

Dear Colleagues,

As we welcome resident students back to campus this weekend and begin classes next week I wanted to share additional information and updates around a number of procedures to keep our campus community as safe as possible and key metrics we will track as the semester unfolds to inform our decision-making.

Testing

MCLA has engaged with the Broad Institute for a comprehensive campus testing plan coordinated by our Health Services office. COVID-19 test results will be available within 48 hours.

Resident Students

All resident students will be tested upon arrival and once a week for the first month of attendance. After that, surveillance monitoring will be conducted with 20-25% of our resident students tested on a randomized schedule. Students will be expected to report for testing as a condition of continued campus residency. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action and repeated violations could result in loss of college housing.

Commuter Students

Commuter students will be offered initial COVID-19 testing in September by appointment. Days and times of testing will be announced the first week of classes. Commuter students may contact Health Services if they are concerned about possible COVID-19 symptoms during hours of operation. Local commuter students may also contact the Berkshire Health Systems (BHS) COVID-19 hotline for questions regarding the novel coronavirus, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. seven days a week at: 855-262-5465.

Additionally, students may be asked to test due to close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, as established through contact tracing practices (detailed below). Continued cooperation with Health Services and reporting to all testing appointments will be a condition of continued campus residence.

Employees

MCLA, will offer one free voluntary test in the month of September for on-campus faculty and staff to assist in mitigating the spread of COVID-19 as we return to campus. Health Services is coordinating these testing procedures and information will be forthcoming regarding dates and times.

For the remainder of the semester faculty and staff physically present on campus may opt into free, voluntary surveillance testing. Health Services will these coordinate specific days and times for employee testing, with details to come. Additionally, MCLA will cover the cost of employee testing for those whom a test is deemed necessary through contact tracing practices (detailed below).

Contact Tracing

The College will work in collaboration with local public health officials to assist with contact tracing among MCLA community members. Upon identification of a COVID-19 infection all individuals identified as being in close contact (periods of greater than 15 minutes without

proper face coverings and/or social distancing) initial contact will be made via cell phone and/or email by local public health officials. Each contacted individual will be informed about possible exposure and given instructions for quarantine.

In addition to coordination with the appropriate local public health officials, MCLA will utilize the Guardian platform to assist in necessary contact tracing measures. Guardian is a case management system that MCLA uses for a multitude of purposes. This software has the capability for MCLA to log and track individuals related to COVID-19 who are confirmed positive, possibly exposed, and also those that may need to self-isolate/quarantine, following established tracing protocols.

While taking every measure possible to engage in a detailed, transparent, contact tracing process we will also be adhering to privacy restrictions outlined through HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and FERPA (Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act) both of which will inform the extent of information that will be released to the wider campus community.

The Center for Student Success and Engagement will notify faculty of students in isolation or quarantine who will experience a long-term absence from in-person classes in order to accommodate any necessary course delivery adjustments.

Metrics for College Decision Making

The College will regularly monitor applicable metrics, as established by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and applicable to Berkshire County, to detect early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be rising to an unacceptable level and that could affect decisions regarding college operations. These metrics include, but are not limited to:

1. External/Community Metrics-
 - a. Relevant MA directives for higher education
 - b. Daily and 7-day average of cases in Berkshire County and Massachusetts, as applicable
 - c. Daily and 7-day average of positive test rates in Berkshire County and Massachusetts, as applicable
 - d. Bed and ICU capacity for local hospitals
2. Campus Metrics- In addition to regularly monitoring external/community metrics, the College will also carefully monitor on campus metrics, including:
 - a. Daily and 7-day average of COVID-19 cases by date reported
 - b. Daily and 7-day average of positive test rates. If the College's infection rates begin to exceed the infection rate in Berkshire County generally, we will consult with appropriate officials and potentially move to more assertive campus restrictions to mitigate infection spread.
 - c. Daily count of students in isolation and available spaces for student isolation. If the College reaches 50% capacity in isolation beds, the College will consult with public health officials about potential measures that need to be taken.
 - d. Daily count of individuals in quarantine
 - e. Daily count of symptomatic testing for students at Health Services
 - f. Average time for contact tracing and implementing quarantines

- g. PPE supply availability
- h. Compliance with testing, daily health screenings, face masks, physical distancing and restrictions on large group gatherings

We will share aggregate COVID-19 test result data through a shared dashboard.

Containment of Potential Campus Transmission

Measures for Students Confirmed or Suspected to have COVID-19

Isolation: Isolation is the separation of someone who is ill with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. The typical isolation period is for a minimum of 10 days to longer if symptoms persist. All students are encouraged to develop an isolation plan whether they live on campus or off campus. MCLA has set aside a number of townhouses for resident students who test positive for COVID-19 and are required to isolate for 10+ days.

Students who test positive will be contacted about their results by the Berkshire County DPH nurse who will notify them of the need to isolate. When possible, students who test positive for COVID-19 are encouraged to isolate at home where they will have a family support system to aid them as they recuperate, particularly if they are feeling sick. However, when this is not possible, students who test positive and are required to isolate, will be assigned to one of the available isolation rooms and assisted in moving there for at least 10 days from the date of the positive test result.

The Berkshire County DPH nurse will monitor health regularly via phone calls; MCLA Health Services personnel will check on students regularly via video tele-medicine appointments. Counseling Services will be available for tele-counseling appointments. Students in isolation will order meals from Dining Services that will be delivered at pre-scheduled times directly to the townhouse door. Coursework can be completed virtually during this time for students well enough to participate. The Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE) can make contact with faculty to assist students with any necessary accommodations while isolating.

Students living off campus who need to isolate will do so in their off-campus housing following CDC/MA DPH guidelines for isolation from other household members. Off-campus students will have contact with local public health officials and will be able to access all College resources and supports (Health Services, Counseling Services and academics) remotely.

Quarantine- Quarantine is the separation of someone who has been exposed to a contagious disease (such as COVID-19) from those who are not sick or exposed. The typical quarantine period lasts 14 days. Students who have been exposed to COVID-19 must quarantine in order to restrict their contact with others and reduce the risk of the spread of infection. MCLA will work closely with local contact tracers to determine which individuals need to quarantine based on contact tracing efforts and will notify affected students and Health Services if students are placed under a quarantine order.

Students in on-campus housing will typically quarantine in their regular housing assignments as all students are living in single rooms. Students living off campus will quarantine in their off-campus housing. Individuals who share a bathroom are considered a “family unit” and must typically quarantine together. MCLA will remotely provide medical, academic, and counseling

support for students in quarantine. Meal delivery will be provided for on-campus students in quarantine.

Students may receive additional specific instructions on how to isolate and quarantine.

Measures for Suspected or Confirmed Employee Cases of COVID-19

Isolation/Quarantine of Confirmed Individual-

Any employee who tests positive for COVID-19 or exhibits COVID-19 symptoms must remain at home until completing 14 days of self-quarantine or release by a health care provider or public health official.

Employees and Other Individuals in Close Contact with Infected Individual-

The College will notify the state and local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result and work with public health officials to identify all individuals who have had close contact (under 6 feet) without a face covering, lasting a minimum of 15 minutes with the affected individual during the time the individual has symptoms and during the 48-hour period before the onset of symptoms or positive test result, whichever is earlier. Depending on the circumstances (physical proximity, length of time of contact, setting, whether tools or equipment were shared, etc.), additional individuals may be identified as having had close contact. Those individuals identified by public health officials and/or the College as having close contact greater than 15 minutes with an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 will not be able to return to work until the individual has been cleared by the Department of Public Health. Employees who are quarantined must self-monitor for symptoms and seek medical attention if symptoms develop.

Cleaning and Sanitization Efforts

In the event an individual on campus tests positive for COVID-19 and has been inside College facilities while potentially infectious, the College will follow relevant MA DPH guidelines. Cleaning and disinfection protocols will be put in place after an individualized assessment based on, but not limited to, these variables: length of time infected individual was in the space, nature of their actions in the space, and whether the space has been cleaned since the individual was last present. Depending on this assessment, the College may elect to close off certain spaces for a period of time before cleaning and disinfecting take place. The College will contract with an outside specific vendor who can assist in the event more specialized cleaning protocols are needed.

Student Return to Campus Guide

All students will receive the [Return to Campus Student Guide](#) with information specific to their campus experience. This is available on the MCLA COVID-19 landing page (mcla.edu/COVID-19) and contains answers to frequently asked student questions that may also be helpful in your work.

Additional Return to Campus and COVID Related Questions

Please reach out to your supervisor or division leader for specific questions related to policy and procedure in your areas. If you have questions regarding procurement of cleaning, social distancing signage, or other supplies please contact Carrie Schadler in the President's Office at x5201

Thank you for all of the efforts that went into preparing campus to welcome our students and colleagues back to campus. Despite the unprecedented and challenging time it's been reassuring to watch the high level of collaboration and collegiality that has made our return to campus possible.

Sincerely,
Gina