

Lancer community,

A few updates on some Covid-related fronts from across campus.

Commencement 2020

On Friday, the Class of 2020, whose May Commencement exercises had been postponed, was informed that the ceremony we had hoped to hold Oct. 9 and 10 has been canceled in light of our continuing responsibility to public health and continuing state and local restrictions on gatherings.

This is disappointing news for the Class of 2020, which has been through much upheaval at what should be a joyous time of celebrations and new beginnings, and which has deeply desired an occasion to celebrate this fall. The decision to cancel a gathering of the class in the traditional manner for graduation was not arrived at lightly. We do know some members of the class have had longstanding plans to be in Farmville over that weekend, and we let the class know that even though a gathering in the traditional manner is not possible, we will continue working with them to see if there is an appropriate way -- subject to public health conditions and in line with state and local guidance/restrictions -- for small groups of graduates and their families to mark the occasion that weekend.

Dashboard - Active Cases

We've gotten a few questions over the last couple days about the number of active cases reported on the [daily dashboard](#) in relation to the total positive tests reported in the previous 10-day period, and why they may be different. I hope this will help clarify.

- A student who tests positive must stay in isolation for at least 10 days after symptoms appear (or 10 days after the test date if asymptomatic). Students, faculty, and staff begin quarantine at the time they are given a test, but do not become an active case until a test is returned positive.
- Generally, tests are returned within 1-2 days, but occasionally longer. For instance, due to a statewide lab backlog over Labor Day weekend, several students had already been in quarantine 4 or 5 days before their results came back. Following CDC guidelines, those who tested positive only needed to isolate for an additional 5 or 6 days, so they were only registered as active cases for that time. This is not typical as long as tests are returned in the 24-48 hours, as we've been seeing recently and for most of the

semester.

- The University Health Center is in daily contact with students in isolation in Arc, and is involved in the process of clearing all students in isolation to return. Again, no student is cleared from the list of active cases until, per CDC guidelines, they have been in isolation at least 10 days since the onset of any symptoms and fever-free for 24 hours. Students who have tested positive and are asymptomatic are cleared after 10 days from a positive test.

Dashboard - Employee Self-Report

Regarding the dashboard, you may notice the latest update includes an additional employee positive test that we've become aware of. The test was reported to a supervisor on Aug. 10, before the current Covid-19 Temporary Workplace Policy was in place and the Human Resources reporting system established. We're adding this backdated positive test for the sake of transparency and maintaining an accurate record. This brings the total number of employee positive tests to 2, but it remains the case that we are currently unaware of any active cases among faculty and staff.