

October 30, 2009

Dear Members of the Siena Community,

In response to your many questions and concerns I am providing you with the following update:

Current Status of Influenza:

- As of today, The Albany County Department of Health reports increased levels of Influenza-like illness (ILI) reported by health care providers, Emergency Departments, schools and colleges in Albany County and the Capital Region. In the last week, they have received reports of lab confirmed influenza A and Influenza 2009 H1N1 cases among Albany County residents.
- Nationally and in New York State, the H1N1 influenza virus continues to be the dominant flu virus circulating at this time.
- Siena College Health Service experienced an increased number of student sick calls this week. A Nursing Station was set up in Hennepin Lounge from 11-2pm everyday to provide evaluation and treatment of students with complaints of flu and flu-like illness. The continuation of this service will be determined on a weekly basis based on the volume of sick students utilizing this service.
- Students with flu or flu-like illness are being placed on a 5 day Medical Leave. Five days is the normal recovery time for this illness. This is a college-wide policy which allows students who are too ill to attend classes and remain in the residence halls to go home to recover from their illness. Additionally, this policy is in place to reduce the spread of illness on campus. Students placed on a Medical leave will have their faculty notified of their absence and their return date. Faculty are in support of this policy and will be working with students to make up any missed work upon their return to campus.
- Students placed on a medical leave are being assisted to make transportation arrangements home within a reasonable time frame. Students are cleared to return to campus by the Health Services staff.
- The Trick or Treating program scheduled today in the Residence Halls for local area school aged children was cancelled. This is to minimize risk of illness exposure to school aged children and to Siena students participating in the event.
- The College continues to monitor influenza activity on a daily basis. The College continues to operate under normal conditions.

Flu Vaccine Information

- There is a delay in receipt of the seasonal flu vaccine. A number of Flu vaccine clinics in the Capital Region had to be cancelled this week due to a shortage of the flu vaccine.
- The Siena College Seasonal Flu Vaccine Clinic is now scheduled for Thursday 11/12, 11am-5pm in the Sarazen Student Union. This is a walk-in clinic. The cost is \$30. Most insurances are accepted. Students may bill their student account.
- Nationwide distribution of the H1N1 flu vaccine is underway in all states, although it is being produced and distributed slower than predicted. Information regarding the availability of the H1N1 vaccine in our area will be provided to you as it becomes available to us.
- Siena College Health Services has placed an order for H1N1 vaccine for use on campus. We will provide details of a vaccine clinic on campus when our shipment of vaccine arrives.
- It cannot be stressed enough, vaccination offers the best protection against getting sick from influenza, both seasonal and 2009 H1N1 influenza.

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