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To: [fulltimefaculty](#); [adjunctfaculty](#)
Subject: Provost's Notes: Week 5
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Good morning, Faculty –

Here we are moving on to Week 5. I hope you all had a chance to enjoy the beautiful weather this past weekend! Here are a few COVID-related updates to share:

NEW CDC GUIDELINES: Last week, the [CDC adjusted its testing guidelines](#) to state that those who have had close contact with a person who has tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 should be tested themselves, even if they are asymptomatic. Our case managers are still fleshing out exactly what OTC's process will be, but due to this adjusted guidance, you will likely see more students quarantined than in the past.

SPRINGFIELD CAMPUS TESTING: Dr. Higdon shared in his *Notes* over the weekend that OTC has been awarded funding from the Greene County CARES grant process to offer testing to asymptomatic students and employees in Greene County who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. More details on that program are coming this week.

NEW CASE MANAGERS: The college has hired several new part-time employees to help manage the workflow associated with student COVID cases. This will relieve some of the extra work for our employees who have been managing cases in addition to their regular, full-time jobs. We all owe this group a huge thank you. They have spent many hours every day, including late nights and weekends, for the last several weeks to assist us with providing the necessary support to our COVID-positive students. We're excited to have these new employees to help us keep OTC safe and healthy.

DOCUMENTATION FROM COVID-IMPACTED STUDENTS: If a student has been absent from your seated class due to quarantine, you will get documentation from the college when they are cleared to come back to class. An email will go to both you and the student. You must see one of these in order for the student to come back into a seated class section.

STUDENTS WHO WANT TO PARTICIPATE BY ZOOM BECAUSE...WELL, THEY JUST DO: Now that teaching via Zoom is becoming more ubiquitous, students are digging it – so much so that some of them have decided they want to attend via Zoom just as a convenience. Just to clarify: If you are currently teaching by Zoom and/or want to give that option to your students as a convenience to them, go for it; however, **you are under no obligation to conduct class via Zoom or remotely unless a student has tested positive or is under quarantine.**

REPORT STUDENTS WHO ARE QUARANTINING: If a student contacts you and says they have

been instructed to quarantine by the Health Department or a medical professional, please report those students via [the form located on the OTC Cares webpage](#). These students will need to be released by a case manager to return to class, just as a student who has tested positive.

ONLINE STUDENT REPORTS: Our case managers report that they are hearing from online instructors who are confused about why they are being notified when one of their students tests positive. Here's why: We want to support those students just as we do our students in seated classes. Most of the time, thankfully, our students who test positive continue to feel well enough to participate in their online classes. However, in the event that a student becomes too ill to participate, the communication you get from the case manager will alert you to the student's situation and help you adjust as appropriate.

I want to end with a thank you, but the list of things to thank you for is seemingly endless. You have stepped up and taken on the additional responsibility of reporting, you've adapted your teaching to accommodate for the inconvenience and fatigue of lecturing while wearing a mask, and you've been creative in helping students continue to learn while they are out of class. This is all very stressful, but the college supports you and wants to help you thrive this semester. I know some of you feel like you're failing, but you have handled this semester just as I expected you would: with dedication and resilience. That said, we all have our limits. Please make it a point to share any concerns you have with your chair/director and dean. They are available to you and want to help. And, as always, I am here to listen as well.

Have a great week!

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