

Good morning, all, and happy Friday.

We want to be transparent regarding the state of Covid-19 at South Texas. While all of us are tired of having to take precautions, the virus remains a significant threat, and vigilance is key. The more we know about the presence of Covid-19 in our community, the more we can be prepared and react appropriately.

To that end, each week we will report on the number of cases on campus and in our community. We will not provide identifying information, but only aggregate data. That way all of us will know exactly where we stand.

In the past week, we received notice of two positive cases of Covid-19, both in students:

-- One student has not been on campus since spring.

For this student, we followed our protocol for individuals who report a case of Covid-19 off campus: We reached out to the student to obtain details of potential contacts with other members of our community, as well as to offer assistance. The student now is quarantining.

-- One student had been on campus in the days before the student developed symptoms and returned a positive Covid-19 test, which we learned about over the weekend.

For this student, we followed our protocol for individuals who report a case of Covid-19 on campus. First, we reached out to the student to obtain details of potential contacts with other members of our community, as well as to offer assistance. Second, we reviewed the ReturnSafe app proximity data and determined that the student was not in proximity to another member of our community to create a significant risk of transmission on campus to any other member of our community. And, we confirmed the data from the ReturnSafe app with the student. The student now is quarantining.

CDC guidance and Dr. Patel, our Covid-19 expert, tell us that significant risk is created when two individuals (1) who are not wearing masks (2) within six feet of each other (3) indoors (4) for fifteen minutes or more. By continuing to wear facial coverings at all times and maintaining a safe distance apart, all of us can reduce the spread of Covid-19.

We also verified our protocols and our handling of these two cases with Dr. Patel. He had this to say:

"I think this may be a good opportunity to remind everyone that STCL is leading the academic community on infection control best practices and that the system worked in these two cases because of BOTH design and compliance by the student body and the community."

Indeed, it is through our collective efforts that we are keeping our community safe. Please continue to be vigilant. Please continue wearing facial coverings and adhering to safe distancing practices. And please continue demonstrating your concern for our community.

Please reach out to health@stcl.edu with any questions.

We all are in this together. Thank you for helping keep all of us free of Covid-19.

Watch for the next update next Friday.

All the best, and be safe!

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