

To Pat Farrell and Nathan Urban,

This letter of inquiry was drafted by representatives of the Lehigh University Faculty Senate. We hope you are both doing well and in good spirits during these challenging times. As members of the Faculty Senate try to understand the rapidly evolving planning for the next semester and later, we have been documenting questions that we have heard from faculty across the university. In this time of uncertainty, providing a better understanding of how the reopening planning is proceeding would help alleviate many of the worries that faculty have expressed. Faculty Senate Chair Doug Mahony has tried to provide some preliminary answers to questions below, to the extent that he has been able. But we are hoping you can provide some illumination by officially answering each of the questions below and providing guidance on the discussions for issues where we do not yet have answers. The reopening process is bound to confront us with many challenges, and the fears among faculty and students with possible health risks are very real. Providing answers to these questions could help allay people's concerns and build trust in the reopening process.

- Lehigh University Faculty Senate

Updated 7/2/2020: Updated responses from the senate Chair/Vice-Chair are provided in red.

First, a reminder to check Lehigh's COVID-19 information page regularly for new information (<https://www2.lehigh.edu/news/updates-on-novel-coronavirus>).

Public Health Crisis:

COVID 19 is a public health crisis. We have only been informed of cleaning efforts and government guidelines that Lehigh is using for cleanliness and mask-wearing.

- When will COVID and/or antibody tests be available to the Lehigh Community?
 - Who will administer them?
 - Will they be available to anyone who wants one?
 - Will they be required to access certain locations or participate in certain activities? If so, how often will they have to be re-administered?
 - How will this be financed? Will any of the cost of administering the tests or running them in the lab be born by the people being tested? If so, how will that be handled by insurance?
 - How quickly will the turnaround time for results be? If it takes time, will there be restrictions on the person being tested from entering campus, or entering certain locations, or participating in certain activities until the results are known?

Testing results are beyond Lehigh's control. At present, it is taking up to five days for results to come back. It is possible that a testing times will change by the start of the semester. Persons suspected of COVID exposure will be asked to self-quarantine.

COVID-testing has been and will continue to be performed for symptomatic students through the Health and Wellness center. Full campus screenings for COVID-19 infections are not viewed as the best approach due to financial impacts of testing all members of campus and the need for regular testing to ensure a COVID-19 free community. Rather, the University will require all members of campus to be educated about how to be safe (i.e. via a training video on social distancing and the use of masks), reducing the size of gatherings, developing policies for increased work from home, and potentially shielding.

- If antibody tests are used to determine access rights for people, how will that be applied? Will people receive letters or badges attesting to positive antibody tests?

Lehigh cannot adopt policies or practices that require individuals to self-disclose personal medical information.

- If a student, staffer, faculty, or others on campus contract Covid-19, will all those who have come into contact with them be required to quarantine for two weeks?

If a person is suspected of being in contact with an infected person then they will be quarantined for 14 days or until negative test results are returned. Presently, there are plans in place to accommodate students during this period. But faculty and staff will be expected to self-quarantine if exposure is suspected.

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- If a staff member must quarantine themselves, will that time period be paid leave?

Human Resources is developing specific guidelines and instructions for unit heads pertaining to staff related questions. The question of “paid leave” for time spent in quarantine will depend upon where the person was exposed. If the exposure was work related then time spent in quarantine will fall under workers compensation.

Faculty and staff will have to use personal sick days, vacation days, or unpaid time off for quarantine periods that result from personal travel to locations that require a 14 day self-quarantine.

- How specifically does Lehigh plan on preventing student groups like greek organizations affiliated with the university from holding parties/events, which threaten to cause an outbreak, thereby endangering the health and lives of students, staff, faculty, and others?
 - More broadly, what advice, guidance, rules, or sanctions will the university employ to encourage proper behavior by students to prevent transmission?

We expect that all members of our community act in accordance with the CDC's guidelines and adhere to proper social distancing protocols and use of PPE. Concerns over student conduct, particularly off campus, remains a serious concern. The task force for reopening Lehigh has been working on a strategy to promote compliance including the development of a pledge or other compact for all to sign.

A significant component to ensuring safety on campus is for each of us to be aware of the protocols for acting in a safe manner. Here, we can draw upon our knowledge and best practices for promoting safe campus conduct through awareness campaigns, education, and training including intervention strategies.

- The mask policy in the university email was vague as to how firm the rule is and how it would be enforced. Is mask-wearing a university requirement or is it considered a personal responsibility aspect of the "four pillars?" If the university will not formally require it, are professors able to set it as a condition for in-person attendance, and what is the university's stance on any conflicts that would have with HIPAA, ADA and/or Title IX?

Masks and social distancing will be required on campus. Policies around enforcement are being considered and will be discussed further within the Task Force on Academic Planning and with faculty.

- What is the plan to clean classrooms between class sessions? What will be sanitized, how often will it happen, and how will cleaned classrooms be marked so that professors and students can enter with confidence that the class has been cleaned as promised?

The Deans of Arts and Sciences and of Engineering have been working closely with their faculty and with facilities to develop protocols for coming back safely. As I understand, several faculty have since returned to their labs.

Labor & Support:

- The plans outlined in the two emails sent by the president and the provost call for a hybrid approach to teaching in the fall. In order to prepare and implement this plan, the faculty will need to do extraordinary amounts of labor.
 - What is Lehigh's plan to assist with this extraordinary undertaking in addition to training?
 - How will Lehigh provide additional staff or faculty to perform this labor?
 - How will Lehigh provide the financial support for this labor?

On the question of uncompensated time: I will characterize the discussions that I and Kathy have been involved with as being one of profound understanding for the massive burden that is being placed on us all. The challenge of providing an educational experience of Lehigh's quality given the level of uncertainty is one that the academic planning taskforce is especially aware of.

There are a number of unanswered questions that preclude more specific guidance. One challenge is matching instructional spaces with courses identified

for substantial face-to-face instruction and keep within the social distance guidelines.

Regarding preparing our classes: We are being asked to prepare a blended course—one that utilizes synchronous and asynchronous instructional methods of engaging with our students. The degree of face-to-face instruction will vary across our curriculum with some courses being fully online, others will have a some with limited face-to-face instruction, and some courses will have a substantial face-to-face component. Decisions about individual courses will involve input from faculty, department chairs, and deans.

Given the potential for an outbreak to occur at Lehigh, it would be highly prudent for each faculty member to take the time now and develop a plan to teach their classes in a fully-online format should the need arise.

Regarding resources: this is just a reminder that the LTS page on planning to teach in the Fall (<https://lts.lehigh.edu/preparing-for-fall-2020>) includes useful resources and guidance for preparing for the Fall. This site will continue to be updated with other information and workshops to aid in course development.

- If and when faculty members contract Covid-19, what is the expectation for completing their classes? Will fellow faculty be expected to take over their work loads? What resources will the university provide to make that possible?

Response from Nathan Urban: Generally, departments will be responsible for ensuring that courses get taught to completion. If this involves extensive work by a faculty member not originally scheduled to teach that course, departments or colleges may choose to count this effort as fulfilling part of a faculty member's course load.

Financial Decisions:

- Will there be a description of why certain approaches are being taken to handle the current financial squeeze, as opposed to others? Other options could include taking out loans, raising tuition, closing departments, selling real estate, laying off personnel, tapping more of the endowment, and many others. There may be clear reasons why some such steps would not be viable, but it would be helpful to know about the range of options that were considered.

From the Senate meeting held on June 19, Pat Johnson reviewed a set of powerpoint slides that were created in May to anticipate the size of a shortfall in revenue and possible mitigation plans.

A document outlining the financial impact of COVID 19 is currently being updated. The administration expects to have a more accurate financial picture by mid-July and will share this data with the faculty senate at that time.

Childcare:

Many faculty and staff will need safe childcare solutions in the event that they need to teach or work remotely or because school districts will require children to be home part of the week.

- What are Lehigh's plans to provide these solutions?
- The childcare center currently doesn't have a part-time option at a reduced rate. It would help faculty who want to come on campus 1-2 days per week to have the option of a part-time option that is affordable, because otherwise faculty and staff parents might just opt to work and teach remotely so their kids can be at home. If the university wants a hybrid experience, the daycare policy is not conducive to encouraging that. It can't be stressed enough that Lehigh employees with kids are very worried about the unknowns of having their kids in school or daycare, be exposed to the virus, and bring it home to infect everyone else.

This is an issue for which many of us are acutely aware of and live each day. As I read and understand your question my recommendation is one of preparing to teach remotely as much as possible. More specific guidance is being developed and should be shared within the next week. This should help us all think about how best to approach the fall given our individual and collective circumstances.

There are a number of constraints that the school is working through: Classroom space and utilization given social distancing requirements, being able to provide meaningful in-person experiences for our first year students and seniors in capstone programs; the health concerns and needs of our students, faculty, and staff, and the ability for all students (regardless of whether they are in-person or fully remote) to be able to make satisfactory progress in their degree programs.

Practically speaking, these constraints will result in varying degrees of in-person experiences that range from fully remote to a few meetings scattered throughout the semester, to substantial in-person experiences. Where your particular course falls on that spectrum will be a mix of your needs, the priorities within the department and college, and available space. These conversations will begin in earnest at the beginning of July.

Response from Nathan Urban: I will look into the child care center policies and capacity.

Equity and Inclusion

- Are there provisions in place to ensure that vulnerable teaching personnel (i.e non-tenured faculty) who may be asked to teach face to face are able to choose to teach online without facing repercussions?

If you hear of any faculty member being pressured this way please let the Faculty Senate Chair know and Kathy will address it with the leadership team.

Jackie Krassas is developing policies around teaching from home for three categories of teaching personnel: those at high risk that are eligible for ADA accommodations; those that are not eligible for an ADA accommodation but none-the-less have a rationale for preferring to work from home (such as a high-risk family member or lack of daycare options); those that have significant anxiety about returning.

- Are there ongoing discussions with graduate student representatives to ensure that grad student concerns about the fall are being taken into account, including requirements for teaching, research, compensation, and insurance?

Response from Nathan Urban: Conversations with graduate students are ongoing. I am meeting with the graduate student senate next week and I anticipate that these issue will come up.