

# The Spectrum

## SHU Mandatory Weekly Testing

*by Citlalli Godinez | Posted on February 17, 2021*

On Dec. 15, the Coronavirus Planning Team emailed an update stating that all full-time undergraduate students will be tested on a weekly basis.

Dean of Students Lawrence Wielk stated in an email, “This testing is mandatory for all and failing to get tested each week will result in suspension from the university.”

Sacred Heart University has been preparing for a safe spring semester since December.

“We’re doing weekly testing because the state requires it until the end of February due to the spike in the state,” said President John Petillo. “I think that’s going to change.”

Students are required to book their appointment through a link that Dean Wielk emails out every Friday.

Testing takes place in the library between 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and the Edgerton Center between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday.

“The first part of requiring everyone to get tested within five business days of returning to school was a huge asset in that approximately 40 students found out that they were positive before they got here and potentially infected everyone,” said Wielk.

“Compared to last semester, I think that SHU has implemented better rules and regulations that students and faculty have to follow in order to be on campus,” said senior Danielle Koster. “The wristband idea is great in my opinion because it is very easy to tell who has been tested that week.”

Once a student is tested, they receive a wristband that indicates they have complied with mandatory testing.

“The wristband system, as basic as it may seem, has been helpful, but we are also downloading the results into Student Health Portals for tracking purposes and we are just about to incorporate a new emergency management database to further assist us with tracking,” said Wielk.

Sacred Heart faculty and staff are working toward safety for all on campus to transition to complete normality.

“This week we allowed some in-house dining,” said Petillo. “We want to get as close to back to normal without jeopardizing the safety and healthcare of our students.”

The spring semester calls for a May graduation.

“We’re already beginning to talk about alternatives, so we don’t have to do what we did last year,” said Petillo. “We’re hoping for something and we’re hoping the state allows it.”

“As of commencement, it’s too soon to be able to tell what we will be able to do and what the state guidelines may be for large gatherings come early May,” said Wielk.

“We have been stripped of our senior year, so if weekly testing can help the chances of an in-person graduation, then I think it should remain strictly enforced,” said Koster.

According to the COVID-19 dashboard, as of Feb. 11, there are a total of 76 positive cases, including 50 on-campus students, 24 off-campus students, and 2 employees.

“I think students are conscious of it and telling other students to wear a mask. The people who aren’t following it are putting others in danger. Students need to realize this is not a joke. Now compared to March, more students are realizing it even though there are some who don’t,” said Petillo.

“I only have to be on campus one day a week at the Center for Healthcare Education and I feel very comfortable as everyone is wearing masks and socially distancing,” said Koster.

“What I have seen so far is that students have been extremely compliant and are all working with us to help stop the spread,” said Wielk.