

Provost's Advisory Council
Thursday, October 8, 2020
8:30-10:00 a.m. - Zoom

In attendance:

Sharon Beckman (Chair)
Anthony Annunziato
Michelle Elias Bloomer
Joseph Carroll
Mary Ellen Carter
Thomas Chiles
Thomas Crea
Joseph Du Pont
Kristin Flower
Yonder Gillihan
Stacy Grooters

Christian Guma
Angela Harkins
Dewin Hernandez
Regine Jean-Charles
Gregory Kalscheur, S.J.
William Keane
Thomas Kohler
Adam Krueckeberg
Jonathan Laurence
Karen Lyons
John Mahoney

Gilda Morelli
Karen Muncaster
David Quigley
Tracy Regan
Romas Sada
Ronnie Sacka
Akua Sarr
David Seanlon

2. **COVID-19 Testing Protocol: Douglas Comeau and Welkin Johnson, Chairperson of the**

Billy Soo introduced Douglas Comeau, D. Johnson, Professor and Chair of the Biology Department, and his approach and experiences from the fall semester.

Doug began with an overview of the testing process. All faculty, staff, and students were tested. When approximately 18,000 tests were conducted, the approach shifted to targeted and individual departments and individuals was identified. 50% of that group is selected to be tested. High contact individuals are also included in the testing process.

day appointment to be seen and evaluated. Symptomatic students are removed from their dorm and await their results in the Cabaret Room in Vanderslice Hall. Staff begin contact tracing on symptomatic students immediately to allow any close contacts to be screened and tested. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health recommends close contacts be tested on days 4-6 after exposure. BC is also testing those individuals on days 0-1 to ensure they are not already positive. BC maintains quarantine facilities at Hotel Boston in Brighton and isolation space at Pine Manor College.

Following the cluster earlier in the semester, surveillance testing was increased, and all undergraduates were tested over a two-week period. Since then, 6,000-8,000 tests are being conducted weekly. The low number of positive cases indicates that the surveillance testing approach is working, and the right individuals are being targeted for testing. Contract tracing is done in consultation with the Community Tracing Collaborative, which is

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Doug added that if there are specific concerns or cases of contact and exposure that are not being correctly reported by the students, faculty should reach out to Billy Soo or to UHS via the COVIDtesting@bc.edu. Faculty who are symptomatic should work with their primary care physician to be tested.

A council member asked if there is a threshold of positivity for acceptability of meeting in person.

Doug answered that the positive rates are evaluated daily and week-to-week to look for escalating trends. There is the capacity to scale up testing as needed, as well as to quarantine and isolate students.

David added that there are a range of interventions that can be implemented as the situation evolves.

A council member asked if students who are quarantining or isolating at home are tested by BC upon their return to campus.

Doug responded that those students would be tested prior to leaving and upon their return.

A council member asked how faculty are being notified of students who are in quarantine or isolation.

Akua Sarr responded that student affairs is providing a list of students who are in quarantine or isolation with the date of notification. Faculty will receive a notification alerting them that the student(s) will be absent from class for at least 10-14 days. The notification will not specify if the student has tested positive or not. The absences should not preclude remote learning. She added that there have been no cases of students being infected in the classroom at this point.

Billy added that there have also been no cases of faculty being infected in the classroom.

A council member asked about how often high-touch graduate students are being tested and suggested that the communication strategy and transparency surrounding testing and the increased positivity could be improved.

Doug noted that a number of graduate students are in the high-touch group for regular testing and that at least 40% of that group is tested weekly. He added that the information provided on the dashboard aligns with how many schools are reporting their testing data.

David added that University Communications has been updating the community on a regular basis and will continue to do so. The focus on undergraduate test results reflects concern from a public health standpoint of that specific population due to close living conditions on campus.

