Provost Anderson-Levy and Paul Overvoorde on COVID Concerns/Precautions

Hope all of you had a good day and week has been going well
Paul and I will both answer questions as best as we can

Overvoorde

Uses he/him pronouns
Also on student government in college and was student body president
Variant in Europe
Given current understanding of COVID, which procedures will change in the spring?

- Hard to know what the future will hold
- B2 seems to behave like parental strain
- Ways that body responds seems to be well prepared
- Not creating as much chaos as omicron
- Data from MN shows dramatic decreases in case rates/test positivity
- How this will impact community is a question mark
- We’ve been adhering to swiss cheese approach
  - Each layer with holes piled up
  - Multiple layers help prevent things
- Having vaccinations is foundational
- Mask requirement and other preventative measures like testing
- Hard to know what will change
- Case rates will impact that

Indoor dining question
- Dining at outset of semester was question about people returning to campus
- To-go options made recognizing people would use it
- Challenges of spring is rolling arrival of people
- Public health measures of vaccines and natural de-densifying of cafe mac is how process is unfolding

Pre-distributing rapid antigen testing
- Would love to be able to do this but it is expensive
- LC tests are provided by the state
- Expectation that tests are supervised and results are reported
- Can we distribute and do over zoom? → no has to be in person

Covid restrictions impact on wellbeing, what steps are being taken for mental health?

It matters to think about mental health beyond individual
Way to go get to that is to think about stress levels over course of semester/class
- What this looks like varies by class
Different classes have different goals/learning outcomes

New DOS working with Hamre center to figure out how to make more appointments available and increase access for students
  - Ongoing challenge includes that people being affected by COVID impact broader services that are offered
  - Working with health insurance provider for more counselors covered by mac insurance

Overvoorde
  - Other questions?

Shreya
  - Email in macdaily that masks need to be purchased this week for subsidized mask, what is financial motive

Overvoorde
  - Suggestion from MCSG
  - Worked with mailing services to organize
  - Financial motive is to make masks available so people don’t have to do sourcing
  - Pricing varies but essentially at cost and subsidized at 50 cents a piece for N-95

Shreya
  - If you have a follow up, message me
  - Why subsidized instead of all free?

Overvoorde
  - Notion was requiring masks was a part of everyday living so limits to what college can provide

Shreya
  - Many schools that cost half as much as Mac have free PCR tests, why don’t we have that availability?

Overvoorde
  - What’s embedded is the size of campus and endowments
  - East coast schools with access to institutes means costs of tests are more reasonable
  - We do have free testing in the state of MN
  - Make use of doordash tests and have one on hand in case you need it
  - Federal availability for rapid antigen tests
  - Testing is available on campus (antigen and Hamre center)
  - Testing sites in twin cities
  - Reason for no surveillance testing is that it was very important in early days of pandemic but as we’ve moved through and the prevalence on campus is pretty low, effectiveness of testing goes down

Shreya
  - Do we have an initial idea of spring break? Travel/quiet period/etc? Will cafe mac be open to students over break?
Overvoorde
- Glass half full kind of person
- Actively talking about these questions with the covid task force
- Discouraging travel → in a very different place now
- Having vaccinated community is a big benefit
- If case counts remain high in US, it would make sense to look at testing for return to campus
- Monitoring community spread and making decision on what ends up happening
- Cafe mac may be open

Shreya
- Pre-pandemic years cafe mac/grill closed during spring break
- Is it reverting back to that?

Provost
- Doesn’t know answer to that

Andy
- Dining advisory committee meeting on thursday
- Will get that info

Bobbie
- Thank you for coming
- Understand limits to surveillance testing
- How do we know reported testing is accurate with asymptomatic cases?

Overvoorde
- Haven’t seen continued rate of positive tests showing up
- Asymptomatic are much less likely
- Students are paying attention
- Substantial number of students who have had covid in past 90 days

Joel
- Appreciated answer for rapid tests question
- Trying to follow dashboard
- Old data no longer there
- Could it be returned to dashboard?

Overvoorde
- Absolutely
- Lots of questions about utility of dashboards
- Easily addressable question
- Try to make questions into FAQs on COVID website
- Challenge to manage expectations and evolution of pandemic on individual level
- Challenging time and covid team is fielding a lot of emails
- Trying to promote keeping each other safe and not promoting false sense of security
Settling In and Check-in Breakout Rooms

Break

SOC Code
Katie
  ● Proposed SOC code
  ● All SOC docs were housed on OSLE website
  ● Decided to move it to be MCSG documents
  ● Proposing clarification of rules but no major edits
  ● Excited to make this an MCSG documents
  ● Will take 3 min to run through code and take next week to think and vote then
  ● Explicitly included non-discrimination clause
  ● Org edits can be made to SOC unless they are major, then sent back to LB
  ● Made definitions for what active/probational/frozen mean
  ● Questions?

Charlie
  ● Could you highlight edits/changes?

Katie
  ● Yes
  ● SOC job is not question purpose of org existing
  ● If you have questions/edits email personal email or slack dm

Publicity Workshop
Ayana
  ● Being a senior, realizing things she knows that people don’t
  ● Advertising elections a bit earlier than we have been
  ● Poster run
    ○ 55 posters go into residential/academic buildings that u drop off on second floor of cc at Res Life/OSLE front desk
    ○ Deadline is Tuesday afternoon
  ● You can’t spend money on election things
  ● Our printers print in color at mac without spending any money

Andy
  ● Go out 5pm on tuesday
  ● There are mailboxes across MCSG office door
  ● Put them in the slot
  ● There are mailboxes for academic/residential buildings
  ● Can be dropped off anytime
• if you want to drop something off on an wednesday, you could always go around and do it yourself
• Mac EMS → great way to reserve publicity spots (sandwhich boards, table tents)
• Good thing to bring up at candidate’s meetings
Katie
• Also how you reserve rooms
• Must have an org sponsored event to reserve
  ○ Put someone’s name in
Andy
• Policy has been same for reservations for 10 years
Ayana
• Go to create a reservation and then publicity request
• Will give you time info just go to let me search for a room
• If you have questions, ask or email

Spring Retreat Conversation
Shreya
• Checking in with groups about takeaways from the retreat
Charlie
• A lot of conversation about how we can communicate between different committees
• Tension with how AAC is designed
Micah
• Accessibility to committees
Katie
• Committees operate on different timelines
Shreya
• Talk to committees

Committee Updates
Joel
• AAC
• Recent progress = sending out forms for GSAT subsidizes
• Organizing alumni fair
• Continuing to work on textbook reserve
Kit
• SSRC
• Trying to get students to utilize it
• Testimonials about those who have used it
• Trying to talk to Hamre center about mental health resources
Eva
- FAC
- Approved allocation request
- Chat with DML about FAC can be more conscious and culturally sensitive

Eric
- SOC
- Election code
- Working on formal check in process

Shreya
- Elections are happening
- Ballots go out Feb 10th and close the 13th
- Vote and make friends vote

Ayana
- Juniors and seniors have lower voter turnout
  - Let’s make more people vote
- At candidate’s debate there were zoom bombers
  - Let’s not put links on social media platforms
  - Check in with ITS to have security measures