



Community Update 12.3.21

Dean Of Students, Coe College <dos@coe.edu>

Fri, Dec 3, 2021 at 1:11 PM

Reply-To: dos@coe.edu

To: All Students <allstudents@coe.edu>

Dear Kohawks,

With the semester winding down, we are sending a final community update with updates and considerations for the start of next term. See below for important updates and information.

New format: check out the bolded headings below to see what sections contain updates vs. news vs. reminders.

New: Wrapping Up Fall Term

While campus community numbers of COVID remain low, our larger community in Linn County is seeing a surge in positive cases and hospitalizations. With finals approaching, we encourage everyone to be thoughtful about social connections to ensure we can finish the semester strong.

Over the holiday, news spread of a newly identified COVID variant, Omicron. There are many campus partners monitoring news, local conditions, and public health guidance. As the many unknowns begin to unfold, the COVID leadership committee and senior leadership team will continue to meet to review this emerging concern.

New: Return to Campus Planning

Resources in Health Services

In terms of preparation for next term, we will have two additional resources that will benefit the community.

- We are in final interviews for a Certified Medical Assistant. In addition to supporting physical health services on campus, this position will be conducting close contact, symptomatic, and surveillance testing on campus, in addition to joining the COVID response team.
- We are adding rapid antigen testing to the options available in Health Services, in addition to the PCR tests we already have available.

Testing

Coe will require testing for all unvaccinated community members at the start of the term on **Sunday, January 9th, from 1:00-3:00pm**, so please plan accordingly. More details will follow when it gets closer. We also have the ability to expand testing as needed, based on what we learn about the variant in the coming weeks.

Masking

Given the current positivity rate in Linn County, and the benchmarks identified below, we should plan to return to campus under the same masking protocols currently in place. However, the COVID leadership committee will resume meeting prior to the start of the semester and will continue to inform campus of updates as they become available.

Update: Campus Community and COVID-19

Our community experience with COVID-19 remains low, with 3 positive students and 4 total in quarantine or isolation. 1 faculty or staff member has tested positive and is safely in isolation.

Numbers of students in quarantine or isolation are updated twice per week on the [Coe website](#).

Community Benchmarks

As a reminder, below are the benchmarks the committee is monitoring:

- The **Coe community positive rate** continues to be under 1%.
- The Coe community has surpassed 80% **vaccination rate** in the student population and 90% for faculty and staff.
- The CDC continues to list **Linn County** as a high risk for transmission.
- **Hospital capacity** is listed as red (closed for transfers and limited capacity).

New: COVID Vaccine and Booster Registration:

We were happy to see so many of you at the booster and 3rd vaccine clinics over the last few weeks as well as those who began the process with a 1st dose! At this point everyone 18 years or older is encouraged to get the vaccine booster. If you didn't attend the recent vaccine clinic, please consider scheduling your own appointment prior to leaving campus or once you are home for winter break. To locate a vaccine near you, click [here](#). Additionally, please take a moment to [register](#) your card and update vaccine information if you haven't already.

Lastly, this will be a challenging flu season and the flu can mask COVID and compound the severity of illness. If you haven't already, please consider getting a flu shot over the break.

Good luck with the end of the term! We hope everyone has a safe and healthy winter break!

~ ~ ~

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