staff on both campuses celebrated “Dress Around the World Day.” Many of us wore clothes or accessories to represent a region, country, or culture, thus honoring and embracing Midwestern University’s culture of inclusivity that celebrates the importance of diversity in our academic community.
- The College of Veterinary Medicine received a NIH grant to join the Purdue University’s “This Is How We Role,” program reaching out to underserved children from Kindergarten to Fourth Grade to introduce them to science and medicine. The college faculty, staff and students are part of this new outreach.

I hope you take a moment this weekend to reflect on the positive things we have in our lives, do additional holiday planning, and spend relaxing time with your loved ones. Have a wonderful weekend.

Be well.

Dr. G.

Kathleen H. Goepfinger, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Midwestern University