

**From:** [Summers, Greg](#)  
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Colleagues,

I'll begin my update this week where I left off last Friday, with a reminder to be kind and flexible in your interactions with students and colleagues. Last night, I had the chance to hear feedback and field questions from members of the Student Government Association. I'm happy to report that students were complimentary of their experience thus far in their classes, noting that instructors have generally gone out of their way to extend deadlines, provide alternative assignments, and help students navigate the challenges of learning during a pandemic. Your understanding, empathy, and flexibility are appreciated.

We've had 71 new cases of the virus thus far this week, meaning that by Saturday, our weekly total will likely have increased from last week, but not exploded—which is good news. Statewide and local trends remain concerning. The Midwest generally is experiencing a surge in the number of positive cases, and Wisconsin is part of this trend. Portage County has been active, and local health officials are struggling to keep pace with the volume of contact tracing they are facing, leading to delays in following up with our main-campus cases. The university is working to assist the county in staffing available positions to help with this work. With most of our student cases still coming from those living off-campus, our on-campus isolation and quarantine capacity remains sufficient.

It's been some time since I've offered a budget update, which is true mainly because there is little new to report. We're still working to complete our efforts to manage the one-time "lapse" in funding that the state and university requested for this fiscal year. In the coming weeks, we'll begin thinking about the upcoming biennial budget process, so I'll have more to share in future updates about the parameters and process for this planning. This week, I learned that Interim System President Thompson has schedule a one-day "retreat" on October 23, to include the chancellors and provosts from across the UW. We've been told that the retreat will focus on the future of the UW System, but beyond this general description, I don't yet know the agenda for the day's discussions. I'll keep you posted as I learn more.

One final health-related reminder: the university will host several flu-shot clinics to help facilitate widespread vaccinations this winter. You can sign up at [this link](#).

Although the news these days is filled with too many surreal stories of raging wildfires, pestilence, and [birds literally falling dead from the skies](#), our local weather promises a nearly perfect autumn weekend. I hope that you all take some time to enjoy it.

Greg

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