

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

Remember the old phrase, “not one size fits all”? That is certainly what we are dealing with each day, as we look at how organizations, institutions and even other universities are addressing the COVID-19 crisis. Northwestern University has already gone above and beyond other institutions to help students continue their learning, while taking unprecedented steps to assure our facilities are cleaned and sanitized daily.

Northwestern University has no new identified cases of COVID-19 since the one identified last week. However, we have one additional member of our community whose immediate family tested positive. This raises the issue of how should we address anyone actually impacted by the COVID-19 virus. I have chosen to be very conservative in the early days of this pandemic as we carefully monitor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention daily updates and status reports. I find myself thinking that there is never a wrong time to do the right thing, as we address faculty, staff and student concerns. I strive to do the right thing on behalf of all of you.

Today the COVID-19 Response Team met to review the updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention standards. These standards outlined what individuals and institutions should do in response to an active case of COVID-19. I want to share these with all of you.

What are the CDC Standard for quarantine?

- If a family member or one of our faculty, staff or students have tested positive for COVID-19, does everyone in the facility need to be quarantined?
 - CDC Standard: Only individuals with close contact, which is defined as being within 6 feet of each other for more than 10 minutes of time, should be quarantined.
 - Northwestern University Response: Since we cannot clearly define the length of a close contact, we are recommending a slightly broader group be considered for quarantine, specifically if your encounter was in person without PPE, or in close quarters.
- What if I walk by someone who has tested positive?
 - CDC Standard: Brief interactions such as walking past a person does not constitute a close interaction.
 - Northwestern University Response: We will follow the exact CDC standard, but encourage all of you to be vigilant on social distancing in all departments, at all times.
- How long will I be quarantined from coming to the campus if I did come in contact with a colleague whose family members or themselves tested positive?
 - CDC Standard: If you determine you have had close contact, which is defined as being within 6 feet for more than 10 minutes, you begin counting your quarantine period from 48 hours prior to the student, employee or immediate family member becoming symptomatic. For example, if someone got sick on Wednesday this week, we would go back to Monday to track your contacts.
 - Northwestern University Response: We will follow the same quarantine guidelines. Ms. Amy Gibson (faculty and staff) or Dr. Ross Kosinski (students) will call and personally notify anyone who has been identified as a potential quarantine candidate.
- If I am quarantined, what should I do?

- CDC Standard: Stay home for 14 days, work from home if possible, take your temperature daily, call your primary care doctor if your temperature is 100.4 or higher.
- Midwestern University Response: Follow the CDC standards, utilize your time off benefits, work from home if possible and stay in frequent communication with your supervisor to provide us the status of your health condition.
- When can I return to work following my quarantine?
 - CDC Standard: You can return to work following a quarantine of 14 days as long as you have not had a fever or symptoms for 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
 - Midwestern University Response: We follow CDC standards; however discuss your health status with either Ms. Amy Gibson or Dr. Ross Kosinski prior to returning. They will advise you of a safe return date based on your work assignments and location on campus.
- Is Midwestern University going to test all faculty, staff and students on campus?
 - CDC Standard: Testing is only available through your personal health care provider, and only for individuals with symptoms. Exposure to well persons who have been in contact with a potential infected member does not qualify for testing.
 - Midwestern University Response: We follow CDC standards and advise everyone to contact your personal primary care provider to discuss your concerns and health questions.

Additional Midwestern University Plans

- We are asking all faculty, staff and students who come to campus to use their Identification Badges as they enter any building. This will assist us compiling an accurate list of everyone on campus, should we need contact you.
- Social and physical distancing is critical at this time. We are removing additional seats in the cafeteria to lessen the number of guests at a table.
- All Cafeteria, Bookstore, Construction and Cleaning Service personnel on campus are being asked to wear a mask or maximize social distancing at all times. In addition, many are asked to have their temperatures taken or respond to a wellness questionnaire prior to being on campus.
- All clinic faculty and staff are being asked to wear a mask throughout their shift. We have seen some very creative, stylish and practical masks, lined with filters and other materials to better protect you. We are asking everyone to not visit in small enclosed offices, try to meet online when possible, and maintain strict hygiene standards.
- If you are ill, please do not come to work and notify your supervisor.

While some of you are very fearful of coming in contact with colleagues who may be infected with COVID-19, others need to take greater precautions. It is my hope that we try to walk in each other's shoes, think about those around you, consider your family and friends, and work at achieving a better balance. We are in an extraordinary time, taking extraordinary measures. Not one size solution works for everyone – but for now we are taking extra cautionary measures on behalf of all of you.

Remember, we are in this together!

Be well.

Dr. G.