

2/5/21 Weekly Update:

**Outside the NWAC:**

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| New cases in the U.S. [have fallen 35 percent](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/6mWeHbKUHu5Nz3B5_88zEw~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRh9SbwP0TaaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vaW50ZXJhY3RpdmUvMjAyMC91cy9jb3JvbmF2aXJ1cy11cy1jYXNlcy5odG1sP2NhbXBhaWduX2lkPTkmZW1jPWVkaXRfbm5fMjAyMTAxMjgmaW5zdGFuY2VfaWQ9MjY0OTImbmw9dGhlLW1vcm5pbmcmcmVnaV9pZD0xMTA4NjY3OTImc2VnbWVudF9pZD01MDQ1OCZ0ZT0xJnVzZXJfaWQ9MjExMjVhZmI2N2Q4ZTlkZTFhN2JhZDIzOTBmZmI3MDVXA255dEIKYBHwoRJg6Y-RGlISbWF6dXJkaWFAY2xhcmsuZWR1WAQAAAAA) over the past three weeks. Hospitalizations have dropped, as well. Deaths have not, but they have stabilized — and the death trend typically [lags](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/newsletter/weFIfs08Cthu9vXyuJOUEg~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRh9SbwP0T6aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vMjAyMC8xMi8yMS9icmllZmluZy9zdGltdWx1cy1kZWFsLWNvbmdyZXNzLWNvdmlkLXZhY2NpbmUtd2ludGVyLXNvbHN0aWNlLmh0bWw_Y2FtcGFpZ25faWQ9OSZlbWM9ZWRpdF9ubl8yMDIxMDEyOCZpbnN0YW5jZV9pZD0yNjQ5MiZubD10aGUtbW9ybmluZyZyZWdpX2lkPTExMDg2Njc5MiZzZWdtZW50X2lkPTUwNDU4JnRlPTEmdXNlcl9pZD0yMTEyNWFmYjY3ZDhlOWRlMWE3YmFkMjM5MGZmYjcwNVcDbnl0QgpgEfChEmDpj5EaUhJtYXp1cmRpYUBjbGFyay5lZHVYBAAAAAA~) the cases trend by a few weeks. “I like the trends we are seeing, and I am personally hopeful that |
| things are going to get better,” [Jennifer Nuzzo](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/IFPfG27eACZySSVIPukTWA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRh9SbwP0TOaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuY2VudGVyZm9yaGVhbHRoc2VjdXJpdHkub3JnL291ci1wZW9wbGUvbnV6em8vP2NhbXBhaWduX2lkPTkmZW1jPWVkaXRfbm5fMjAyMTAxMjgmaW5zdGFuY2VfaWQ9MjY0OTImbmw9dGhlLW1vcm5pbmcmcmVnaV9pZD0xMTA4NjY3OTImc2VnbWVudF9pZD01MDQ1OCZ0ZT0xJnVzZXJfaWQ9MjExMjVhZmI2N2Q4ZTlkZTFhN2JhZDIzOTBmZmI3MDVXA255dEIKYBHwoRJg6Y-RGlISbWF6dXJkaWFAY2xhcmsuZWR1WAQAAAAA), an epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins University, stated. “But there are a number of things that could also wrong.” Two possible explanations: |

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| **1. We may be in the very early stages of herd immunity.** Roughly 100 million Americans seem to have had the virus. (For every person who tests positive, three more have had it without being diagnosed, studies suggest.) Another 24 million people have received a vaccine shot. Put those two groups together, and you realize that about one-third of all Americans have at least some degree of immunity from the virus. That may be enough to begin — *begin* — slowing the spread. |
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| **2. More Americans may be wearing masks and staying socially distant.** Many still are not, but any increase in safe behavior matters. And there are signs of change. We have seen that multiple counties and states have tightened restrictions late last year. The country just elected a president who echoes scientific authority. Some Americans may also be inspired by light at the end of the tunnel. “I’m hearing from a lot of people that one of the reasons why they’re really hunkering down now is that it would be a shame to get a severe Covid case while waiting to get the vaccine,” said [Dr. Lee Harrison](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/OTc9r7Xu2A7bgHlk_Ua0WQ~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRh9SbwP4RLAWh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnBvc3QtZ2F6ZXR0ZS5jb20vbmV3cy9oZWFsdGgvMjAyMS8wMS8yNS9jb3ZpZC0xOS1jb3JvbmF2aXJ1cy1wZW5uc3lsdmFuaWEtYWxsZWdoZW55LWNvdW50eS1waXR0c2J1cmdoLWNhc2VzLWRlYXRocy12YWNjaW5lLWRvc2VzLWhlYWx0aC1kYXRhLXBhbmRlbWljL3N0b3JpZXMvMjAyMTAxMjUwMDcwP2NhbXBhaWduX2lkPTkmZW1jPWVkaXRfbm5fMjAyMTAxMjgmaW5zdGFuY2VfaWQ9MjY0OTImbmw9dGhlLW1vcm5pbmcmcmVnaV9pZD0xMTA4NjY3OTImc2VnbWVudF9pZD01MDQ1OCZ0ZT0xJnVzZXJfaWQ9MjExMjVhZmI2N2Q4ZTlkZTFhN2JhZDIzOTBmZmI3MDVXA255dEIKYBHwoRJg6Y-RGlISbWF6dXJkaWFAY2xhcmsuZWR1WAQAAAAA), the chairman of a local health board.

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| [Dr. Mark Escott](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/IDO8k112ikvpfv_03fNLWw~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRh9SbwP4QLAWh0dHBzOi8vY2JzYXVzdGluLmNvbS9uZXdzL2xvY2FsL3RleGFzLWluZmVjdGlvdXMtZGlzZWFzZS1leHBlcnRzLXdhcm5zLWRlY2xpbmluZy1jb3ZpZC0xOS1jYXNlcy1jYWxtLWJlZm9yZS10aGUtc3Rvcm0_Y2FtcGFpZ25faWQ9OSZlbWM9ZWRpdF9ubl8yMDIxMDEyOCZpbnN0YW5jZV9pZD0yNjQ5MiZubD10aGUtbW9ybmluZyZyZWdpX2lkPTExMDg2Njc5MiZzZWdtZW50X2lkPTUwNDU4JnRlPTEmdXNlcl9pZD0yMTEyNWFmYjY3ZDhlOWRlMWE3YmFkMjM5MGZmYjcwNVcDbnl0QgpgEfChEmDpj5EaUhJtYXp1cmRpYUBjbGFyay5lZHVYBAAAAAA~), who runs the local health agency around Austin, Texas, shared “Folks are changing behavior. Folks are wearing masks, folks are staying home, and that is resulting in these decreasing cases.” Dr. Alex Garza, a member of a pandemic task force in St. Louis, told The Associated Press: “The fact that this is happening in the winter when respiratory viruses typically spread the most shows us just how effective all the preventative measures actually are when we use them.” |

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A study [published in the peer-reviewed journal Matter in July](https://www.cell.com/matter/fulltext/S2590-2385%2820%2930364-7) found that wearing two masks could increase protection from virus particles by 50% up to 75%. It not only added an extra layer of protection but also made the mask fit snugger around the face, said Dr. Loretta Fernandez, study author and associate professor at Northeastern University."We found that the particle removal efficiency of many surgical style masks could be improved by up to 50% by simply snugging the mask material to the face," she said. "In the lab, we did this by adding a nylon stocking, but also tested other elastic layers such as gators and tights and found that they also solved the problem of cutting off air leaking in from around the mask." The Mount Union men's basketball team may end the 2021 season on a 30-plus-game winning streak have no national championships to show for it. Citing low participation numbers among member schools, the NCAA has canceled its Division III winter championships. The move affects men's and women's basketball, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's indoor track and field, men's and women's ice hockey and wrestling.**Inside the NWAC:** |
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Monday at my weekly meeting with the Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Inslee, he reported that over half of the population in Washington as moved to Phase II. This is a good sign and they are going to have very limited talks on what Phase III will look like. Though they continue to have concerns about the new variants found in the state, vaccine locations around the state are maxed out, and they need more vaccinations. They will be forming an ad hoc committee on what it may look like to have spectators in Phase III.

Regarding quarantine for out of state travel, he indicated that there may be some leeway with Institutions’ of Higher Education. Hopefully more clarity will forthcoming. He also stated that local county authorities do have the authority to be more restrictive that what the state allows. He emphasized working with local county authorities to keep them apprised of safety protocols to be used, especially if you are using county facilities.

This week had another meeting with representatives from NCAA, NJCAA, CCCAA to discuss updates each NCAA division is recognizing season-of-competition waivers and extensions of eligibility granted by the CC conferences. Please review the following

**Update on recognizing extensions of eligibility:**

* **Division II – For Spring 2020 and fall 2020.**
	+ Rules and decisions made by other divisions and organizations regarding the use of a season or 10 semester/15 quarter period of eligibility would follow the student-athlete upon transfer to a DII institution.
* **Division III – For Spring 2020**
	+ Extensions of eligibility given by NJCAA, CCCAA, and NWAC are not automatically recognized in NCAA Division III.  NCAA institutions would have to file waivers which would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
* **Division III– For Fall 2020.**
	+ Extensions of eligibility given by NJCAA, CCCAA, and NWAC are automatically recognized in NCAA Division III.

**Update on recognizing season of competition waivers and eligibility extensions granted by NJCAA, CCCAA, and NWAC for spring 2021:**

* **Division II**
	+ Rules and decisions made by other divisions and organizations regarding the use of a season or 10 semester/15 quarter period of eligibility would follow the student-athlete upon transfer to a DII institution.
* **Division III**
	+ DIII has accepted waivers (Season of Competition/Extensions of eligibility) from CCCAA, NJCAA, NWAC for undergraduate transfers for 2020-21 academic year (includes spring 2021).

If I haven’t listed it here, it hasn’t changed since November and December.   Specifically, NCAA Division I relief for spring 2021 is still undecided.  For advising purposes, it is safe to say today that two-year college spring sport student-athletes should plan to not have their spring 2021 participation waived by NCAA Division I and their Division I institution would need to file a waiver to try to get that season reinstated.  Those waivers would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and we don’t know the evaluation criteria that will be established for those waivers at this time. **There is a very helpful Power Point done by Greg Dana (NCAA Two-Year Compliance Director) located at** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvvS9IaHn-w&feature=youtu.be>

**Personal commentary:** I do not believe Division I will grant/honor a second year waiver for spring sport athletes**.**

Executive Board met yesterday and following is information that you may find helpful. **1)** Two companies (PRIVIT & Henry Schein) presented to the EB information regarding comprehensive testing options for our student-athletes. After their presentations, the EB charged Aaron and I to work on developing a white paper to outline a process for testing for the EB to review before moving it up the ladder; **2)** The EB discussed realignment and as you know most of the talk surrounds Clark moving to the west. The EB also discussed a recent request from Columbia Gorge Community College to delay their joining the NWAC from fall 2021 to fall 2022. In light of both situations, the EB decided to not make any formal adjustments to the regions for the rest of 2021. Because of this bizarre year, the EB supports Clark, BMCC, and TVCC in their efforts to seek competition with schools in the west region and south regions for winter and spring quarters 2021; 3) The NWAC HOF will take place this year virtually. NWAC will look to induct the class of 2020 sometime this June. More details will be forthcoming.

Please do not forget the Virtual Winter Conference-Tuesday February 16. Guest speakers include America East Commissioner, Amy Huchthausen who will speak on social justice and mental health campaigns and HopeSquad CEO, Dr. Greg Hudnall to speak on suicide prevention organization. Alli and Tracy on working on the registration process and hopefully that will get out to you soon. Cost is $80 per school for as many participants

from each school.

After serving the NWAC faithfully and well, Sports Information Director, Tracy Swisher will retire at the end of March. Tracy has been a trusted and faithful co-worker. We have all have enjoyed working with Tracy over the years and there will be a more formal celebration of Tracy later this year. He will definitely will be missed.

**Conclusion:**

A few weeks back I shared with you about the “Circle of Safety.” I would like to share the following example about the “Circle of Safety.” The Spartans, a warrior society in ancient Greece, were feared and revered for their strength, courage and endurance. The power of the Spartan army did not come from the sharpness of their spears, however, it came from the strength of their shields. Losing one’s shield in battle was considered the single greatest crime a Spartan could commit. “Spartans excuse without penalty the warrior who loses his helmet or breastplate in battle,” writes Steven Pressfield in his account of the Battle of Thermopylae (the battle upon which the movie 300 is based), “but punish the loss of all citizenship rights the man who discards his shield.” And the reason was simple. “A warrior carries helmet and breastplate for his own protection, but his shield for the safety of the whole line.”

It is my hope that the strength and character of the NWAC does not come from products or even our services, but rather how well we pull together. Every person in this conference and like any great team, plays a role in maintaining the Circle of Safety. The Circle of Safety for the conference and for the Circle of Safety of your athletic department. For all of us in leadership roles, whether at the conference office or at our member colleges, it is our job to look out for those inside our Circle of Safety.

Until next time,

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