

To: President's Cabinet
From: Denise M. Trauth
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting
November 16, 2020

Board of Regents' Review (#500)

Mr. Algoe, Dr. Bourgeois, guests Mr. Noel Fuller, Staff Council Chair; Dr. Lynn Ledbetter, Faculty Senate Vice Chair; Mr. Catching Valentinis-Dee, Student Government President; and Mr. Jayme Blaschke reviewed the November 2020 agenda items.

Board of Regents News Release (#626)

Dr. Breier and guest Mr. Jayme Blaschke reviewed possible topics for inclusion in a news release about the November 2020 Board of Regents meeting. Mr. Blaschke will highlight the Regent's Professors as well as the interlocal agreement between Texas State and the City of San Marcos concerning the Edwards Aquifer Authority Habitat Conservation Plan Program. The press release for the new Infrastructure Research Laboratory Building will be disseminated when construction commences.

Impact of COVID-19 (#770)

Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States is in the early stages of a new surge. In Texas, week-to-week comparisons (week of November 2, 2020, versus week of November 9, 2020) revealed an increase in cases per day from about 6,800 to more than 7,800 cases and in the positivity rate from 11.3 to 12.4 percent. Likewise, in Williamson county, new cases increased from 37 to 62 cases per day, and the positivity rate increased from 3.5 to five percent. In Hays county, public data reveal new cases increased from 28.4 to 42.7 cases per day; the current positivity rate is 7.3 percent.

As of November 13, 2020, there are 146 active cases at Texas State. The number of students housed in isolation is 13 and in quarantine is 13.

During the week of November 9, 2020, 1,598 tests were conducted on the San Marcos Campus, with 66 returning positive (4.1 positivity rate, which increased from 3.6 percent the previous week). Dr. Lloyd requested that weekly isolation and quarantine numbers be added to the Dashboard.

Dr. Carranco provided a COVID-19 update for other universities. During the week of November 9, 2020, at The University of Texas at Austin, 4,624 tests were conducted with 49 returning positive for a positivity rate of 1.1 percent. At Texas A&M University, 5,640 tests were conducted with 443 returning positive for a positivity rate of 7.9 percent. At Sam Houston State University, 828 tests were conducted with 107 returning positive for a positivity rate of 12.9 percent.

Contact tracing has yet to identify evidence of transmission in classrooms, residence halls, or offices.

Dr. Carranco announced that he is preparing another update to the university community. The update will focus on preparing for the upcoming holiday break -- getting tested prior to the holidays and upon returning to one of the campuses and returning home and celebrating the holidays safely with family and friends.

Dr. Carranco provided an update from the Health, Safety, and Wellness Work Group, which is in the final stages of drafting recommendations to bolster current health and safety measures. The Work Group will recommend: 1) adding "report to Bobcat Trace" and "get tested" to Texas State's Health & Safety Measures; 2) developing new communication strategies to combat "COVID-19" fatigue; 3) launching an education campaign in the residence halls promoting testing and compliance to Texas State's Health & Safety Measures; and 4) continuing random proactive testing into the semester. Dr. Carranco will be meeting with Curative, Inc., officials on November 16, 2020, to learn more about their contract with the State of Texas and how long they are scheduled to be on Texas State campuses.

Dr. Carranco provided an update on the development of COVID-19 vaccines. Currently, two vaccines have been shown to be highly effective. The Pfizer vaccine will require ultra-cold storage, while the Moderna vaccine will require a freezer. Those who have proper storage capabilities will likely be one of the first to receive the vaccine. Dr. Carranco is expecting the vaccines to be available to first responders in December 2020, and to institutions of higher education in February 2021 or March 2021.

Dr. Carranco led a discussion on in-person commencement ceremonies for fall 2020. At the Cabinet meeting on November 17, 2020, President's Cabinet will continue the discussion as to whether to hold in-person ceremonies.

President's Update (#556)

Item was not discussed.

Significant Issues (#01)

Item was not discussed.

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Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on November 20, 2020.