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October 20, 2020

Subj: Reopening the University – Message 24

Dear Colleagues,

As we head into the home stretch for the fall semester, we are facing an uptick in the number of positive COVID-19 cases. As best we can tell, this is due to a combination of recent weather, mask- and social-distancing fatigue, and increased socialization before and after home football games. We are working hard to reinforce the need for continued compliance with health and safety protocols, so that we can successfully finish our semester of in-person instruction. Here is a brief update on other news.

#### ***Spring Study Abroad***

Earlier today, students were notified about the University's necessary but difficult decision to suspend study abroad for the spring semester. For the past several months, Notre Dame International has closely examined evolving factors including travel bans and advisories, the spread of the pandemic, the ability of health care systems around the world to provide the necessary care, as well as our capacity for surveillance testing and ability to quarantine and isolate our students, staff, and faculty overseas should it become necessary. Unfortunately, the dynamically changing spread of the pandemic globally and the associated uncertainties make the risks to our students and faculty simply too high at this time. This news is deeply disappointing, but necessary to protect the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff—our top priority. We will continue to monitor the situation in the coming months.

#### ***Increased Surveillance Testing***

Starting this week, we are ramping up saliva-based surveillance testing while continuing nasal swab surveillance testing. Yesterday, we conducted 1,400+ surveillance tests. This effort should help us stay ahead of infection rates as we head into the cold and flu season. We are hopeful this increased testing frequency will position us for a smooth end of the semester. However, this increase also means that each of us will be summoned for surveillance testing more frequently. Please help us by responding when you are called. As of this writing, the COVID-19 Response Unit at the University Testing Center has administered more than 36,000 surveillance tests (nasal swab and saliva). Once again, we thank CRU for their tireless efforts to make testing at this scale possible.

#### ***Winter Session Planning***

We continue to develop plans to offer a suite of opportunities as part of an experimental “winter session” between the end of the Fall 2020 semester and the beginning of the Spring 2021 semester. Among the offerings will be career development and professional growth workshops and projects, job and internship search support, co-curricular [virtual] community service, research experiences, and a modest number of short online courses taught by Notre Dame faculty members. We expect to publish a list of these opportunities in early November. Programs that require on-campus housing may begin no earlier than Tuesday, December 1, 2020, and must conclude by Wednesday, January 27. If you have any additional questions, please email [wintersession@nd.edu](mailto:wintersession@nd.edu).

### ***Closing Thoughts***

In a year filled with challenges, “The Fighting Four” Four Square Tournament was a reminder that fresh air, a playground ball, and good (physically distanced and mask-wearing) company can put some bounce back in all our steps. Congratulations to our champions, JV Squared, featuring Jack Irwin, Jack Harness, Vincent Burke, and Vincent Reisel.

Here's a photo of the schoolyard competition extravaganza, which we hope will make you smile. A special thanks to tournament co-sponsor Coach Niele Ivey and the planning committee and many volunteers who made this event possible.

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 each other.

Yours in Notre Dame,

Marie Lynn Miranda, Provost  
Shannon Cullinan, Executive Vice President