Part I: Provost Helble Introduction

- President Philip J. Hanlon '77 will join the Community Conversations webcast to discuss Dartmouth operations during COVID-19.

I. COVID-19 Testing
   A. During election week, Leverone Field House was converted into a polling location, and back to a testing site.
   B. Dartmouth is conducting 4,500 surveillance tests each week. These numbers will diminish as students begin to depart at the start of winter break.
   C. As of this week, Dartmouth has conducted about 43,000 surveillance test in total.
   D. Overall, there have been 4 new positive cases in the past two weeks, bringing our positive testing rate to 0.03%.
   E. Testing information continues to be updated in the COVID-19 Dashboard.
   F. To students travelling home, we recommend that you receive your last test 2-3 days before departure to ensure you are negative before your trip.
   G. Students, staff, and faculty will be tested twice per week during winter term.

II. Course of the Pandemic
   A. Nationally, there are record numbers of positive cases. Though numbers in the Upper Valley are relatively low, we are not out of the woods.
   B. Our work-from-home guidance is still in place. If the pandemic takes a turn for the better, Dartmouth will revisit this policy.
   C. Given where we are today, it is our expectation that limited access operations will continue into the winter term. As a community, we have to stay focused and continue following safety guidelines.

III. Winter Term
   A. Dartmouth will house the same number of students in winter as in fall term — approximately half of the undergraduate population.
   B. Students will receive information on accessing their belongings in controlled storage after their first negative test (approximately 24 hours after arrival). We anticipate providing limited support to students who need access to linens and other necessities during the first 24 hours.
   C. All students who placed themselves on the second waitlist were notified of the results last Friday.
   D. Students can expect their room assignments and arrival dates by the end of the day this Friday, November 13th.
E. Parents and students have pointed out the limited number of indoor social spaces — we hear you. Over the course of the next month, the Task Force will revise fall term operation and policies to determine what has worked and what can be improved upon.

F. There have been questions about policies that have resulted in students being removed from the residence halls this fall term. These policies were created to protect community health — this cannot change. That being said, Dartmouth is looking at this process and looking at whether there are things that can be change in winter to provide more clarity.

G. The Dartmouth Skiway will be open. We are looking at ways to provide weekend transportation to students.

H. More details will be provided through Community Conversations on December 9th.

Part II: Questions from the Audience

I. How do you think the administration has handled the mental stress of students on campus this term?
   A. In my view, Dartmouth has done well — not perfectly, but well. These are the kinds of questions the administration will ask as it revises fall plans and finalizes winter plans. There are steps that we can, and will, take to make winter term even better.

II. Has Dartmouth been in touch with health officials about how it can provide vaccines to students when it becomes available?
   A. We have, but there are no plans we can articulate at the moment. We are not at that step of the conversation.

III. How do you think about merging these various communities — students on/off campus, faculty, staff — and assuring they all have access to the Dartmouth facilities that they need while assuring public health is protected?
   A. This is a complicated question. We ask that all members of the Dartmouth community living in the Upper Valley test frequently and follows public health guidelines.
   B. We have not welcomed new faculty members to campus since the start of the pandemic — the hiring process has been moved entirely online to protect the health of the community.

IV. Why is there so much isolation space? What does it look like?
   A. Students who live in isolation spaces have meals delivered to them.
   B. Isolation spaces are reserved for those who test positive, have symptoms, or are close contacts of someone who tests positive.
   C. The isolation space is like other living halls, and have internet access so students can continue to take classes if their health allows.

Part III: Conversations with President Phil Hanlon
I. **What is like for you as a leader to be the head of Dartmouth during COVID-19?**
   A. It's much more complicated than anything I have encountered before. There is no playbook — no one has encountered anything like this in our lifetime.
   B. There are three big challenges: keeping campus healthy, carrying out our mission, and dealing with the financial fallout from COVID-19.
   C. We are coming together as a community. Alumni are contributing, students are persevering through their education, and everyone is stepping up to protect public health.

II. **What are you hearing from other Presidents about operations in their campuses?**
   A. I am hearing a lot more from other Presidents not only from the Ivy League, but from small colleges in New England.
   B. We are hearing from them that safety measures to de-densify campus have worked and keep positive testing rates under 0.05%. These measures work, and make college campuses like Dartmouth some of the safest places in America.

III. **This past fiscal year, we worked to balance our budget. Things look encouraging for the current fiscal year, but what happens after this? What about unfunded deferred maintenance?**
   A. Buildings are made to last, but every 60 years or so they need major renovations. The Hop is a good example of this — though it is structurally sound, it needs upgrades to keep up with modern performance standards and teaching practices.
   B. Dartmouth Hall will be renovated, and the Hood has been rebuilt.
   C. Undergraduate housing and our steam tunnels need renovating — some were built over 100 years ago.

IV. **Some writers in academics have stated that COVID-19 will permanently change higher education, making remote learning more acceptable and a part of every institution’s portfolio. Do you agree, and what impact do you think it will have on Dartmouth?**
   A. Online teaching is not new. But what is new is that in the past the adoption of online teaching in higher education was slow because faculty were unfamiliar with it as a tool. Now, faculty at every campus have had a forced experiment with online teaching and have a feel for its capabilities and limitations.
   B. My prediction for Dartmouth: faculty will adopt the best aspects of online teaching, by bringing in more outside experts into the classroom, for example.

V. **Why have you continued to teach? What is the course you are teaching at the moment?**
   A. Teaching is the most important thing we do in this campus and I want to be part of that. Dartmouth students are remarkable individuals and I love getting to know the better.
   B. My class is about the study of permutations. For example, people shuffle a deck of cards more than once because it feels as though this makes the shuffle random. In practice, a deck is only arranged randomly after the eighth shuffle.

**Part IV: Questions for President Phil Hanlon**
I. How do you think about creating and maintaining the Dartmouth community when we do so much remotely?
   A. There is no doubt that maintaining the community is one of the things that worries me most. Let’s face it, we are not operating under optimal conditions, and this is not the way that we would like to be conducting our business. But we need to keep going.
   B. The outdoors has been essential. The more we can embrace the outdoors together, the more we can tap into and strengthen our community.

II. Is there anything you can tell us about Ivy League sports this winter?
   A. For those who are anxiously awaiting decisions on sports, I would say stay tuned. The Ivy League Presidents have been meeting regularly to discuss this and other items.

III. Another topic that comes in week after week has to do with financial aid. Dartmouth announced a Commission on financial aid. Can you explain what this is?
   A. The Dartmouth education is very special and your financial need should not prevent you from accessing it. We are committed to meeting every student’s need, and plan on expanding this service to international students.
   B. Beyond the pandemic, we believe that socioeconomic diversity strengthens our community and allows for all to receive a well-rounded education.

IV. Financial aid applications have skyrocketed. Are you worried that the pandemic will depress regular applications to come to Dartmouth? Are you concerned that our model of education will become less appealing if people are concerned about pandemics?
   A. We will get our first glimpse of this when we go through our early decision application numbers. This is something that we are watching closely.

V. How does Dartmouth balance the risk (of COVID-19) vs. the reward (the college experience)?
   A. What we have seen is that simple things like masks, testing, and de-densification reduce risk effectively if implemented. After this, we think about what we can do within these restrictions — that is what the Task Force will be working on the coming weeks.

VI. Do you know if Commencement will happen or what it will look like this coming June?
   A. Commencement is my favorite event of the year — I love the joy and the sense of accomplishment that we all feel.
   B. Our current planning is that it will go forward on the Green. Our best bet is that the vaccine will be finalized and distributed by March.