



Jeremy Thiesfeldt

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 52nd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

February 23rd, 2021

Chancellor Rebecca Blank
161 Bascom Hall
500 Lincoln Drive
Madison, WI 53706
DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

Dear Chancellor Blank,

I am reaching out regarding concerns that have been brought to my attention from constituent students, and parents of students that attend UW-Madison. The majority of concerns revolve around the Safer Badgers application that students are required to use.

The UW Systems' directions require all on-campus students to be tested once per week and off-campus students to be tested once every two weeks. This seems to be a reasonable request.

UW-Madison has mandated testing to occur every 72 hours, and failure to do so would bar students from in-person class participation. Why has UW-Madison required more testing of its students? Presumably, the System is using UWS 17.08 and UWS 17.09 as the source of its authority for enacting these measures. Have parents and students been informed of this? Parents deserve to know how UW-Madison has the authority to mandate testing and bar students from using campus facilities. Furthermore, students need to seek an exemption from testing if the student happens to be away from campus for more than 72 hours. Students who fail to be tested could face removal from the residence hall and no access to campus buildings.

COVID-19 restrictions have robbed our students of a normal college experience and replaced it with a lower quality at the same cost. Many students have lost sources of income and have pushed student debt even higher as a result. Added to this is the stress of finding additional time for COVID-19 testing which may require an extensive wait time. Students leaving campus are also burdened with seeking an exemption from testing.

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By far the most troubling aspect of this policy are the potential long-term ramifications if students are out of compliance. No student should have a notation of disciplinary action on their permanent record over a COVID-19 policy to which they never consented.

In closing, I ask that UW-Madison reconsider the restrictions placed on the student body and provide more flexibility for students. Particularly to those students who reside off-campus and those who have chosen online courses.

Sincerely,



Representative Jeremy Thiesfeldt

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