

September 1, 2009

Dear Siena students and parents,

As you may know, flu can be spread easily from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to prevent the spread of flu at Siena College **but, we need your help.**

We are working closely with the Albany County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning Siena College. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available.

For now, we are doing everything we can to keep our institution operating as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help along with reminders of what we are asking in advance of any flu outbreak:

- **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.
- **Practice respiratory etiquette** by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; germs are spread this way.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** In addition to fever, (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating) other signs of flu include: cough, body aches, headaches, fatigue, sore throat, diarrhea/vomiting.
- **If you have flu or flu-like symptoms** contact Health Services at 783- 2554 to report your symptoms and be evaluated by a member of the nursing staff. Our Health Services staff will be triaging students with symptoms and determining the next course of action.
- **College Policy for the flu.** It is our policy for students diagnosed with the flu to be placed on a medical leave. Transportation arrangements are made with the student and family to return home or stay with a friend or relative and remain off campus for at least 5-7 days. Students may return to campus after Health Services staff has evaluated your ability to return (once their flu symptoms have resolved and they no longer pose a risk of communicability on campus).
- **Get the seasonal flu vaccine-Siena College is offering a flu clinic scheduled for October 29, 2009.** The Novel H1N1 Vaccine is still being developed. Recent recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control have placed individuals under the age of 24 in the top priority for receiving the H1N1 vaccine. For more information about priority groups for vaccination visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm. Additional information will be

available in the upcoming weeks regarding how and when this vaccine will be given.

In preparation for any type of outbreak, students and families should review and update their personal plan in the event that the College needs to close or if they are diagnosed with the flu and placed on medical leave. As of this date, there are no closures planned and we are taking *all direction* from the emergency management agencies, NY State Department of Health and Albany County Department of Health.

Members of the faculty are prepared to work with the students in their class on how to make-up missed work. *The important thing to remember is if you have flu or flu like symptoms, you should not be in class and to contact the Health Services at 783-2554.* If the College receives direction from local or state agencies to modify its activities or to close for a period of time, you will be notified via the emergency info web page and the Siena Alert System.

For the most up-to-date information on flu, visit <http://www.flu.gov/>, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636).

We will notify you by email, the Health Services webpage, the emergency info webpage of any additional changes to our institution's strategy to prevent the spread of flu on our campus.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gilroy

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Siena College is a learning community advancing the ideals of a liberal arts education, rooted in its identity as a Franciscan and Catholic institution.