

Improving Trinity College's COVID-19 Communications

Schaeffer, Angela P. <angela.schaeffer@trincoll.edu>

Wed 2/3/2021 4:22 PM

To: Schaeffer, Angela P. <angela.schaeffer@trincoll.edu>

February 3, 2021

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

On behalf of the college's [COVID-19 Steering Committee](#), thank you for your continued support and your dedication to helping Trinity navigate the now-yearlong coronavirus pandemic. As we gear up for the start of in-person learning and the return of most of the student body to campus later this month, I write today to share details about some improvements the college is making to help keep everyone informed.

We're grateful to all who offered feedback and ideas for improving communications. That feedback, along with [lessons we learned through the fall semester](#), have led us to make a number of enhancements, which are described below. We welcome your thoughts on these, as well as any other ideas you have about communications related to the college's ongoing response to the pandemic.

1. [COVID-19 Dashboard](#)

- Beginning February 22, we will update the dashboard's number of active cases each business day (Monday through Friday) and whenever the campus alert level changes. This is an increased frequency from the fall, when we updated the numbers at least twice a week. The time of day of the updates will depend on the availability of test results from the lab, which releases results individually throughout the day, not in complete batches.
- At the top of the dashboard, you'll now see not only the current alert level, but also a short list of the corresponding operational details that are most important to you (about classes, dining, the status of campus activities, etc.).
- In addition to current numbers of active cases among students, employees, and affiliates, the numbers of students who are either in isolation or quarantine are now displayed prominently.
- We've added data showing conditions in Hartford and the state of Connecticut.
- Fuller detail about our testing program, including cumulative data on testing and testing results, is still available on the dashboard. We've added an indicator on the turnaround time for test results, given its importance in our ability to identify and isolate cases quickly. If test results are taking longer than about 36 hours to come in, you'll see that status indicated as *delayed*.

2. [Campus Alert Levels](#)

- We've made our system of color-coded alert levels more flexible to allow the college to respond with more precision to specific conditions. The modified approach sets a baseline of operations at the green alert level and outlines what additional steps could be taken at each progressive level. Whenever the alert level changes, we will inform the community and provide specific operational guidance via email.

- In addition to the now-standard color-coded alert levels (from green to red), we've created a status for key periods of transition: **Campus Transition Phase**. These periods, when large numbers of students are arriving or departing campus, are critical in managing community health and safety and must be managed specifically. From February 18 through February 28, the college will be in one such campus transition phase, during which we will provide specific guidance on operations and activities. **We will resume use of the color-coded alert levels on March 1.**
- We want to be clear about the criteria used to determine an alert level; there are many factors, not a single data point, and they are considered in relation to one another. We have listed those criteria [here](#).

3. Where to find COVID-related information

- On Campus: Key dashboard data is now displayed live on a digital screen in the COVID-19 testing center in Ferris Athletic Center.
- Online: The link to our [COVID-19 website](#), where we maintain a long list of FAQs, as well as numerous resources and a collection of community messages related to the pandemic, remains prominent on the college's homepage, under Important Now. In addition, we've added a link to the site ("COVID-19 Info") in the horizontal navigation bar at the top of the page, which persists on every page of the college's website.
- In Trinity Today: We've added a COVID-19 Advisory to the daily *Trinity Today* email, which will include the college's alert level status and specific guidance for the community.

We hope these changes will help keep you informed and give you the details you need to continue to make good decisions to stay healthy and safe. Please [let us know](#) how you think we can do better.

Sincerely,

Angela Paik Schaeffer
Vice President for Communications and Marketing
Trinity College
860-297-2139

Pronouns: She, her, hers



[Wear Your Face Covering](#)
[Maintain 6 ft. Distance](#)
[Wash Your Hands Often](#)