Community Conversations with Provost Joseph Helble  
Wednesday, October 28, 2020 — 3:30 PM EDT  
Student Assembly Notes

Part I: Provost Helble Introduction
- Mary Lou Aleskie, the Howard L. Gilman ’44 Director of the Hopkins Center for the Arts; Walter Cunningham Jr., director of the Dartmouth College Gospel Choir; and John Stomberg, the Virginia Rice Kelsey 1961S Director of the Hood Museum of Art joined the conversation

I. COVID-19 Testing
   A. Dartmouth continues to conduct about 4,500 tests each week
   B. Data is posted on the COVID-19 Dashboard
   C. The data from our New England peers mirrors Dartmouth’s, with a positive testing rate under 1%
   D. Nationally, positive case counts have risen 40% in the past week—and 70% in the Upper Valley
   E. Despite the surge in cases, the incidence of the virus has remained low within the Dartmouth community
   F. Seasonal flu shots are important this year—Dartmouth expects all members of its community to receive the flu vaccine. The shot is free at local pharmacies and at Dick’s House

II. Election Day
   A. Leverone field house will not be open for testing on November 9th, as it will be used for voting
   B. Hanover will allow same-day voter registration
   C. Students are allowed to be authorized election workers, as long as they remain masked and socially distant. Travel is still restricted as stated in the Community Expectations
   D. On Thursday Nov. 5th, there will be a post-election panel discussion by the Rockefeller Center, titled “What Now?”

III. Winter Term
   A. The start of the term will be delayed by a few days
   B. Classes will start on January 7th, and will end on March 10th
   C. Dean Lively has indicated that the waitlist process has been completed and that all upperclass students who requested housing have been accommodated
   D. Students should wait on information about travel dates prior to making travel arrangements
   E. Dartmouth anticipates implementing a twice-per-week surveillance testing protocol in winter
   F. Dartmouth is scheduled to close for the extended winter holiday break from December 21st to January 1st

Part II: Questions from the Audience
I. What are the plans to create more space for students to move around inside, protected from the elements? Will students be able to travel to different residence halls? Will students be required to arrive on campus with only what they can carry?
   A. We have a group in the Task Force working to create more indoor spaces
   B. Dartmouth understands that it is not ideal for students to spend all of their time isolated in their rooms

II. Do we know how the structure of winter term will affect the budget deficit?
   A. Winter term finances will be the same as that of fall term. We do not know what spring term will look like as the election and the outcome of vaccine trials are unpredictable

III. Will spring study abroad programs be happening?
   A. We do not know the answer to this question. Information on this will be made available by Thanksgiving. It seems unlikely that these programs will take place
   B. All Tuck international programs have been cancelled for the academic year

IV. What about moving out? What are the logistics for leaving campus at the end of fall term?
   A. Students will continue to be tested up until their move-out date—they will only be able to leave if they test negative
   B. Move-out dates will likely be staggered

V. What have you learned from wastewater testing?
   A. As of last week, we had no detections of the virus through wastewater testing. This is not surprising because our surveillance testing has allowed us to catch positive cases and isolate those individuals early on

VI. How are you looking into ways to keep students engaged?
   A. We are looking into ways for students to gather in larger organized structured groups
   B. The House Communities and the Task Force are working on this

Part III: Guest Conversations

I. Mary Lou Aleskie
   A. Can you tell us a bit about the Hop at Home?
      1. On March 10th, Dartmouth Idol was fully booked, and we offered live streaming to all students. This was a springboard for future remote programming
      2. With Hop at Home, our virtual stage, we wanted to create an experience that would bring our community together
   B. This past term you collaborated with alumni and well-known reporters for events. Do you plan on doing something like this again in winter term?
      1. Yes. We were lucky to collaborate with Jake Tapper and Trevor Noah in the fall, and are looking to organize similar events in the fall

II. Walter Cunningham Jr.
A. Tell us a little bit about how you have been working with the choir for the last few months
   1. We have been fully remote
   2. My colleagues and I are grateful that we were able to provide these opportunities—we realize that even though we are socially distant, we don’t have to be emotionally distant

B. How will Dartmouth Idol take place this year?
   1. It will happen remotely. Students can submit audition videos through our website
   2. In the winter, the show will be released episodically

III. John Stomberg
   A. The Hood has been engaging audiences with public art. How did this come about?
      1. This came from our work with K-12 in the Upper Valley, as this is a large part of our audience
      2. We realized that students living on campus needed to be out of their rooms to find entertainment, so we have been holding socially-distant events with small groups
   B. Will these events continue in winter term?
      1. Yes. Students can sign up through our website

Part IV: Questions for the Guests

I. Mary Lou Aleskie
   A. How will you incorporate virtual when you return to performances with a live audience?
      1. This experience has permanently changed us, and that’s a good thing. This makes events more accessible and will allow us to welcome larger audiences
   B. How are the safety precautions affecting students who rehearse at the Hood?
      1. We have some students performing together live. Our singers are using “broadway masks” that protect singers while allowing them to sing comfortably. We are looking to adjust these for winter term

II. Walter Cunningham Jr.
   A. By doing Dartmouth Idol virtually, will an unlimited number of people be able to see the show and vote?
      1. Yes
   B. Have you been inspired in this very strange time as you arrange songs for your ensemble?
      1. Yes. This experience has made me more intentional. In the spring, I chose songs centered around unity, and I am doing the same now to bring the ensemble together despite the distance
   C. How do you motivate students to perform in a group remotely?
      1. First, part of it is that involvement in art performance is enough motivation on its own. Secondly, we are motivated by tapping into the purpose of our work—the impact of our art
2. We make it a safe environment where everyone feels free to express themselves, so we create cohesiveness and trust

III. John Stomberg
   A. Is the museum open and can the public visit?
      1. The museum is only open to students at the moment
   B. How do you feel about the Hood’s lack of access to the public in recent years?
      1. The Hood is an idea. While we were renovating, we had the Hood Downtown and now, during the pandemic, we are showcasing art and history virtually to engage with the public like never before