

January 28, 2021

After consulting faculty, staff, students, administrators, monastery residents, and our partners at St. Francis de Sales Seminary, as well as taking into account the current Covid-19 infection rates for our area, it is imperative that we proceed with prudence as we move forward with our plan to offer hybrid courses this semester following our phase 2.5 protocols.

It is very gratifying that the overall infection rate for our area has begun to decline significantly and that vaccination against the virus is beginning to become available. In addition, we have arranged for Midtown Pharmacy to return to campus next week Thursday, 4 February (more details to follow), to offer free Covid testing to those who wish to be tested; they are willing to come back periodically throughout the semester. We have also acquired the necessary equipment to do deep cleaning and sanitizing on a regular basis which will help us keep the building safe as long as employees, students, and residents follow the CDC protocols (face masks, handwashing, sanitizing, social distancing, etc.).

A factor that needs to be considered before proceeding with our plan are that the SCJ monastery community members will be ending a period of quarantine toward the end of next week.

Consequently, I feel confident that we can move to Phase 2.5 and the hybrid modality of course delivery beginning on Monday, 8 February, barring any further positive, on campus exposures. This will give us another week for staff, faculty, and students to prepare for the change as well as to make sure the residents affected are cleared to end their quarantine.

Please stay safe and monitor yourself for any symptoms – err on the side of caution if you are feeling under the weather.

Thank you to all for your patience and cooperation.

Fr. Raúl

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