



UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

October 20, 2020

Dear Students, Parents, and Loved Ones of our Fall 2020 Rome Class,

I am writing you with a piece of breaking and at the same time welcome news. Yesterday's report of an extremely severe outbreak of COVID-19 on the Rome campus was vastly overstated. In a correction to their report of yesterday, the local health authority admitted a significant clerical error in identifying the number of positive cases on campus.

To quote the director of this authority, in a communication that reached me at 5:30pm this afternoon: "*Non ho parole per scusarmi dell'errore imperdonabile commesso ieri dal laboratorio,*" translated as "There are no words to excuse the unforgiveable error committed yesterday by our laboratory."

In point of fact, that laboratory mistook positive for negative results and vice versa. The actual corrected statistics of the incidence of COVID-19 on campus based on recent molecular testing are therefore as follows:

COVID-19 Negative Individuals

- Students: 52/78 (66%)
- Staff: 7/10 (70%)

COVID-19 Positive Individuals

- Students: 26/78 (33%)
- UD Staff: 3/10 (30%)

The health of all the above individuals is stable and good. Three students who tested positive early last week are fully recovered with mild, receding symptoms, no fever, and high oxygen levels. The twenty-three students who tested positive early this week are to the best of my knowledge asymptomatic, while daily measurements of their temperatures and oxygen levels in recent days has demonstrated that they are free of fever and have high oxygen levels. As for staff, two of the three staff who have tested positive are asymptomatic, while a third is recovering with mild symptoms.

We are of course relieved and reassured that the number of positive cases is some 40% lower within our community than reported yesterday. We are also grateful that a vast majority of our campus residence are either in excellent health—whether positive or not—or subject to very mild COVID-19 symptoms. Still, we continue to be concerned about the current incidence of COVID-19 within our community, need to be vigilant going forward, and we must work harder than we have been to avoid any future, serious outbreak.

As of the writing of this letter, I am in contact with the local health authority to understand the implications of these corrected figures for student and staff mobility in the coming days. Despite their egregious if uncharacteristic miscarriage of duty in recent days, we still need to seek guidance from them in this regard and other respects, including the prospect of follow-up testing, for it is their legal responsibility to protect all citizens and visitors within their jurisdiction. More on this and related issues when that information becomes available.

For your questions and concerns, please do not hesitate to write either me at phatlie@udallas.edu or Mrs. Davies at bdavies@udallas.edu.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Hatlie".

Peter Hatlie, Dean, Director, VP, Prof. of Classics