

University of Providence, Spring 2021 General Testing Protocol

The current approach with testing COVID-19 focuses on the confirmation of cases among those already showing symptoms. This represents the tip of the iceberg as recent estimates show 15-45% of all SARS CoV-2 infections are asymptomatic. (Mizumoto et al., 2020, Nishiura et al., 2020, Oran and Topol, 2020). Also, there is mounting evidence to suggest that pre-symptomatic individuals have high viral loads and are responsible for a large proportion of transmission. (Kimball et al., 2020, Li et al., 2020, Oran and Topol, 2020). Those who are infected do not typically show symptoms until day 5, so if testing happens before symptoms appear and we get a quick result, we might be able to isolate individuals before they infect too many people. To cut off the chain of transmission, we have to move faster than the virus.

Baseline testing of staff, faculty, and students is critical to understanding how the virus may exist in our facilities especially among those without symptoms. This understanding will allow for informed decisions to be made and appropriate steps to be taken for containment.

The University will establish baseline testing, where all residential students and all of those who have direct and routine interaction with students, be tested within 24-hours of arrival to the University campus, or prior to the start of spring 2021 classes. Upon return to the physical campus location, students will be tested upon their arrival to campus (within 24-hours). After baseline testing is established, testing for the purpose of mitigation will include up to 100 random tests per month (random selection of faculty, staff and students). Testing, in terms of numbers, is as such:

- 100 tests early December (early return student-athletes)
- 300 tests early January (all students: commuter and residential)
- 75 Those who have greatest contact (by definition) with the largest population (students)
 - Faculty, athletics, food services, residential life, facilities, security
- Up to 100 randomized tests each month (faculty, staff and students)

*This protocol is separate from protocol required specifically for the purpose of participation in athletic-related events. Development of testing protocol for the specific needs of the Cascade Collegiate Conference, Frontier Conference, and other governing athletic bodies, will be identified at a later date.

References

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