
Subject: Important Covid-19 Update: May 4, 2020

Date: Monday, May 4, 2020 at 4:26:01 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: President Lugo

To: AllStudents, All-faculty-staff

Dear Queens community,

We are actively planning for students to return to residence halls and in-person classes this fall. While it is too early to tell exactly how the fall semester will look, the senior leadership team and I are committed to doing everything we can to bring our community back to campus safely and responsibly. In our planning, the health and safety of our community will continue to be our top priority. While we develop plans for a return to a residential campus and in-person instruction, we should all expect to contribute to keeping each other safe by significantly altering our 'normal' ways of engaging with each other while on campus.

In order to create the safest and best plan possible for our return to campus, we have convened a re-opening task force chaired by Vice Presidents Maria Flores-Mills and Matt Packey. This team, which includes broad membership from the Queens community, including our leadership from campus health and safety, will recommend plans and procedures to safely reopen campus this summer and for our return to campus-based instruction and living in the fall. The task force is studying best practices in social distancing and, if necessary, ways to minimize density in living, learning and common spaces. This work will require that they examine a wide range of potential health and safety measures and consult with local and national health experts before recommending policies and practices for Queens, which may include partnering with a third party for testing, a plan for tracing, and quarantining as we proactively monitor and manage any COVID-19 in our community. It is worth repeating, we will prioritize safety first, while taking every step possible to deliver our best educational experience. I have full confidence in our task force and hope that you will join me in thanking them for leading this important work for our community.

Unfortunately, the impact of COVID-19 on higher education is a very fluid and moving target. I suspect that we will know far more in the next several weeks about the pandemic's forecast for the fall and, importantly, new resources and practices that might be made available to us to mitigate our community's risk of exposure. As a result, we invite your continued good faith, patience, and flexibility as we closely monitor all local, regional and national guidelines, as well as the best practices that we are actively learning about across the higher education landscape.

The measures we have taken since March have kept our community safe and have prepared us to think comprehensively and strategically about our return to campus. I have been so impressed with the ability of our faculty and staff to uphold our commitment to our students through academic, community and support services. It has been truly remarkable how the Queens experience has remained distinctive and strong throughout the pandemic. We continue to learn from this experience, and we are developing plans to continue to deliver a Queens education in the face of many challenges.

I will continue to update you throughout the summer.

Sincerely,
President Lugo