January 28, 2022

Highlights:

- Summary of Public Health Advisory and AY21-22 Steering Committee recommendations
- Operating status unchanged with no significant adjustments to operations
- COVID-19 data
- The week ahead

Dear Lumberjacks,

Today’s COVID-19 Community Briefing shows a very slight decline in positive cases among our NAU and Flagstaff populations, reflecting a similar slight decline in COVID numbers throughout the state.

This is certainly a cause for hope that we may be at or near the peak of the Omicron wave. However, we must temper that hope with the need to remain vigilant. I know that the fatigue of the pandemic, which is nearing two years as a part of our everyday lives, is a challenge. I also know that through our efforts together there is so much to look forward to in the spring semester, which makes our vigilance today essential as we prioritize maintaining a vibrant academic environment that promotes success and health within our broader community.

So, I urge all of us to continue the great work we have done thus far in working to slow the spread and to look forward with optimism to all that we will accomplish together in the months ahead.

Summary of Public Health Advisory and AY21-22 Steering Committee recommendations

- NAU’s Public Health Advisory Committee met on Wednesday to review NAU’s latest COVID-19 data and operational updates; the represented groups also shared specialized information from their fields. Points of emphasis included continuing the mitigation measures currently in place to manage during the week ahead, along with consistent, strong communication regarding best practices around vaccination and boosters, mask wearing, and how to manage potential exposures.
- NAU’s AY21-22 Steering Committee met on Thursday to review the information from the Public Health Advisory Committee and consider several operational matters, including the continuance of mitigation strategies in place for the next week.
After careful consideration of the recommendations of the Public Health Advisory and AY21-22 Steering Committees, as we ready for the week ahead, NAU will:

- Continue to deliver instruction and support services in their originally designated modalities (in-person, hybrid, remote) to sustain student academic momentum.
- Continue to provide accommodations for individuals who need to quarantine or isolate due to testing positive or being exposed to COVID-19 or experiencing other COVID-19 related circumstances.
- Continue the enhanced mitigation efforts enacted January 14 for settings outside of the classroom environment to slow the spread of the Omicron variant. These include limiting any food outside of campus dining to grab-and-go only, encouraging virtual options for non-classroom activities, such as meetings and events, additional masking requirements, and delaying the start of intramural sports and other specific campus recreation activities.

The measures above will continue to be evaluated and updated weekly based on the latest information.

Operating status unchanged with no significant adjustments to operations

NAU’s operating status for the week of January 31 will remain unchanged—with primarily in-person instruction and support services on the Flagstaff Mountain Campus and at Statewide sites with in-person modalities, and full residential capacity on the Flagstaff Mountain Campus.

Ongoing mitigation measures

- **Important general guidance and new information:**
  - If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and cannot get tested immediately, please stay home and work with your instructor or supervisor on accommodations.
  - Strongly consider getting vaccinated and/or boosted (see the Vaccination section below for more information).
  - N95 masks from the federal government are being distributed in Coconino County. Please fill out the form on the North Country Healthcare website to request an N95 mask.

- **Masks:**
  - Masks are required on NAU campuses in all classrooms and academic buildings and other locations where physical distancing is not possible, and strongly encouraged for outdoor events and gatherings.
  - The CDC provides resources about types of masks and their benefits, as well as how to wear and care for your mask.
  - Disposable masks as well as a limited supply of N95 and KN95 respirator masks are available to employees and departments on request through Campus Supply; contact 928-523-6414 or NAU-CampusSupply@nau.edu.

- **Vaccination:**
  - NAU strongly encourages all individuals in our community to get vaccinated and receive a booster shot if they are eligible. Vaccines are a proven and effective means of reducing the risk of
infection and lowering the risk of adverse health effects. More information about vaccines and their benefits can be found on the CDC website. Visit the following links for information on where you can be vaccinated:

- NAU Fieldhouse and Campus Health Services
- Coconino County
- Arizona Department of Health Services

• Testing:
  - NAU strongly encourages individuals randomly selected for mitigation testing or who have been exposed to COVID-19 to be tested at any of the sites identified through the following links:
    - NAU Fieldhouse and Campus Health Services
    - Coconino County
    - Arizona Department of Health Services
  - As shared last week, the federal government is shipping free at-home COVID-19 tests. Visit COVIDTests.gov for more information and to order.

• Managing exposure:
  - The CDC recommends different routes to manage exposure depending on your vaccination status. We strongly encourage individuals to review the latest recommendations on what to do if you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

COVID-19 data

The following data informed the approach described above.

• COVID-19 cases: The number of Arizonans testing positive for COVID-19 continues to be high, but there has been a slight decline over the past few days. Coconino County’s most recent weekly report shows high transmission.

• Isolation and quarantine: As of today, NAU is managing 507 COVID-19 cases among students on- and off-campus on the Flagstaff Mountain Campus, representing 2.7% of the total Flagstaff Mountain Campus student enrollment. This number is down from last week.

• Testing results at the Flagstaff Mountain Campus: For the week ending January 22, testing at the Fieldhouse, Campus Health Services, and self-reported COVID positives yielded the following results:
  - 3,671 tests—down from the previous week’s total of 5,111
    - 2,456 tests by NAU students, faculty, and staff
    - 3,671 tests by non-NAU community members
  - 941 positives (25.6%)—down from the previous week’s total of 1,316
    - 627 positives (25.5%) among NAU students, faculty, and staff
    - 314 positives (25.8%) among non-NAU community members

• Ongoing mitigation testing: Today, 2,500 members of the NAU community were called for mitigation testing to be completed next week.

The week ahead

We plan to share a similar briefing next Friday, following the same process of review and advisement by our Public Health and AY21-22 Steering Committees. If emergent conditions require a more rapid update, we will notify our NAU
community accordingly.

Sincerely,

José Luis Cruz Rivera
President

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