



1/14/22

Dear BUA students and families,

Earlier this week, I walked down to our gym right before lunchtime. We recently created some new lunch protocols, knowing from the research that mealtimes pose a higher risk of transmission: we are asking students to spread out at 20 long tables spaced across the gym. The trick is that we need to set up and strike those tables daily. For the first few days after break, a group of my colleagues went to the gym before lunch and enlisted student volunteers to help with the setup. When I went to the gym before lunch on Tuesday, all the tables and chairs were already in place. I asked two students about it; they told me they had some extra time so they had come to the gym early to do the work themselves, and that several of their classmates had joined in.

We are just finishing our second week of in-person classes. In one of the more challenging chapters of the past twenty-two months, we are able to maintain in-person learning because of these kids' remarkable resilience and their insistence on doing their part to keep us together. That's why I have so much confidence that we will ride this out safely and joyfully.

### **Some Promising Signs**

As you may know, COVID in wastewater is considered a leading indicator. The recent **wastewater [data](#) is promising**; we may see the end of this wave in the coming weeks.

### **Required Testing Tuesday (1/18)**

Following the long MLK Day weekend, all students are **required to test on Tuesday, January 18**. We encourage students to schedule their tests as soon as possible, as testing slots will begin to fill up as BU students return to campus. Any student who does not get tested on Tuesday, January 18 will not be permitted to attend BUA classes on Wednesday, January 19.

### **Returning Seniors**

**Seniors who have not been on campus and in the regular testing cadence since the break must take a test at BU on Tuesday** as well in order to return on Thursday with a negative test in hand.

### **Long Weekend Request**

We know and appreciate that our families are exercising special caution during this wave, limiting indoor interactions with people outside the household. As an additional precaution, we

**encourage, but will not require, students to come to campus for a PCR test over the weekend** for an extra layer of assurance.

### **BU Undergraduates Returning**

**BU classes begin again on Thursday, January 20.** The University has put a number of important protocols in place to identify and isolate positive cases. Nevertheless, we suggest that our students take extra care during these next several weeks.

### **The George Sherman Union (GSU)**

A reminder that **9th and 10th graders may not stay at the GSU to eat** after picking up their lunches there; instead, they should come back to the BU gym or, weather permitting, eat outside.

### **Continuing Twice-Weekly Testing**

Going forward, we will continue the twice-weekly testing requirement. Students who do not **test Monday or Tuesday** will not be permitted to attend in-person classes on Wednesday; students who do not **test Thursday or Friday** will not be permitted to attend classes on Monday, unless they have received a negative result from a weekend test.

### **Recent Positive Tests Results**

Since I last wrote on 1/7, we learned of four students who tested positive through BU testing on 1/6 and four more students (and one staff member) who tested positive over the course of this week – one per day. That slower pace indicates that we have passed the “intake” phase after break, but that we are also very much still experiencing a regional surge. We have followed our typical protocols in all cases, including notification of close contacts and isolation of all community members who tested positive. We will continue weekly updates on positive cases and other changes for the time being.

### **Negative PCR Required before Close Contact Return**

We are making a small update to our close contact rules. Fully vaccinated close contacts are exempt from the quarantine requirement, but we will now **require that close contacts have a negative PCR test result before returning to class** – previously we had accepted either an antigen or PCR test – and then take tests at BU for eight consecutive days upon returning (excluding weekends), after which they can return to their regular testing schedule. We have made this change in consultation with our medical advisors.

### **Booster Requirement**

A reminder that BUA requires all eligible students to receive a booster and **upload evidence of that booster by February 4 or as soon after that as eligibility allows**. For instructions on how to upload proof of a booster, please see the relevant section on the [BUA COVID Protocols](#)

page. As we do for other required vaccinations, we will accommodate medical and religious exemptions to this policy.

### **Some Good Fun**

We are continuing plans for all manner of community bonding and fun, even amidst this surge. Please keep an eye out for notices about the community skate, winter play, rock climbing, stargazing, semi-formal dance, ski trip, and other events.

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If you have any questions, please reach out to us at [academy@bu.edu](mailto:academy@bu.edu). You can find more details about BUA COVID protocols on this [page](#). Thank you for your continued support, partnership, and trust.

Warmly,

Chris Kolovos