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**Subject:** COVID-19 UPDATE: Preparing for Spring; Live Chats Scheduled

**Date:** Monday, November 16, 2020 at 10:43:04 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** President Lugo

Dear Queens Community,

As final exams and holidays approach, we are preparing to welcome more of you back to campus this spring. Your safety continues to be our top priority. We have studied the successes and challenges on college campuses across the country this semester. Along with the rest of the world, we know more than we did three months ago about how to manage the spread of the coronavirus, as well as just how contagious and dangerous it can be. Armed with this information, we have updated our Royal Return plan with important changes that will give us the best chance of opening safely and staying open, if we all comply.

[Royal Return 2.0](#) is now live on our website. Many parts of it will be familiar to you. It reiterates our commitment to universal use of face masks, physical distancing, [a daily symptom checker](#), and [community covenant](#). You can also find information on the academic calendar, move-in, and changes to classrooms and common areas. There are also several critical updates. Here are a few highlights:

- We have outlined a plan for a comprehensive testing strategy. Students and employees will be tested for COVID-19 before the start of the spring semester. We will schedule specific days for testing to be conducted on campus. Details will be provided. Once on campus, there will be weekly survey testing based on stratified random samples of students, faculty, and staff to detect asymptomatic cases and reduce the possibility of an outbreak.
- We are asking all students who are returning for in-person learning (both residential and commuter students) to begin return-to-campus preparations two weeks in advance of their planned arrival. During that 14-day period, students should shelter-in-place, and report in via our [daily symptom checker](#).
- We are asking all community members to get their flu shot before the start of the spring semester. Those in the Charlotte area can get theirs at the health and wellness center. Just schedule an appointment at (704) 337-2220.
- We have developed expertise among staff members. More than two dozen staff members have been trained in contact tracing to help our campus contain any cases that arise. Additionally, we have established a 7-person COVID-19 Response Team to manage the pandemic on campus. You can reach them for non-emergency general questions at [covidsafe@queens.edu](mailto:covidsafe@queens.edu).
- We have reserved enough quarantine and isolation space on campus to accommodate 10% of the residential students who will be staying on campus this spring.

### Things you can do right now

- If you haven't signed the [community covenant](#) yet, please join the 700 plus faculty, staff, and students who have done so already. This is a requirement. Everyone will need to sign it before coming back to campus for the spring semester.

- Also, bookmark the [daily symptom checker](#) which you will be required to complete every day during the 14 days you are sheltering in place prior to arrival, as well as every day during the spring semester before leaving your dorm room or coming to campus for classes or activities.
- Also, we strongly encourage you to download the [SlowCOVIDNC Exposure Notification](#) app to your smart phone which will notify you if you have been in close contact with someone who has shared a positive COVID-19 test result. This application was developed by the North Carolina Health and Human Service Department to facilitate robust contact tracing and to empower individuals to take action when exposed to COVID positive community members.

We have scheduled two live chats with senior leadership – one for students and families, and another for faculty and staff to answer any questions that you may have.

Students and families can join us on Friday, November 20, at 11:00 a.m. at this Ring Central link: <https://webinar.ringcentral.com/j/1493985850>

Faculty and staff will receive an Outlook appointment for a live chat on Wednesday, December 9, at 11:00 a.m. during which we will further discuss the testing plan for faculty and staff, as well as the role supervisors can play to help keep our campus safe.

Even as I write this email, the landscape is changing. The COVID-19 Response Team, senior leadership and I are abreast of the national, regional, and local trends that show an increased spread of the coronavirus. We are monitoring these changes as well as the development of a vaccine. At this time, we expect to implement our plan for a spring return. Of course, we will keep you updated if any new developments force a change.

Best of luck on finals and Happy Thanksgiving. I am certainly grateful for the resilience of this very special community. I look forward to seeing you in person very soon.

Sincerely,  
Dan Lugo