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**Subject:** COVID-19 UPDATE: Preparing for Spring Reminders

**Date:** Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 11:01:37 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** President Lugo

Dear Queens Community,

As the calendar year winds down, we continue to prepare for a safe return to campus for hybrid learning at a reduced density. Our senior leadership and COVID-19 Response teams meet multiple times each week to monitor conditions and implement our Royal Return plan. We have been consulting with our partners at Novant Health to enhance our plan based on the latest scientific research and public health guidance. Some of those updates include:

- Expanding our face mask requirement to not only outside, but also inside dorm rooms and private offices while others are present
- Augmenting our return preparations by asking all students and employees who are returning to campus to shelter-in-place for 14 days prior to their return
- Enhancing our testing protocol to include 1,200 weekly survey tests and detailing our plan to test all students and employees who will be returning to campus at the start of the spring semester
- Rolling out the daily symptom checker and implementing its usage with students and staff already on campus
- Upfitting 50 classrooms with enhanced technology for hybrid learning
- Coordinating a reduced density residential plan that reserves space for quarantine, and maximizes safety and distance during a carefully planned move-in process
- Training 18 staff in contact tracing and promoting universal installation of the [SlowCOVIDNC](#) smart phone application
- Facilitating campus flu shot clinics
- Developing clear policies for violations of the community covenant
- Distributing sanitation supplies and PPE across campus
- Adjusting course modalities to accommodate reduced density in all classrooms, studios, and labs
- Installing signage to manage traffic flow and remind community members of safety protocols

We are aware of the rapidly changing environment as cases continue to climb and the vaccine has begun to be distributed in the United States. Your safety continues to be our top priority. Our ability to open safely and stay open depends on each of us doing our part. Here are some important reminders of things you should do prior to your return.

- If you have not signed the [community covenant](#), please join the 1,100 faculty, staff, and

student signers. Each of us will need to sign it before coming back to campus for the spring semester.

- 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 each day during the spring semester before leaving your dorm room or coming to campus.
- 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 act when exposed to COVID positive community members.
- If you are returning to campus (all students, faculty, and staff), begin your preparations two weeks in advance of your arrival by sheltering in place, and reporting in via our [daily symptom checker](#).
- Get your flu shot.
- Please review and familiarize yourself with our [Royal Return](#) plan. We have recently updated the [FAQ](#) section based on questions we have received from you during the past month.

### **Pre-Arrival Awareness Training**

Members of the COVID-19 Response team are creating an awareness training module to assure we all have common knowledge about COVID-19, its prevention, and Queens' infectious disease protocol. The training will be completed by all employees and students online through Canvas. It will be no more than a 30-minute commitment, including a video followed by a brief list of questions. Look for an email in early January with a link to the training.

### **Arrival Testing**

Prepare to be tested for COVID-19 on campus prior to the start of the semester. Residential students should follow the specific directions from residence life regarding move-in and testing time. We have carefully coordinated a schedule to minimize traffic flow and keep you safe. Commuting students will be given further instructions in early January on when and how to register for their return to campus testing.

As always, I am grateful for our Queens community, and the resilience and perseverance you have demonstrated during these unprecedented times. I look forward to seeing you in person very soon.

Happy holidays and warmest wishes,  
Dan Lugo