

# Greenville University Is Positive About Its Positives

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**GREENVILLE** - While Greenville University does have positive COVID-19 cases and an increase in cases since the start of the semester, the University is still confident that GU is one of the safest places to be right now.

GU tests everyone on campus—students, faculty, and staff—not just those who exhibit symptoms, and not just athletes. Everyone tests at least once a week. GU moves to twice a week testing when there are more cases in the county or when students return to campus from a break, such as Thanksgiving or Christmas break. Athletic teams are

required to test even more frequently based on NCAA protocols for competition. Testing this way catches ALL positives, including the variant strains. Frequent testing on campus provides more positives in an age category that is largely asymptomatic.

“In college-age students, more than 10% of cases never report symptoms, and most have no symptoms for the first few days of infectiousness,” says Rebecca Smith, associate professor of epidemiology at the University of Illinois. “Without this testing, spread can happen rapidly.”

Greenville University is able to offer testing thanks to a partnership with U of I. Also, due to that partnership and the research underway on the campus in Urbana-Champaign, GU has the capability to test for variant strains of COVID-19.

## **Us vs. Them**

While other institutions are testing only those who exhibit symptoms, or athletes who are competing this spring, GU’s frequent testing of everyone on campus catches asymptomatic cases and helps to control the spread early.

What that comparison looks like: An institution that only tests those with symptoms will not know that someone has been possibly spreading COVID-19 until (or if) that person notifies someone else they have symptoms, a test comes back positive, and then they isolate.

At GU, on a weekly basis, when results come back less than a day later showing a student has tested positive, that student goes into isolation and contact tracing phone calls happen quickly.

Quarantining takes place on campus in a designated dorm for students who have been contact traced and those students are in a separate building from those who need to isolate due to testing positive. Students in quarantine and isolation get their meals delivered to them and are cared for by their RAs and coaches.

## **Spike in cases**

When GU has a spike (defined by 20 or more cases in a week), there is never a mystery as to why. An increase in cases can typically be traced back to students returning to campus from visits home, increased athletic team practices in preparation for their season, or gatherings related to events like the Super Bowl.

When spikes in cases occur, faculty, staff, and students comply with increased testing, which helps to control the spread and reduce cases.

## **What students say**

Sam Siefken, a senior pre-med student at GU, says regularly testing makes her feel safe on campus:

“I know the people I’m around are regularly being tested. I know I’m regularly being tested. And it just gives us a lot more freedom to have a more normal life and to live alongside one another in a way that brings us peace.”

Emily Koberlein, a senior majoring in Early Childhood and Elementary Education, says testing and safety measures have become a part of normal routine on campus:

“I’ve only been quarantined once, but the staff and the professors and everybody is so understanding and they’re willing to work with you no matter what the situation may be. Even if you’re just maybe uncomfortable to go to class one day. They totally understand and they’ve been more than willing to work with you and yeah, it’s been great.”