

September 29, 2020

Subj: Reopening the University – Message 21

Dear Colleagues,

We are eight weeks into the fall semester. Wow! While it might seem strange that we are still calling these messages “Reopening the University,” the energy and enthusiasm you continue to pour into ensuring the success of our reopening makes us think the current name still fits. Here are some updates.

By the Numbers

Before the end of this week, we will have completed our 20,000th COVID-19 test at Notre Dame, in addition to the more than 11,000 pre-matriculation tests completed before students arrived on campus. We are grateful to the amazing teams at the University testing center and the group in Notre Dame Research that more recently launched the saliva-testing program for their ongoing great work to keep our campus community safe. Overall, our numbers continue to be encouraging. A big shout-out to the women of Lyons Hall who have yet to record a positive case. Here a Lyons Hall resident is geared up to support Spirit Week in the hall.



The 12 Days (Off) of Christmas

Our community has worked tirelessly and invested so much over the past 6+ months in service to Notre Dame, and we want to thank everyone for their heroic efforts. We also want to give people additional time to be with their families during the holiday season. To show our appreciation, this year the University will be providing six additional paid holiday days, which will begin with a paid day off the Wednesday before Thanksgiving (November 25) followed later by an extended Christmas break from Monday, December 21, through Tuesday, January 5. We will have our essential staff present during the extended holiday (e.g., Police, Fire, Power Plant, etc.), as well as some basic services (e.g., a few retail food options) for those wanting to continue research activities. We will also have some students on campus during these breaks and will ensure that they are cared for well.

Winter Session Planning

Following up on Father Jenkins’ recent message about plans for a winter session in January, we have asked Regan Jones, the director of Notre Dame’s Office of Military and Veterans Affairs, to lead and coordinate planning for this effort. The general concept is to develop a schedule of voluntary educational, service, and internship opportunities for students during the 10-week break between the fall and spring semesters. We are soliciting ideas from faculty members who may want to take part in delivering short, mostly online courses or projects, and we plan to provide funding in support of these

offerings. We also welcome faculty who are willing to engage students in a sustained month-long research exposure. Regan will be collaborating with multiple units across campus, including the Meruelo Family Center for Career Development and the Center for Social Concerns. We will also share additional information about housing for students who may need to be on campus during the winter session as it becomes available, but in the meantime, please send your comments and suggestions to wintersession@nd.edu.

Library Hours Update

In response to student requests and a quick response from the library staff, the main Hesburgh Library will now remain open until 2 a.m. Sunday through Thursday. For the latest complete list of Library hours and services, please visit the [Hesburgh Libraries website](#).

Closing Thoughts

At the start of this message, we mentioned the work of those involved with COVID-19 testing. For a deeper, more nuanced look at their efforts and collaboration with others in the COVID Response Unit (CRU), we invite your attention to this *Notre Dame Magazine* article by Fr. Joe Corpora, C.S.C., titled [“Doing Mercy: Saints Next Door.”](#) In addition to those Fr. Joe highlights in his article, we know there are many, many saints next door at Notre Dame – people serving meals, greeting us in our buildings, delivering our mail, and many others. One group we are especially grateful to are those on the Building Services team. They have been serving on the frontlines for months, keeping our students, faculty, and staff members safe through their nonstop efforts to clean, sanitize, disinfect, and beautify not only our campus, but also the quarantine and isolation rooms on and off campus after each student is safely returned to our campus community. We are very grateful to them and all of our saints next door.

Please remember:

- Wear your mask
- Practice physical distancing
- Wash your hands regularly
- Complete your daily health check
- Show up when selected for surveillance testing

Please be generous with yourselves and with each other.

Yours in Notre Dame,

Marie Lynn Miranda, Provost
Shannon Cullinan, Executive Vice President