

Optimistic

Trump administration officials spoke optimistically about a relatively quick rebound from the coronavirus yesterday as life within the White House reflected the stark challenges still posed by the pandemic, with Vice President Mike Pence now "self-isolating" after one of his aides tested positive. Full story, Page A3

WEATHER

PM showers/storms. High: 60°; Low: 36° EXPANDED WEATHER, B5

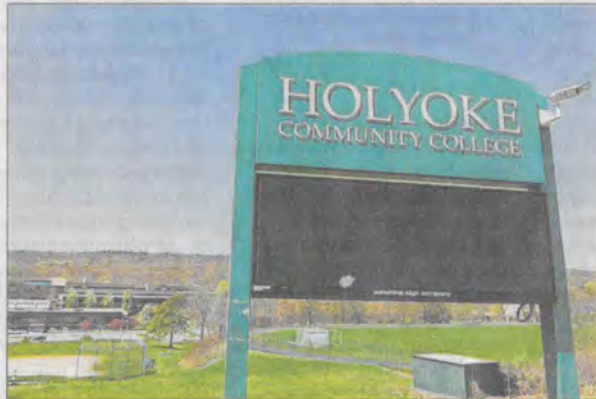
OPEN FOR BUSINESS Stay Safe Rick's AUTO BODY

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Table with 3 columns: Category, Page, Page. Includes Business (B1), Classified (B4), Comics (C2), Dear Abby (B8), Legals (B4), Obituaries (A5), Opinion (A4), Puzzles (B8), Sports (A7), Television (B5).



Hampshire College is preparing to welcome students back to campus in the fall. (HOANG 'LEON' NGUYEN / THE REPUBLICAN)



Holyoke Community College will conduct the fall semester online or remotely. (HOANG 'LEON' NGUYEN / THE REPUBLICAN)

HIGHER EDUCATION

Repub 5/11/20 P1

A tale of 2 campuses

Hampshire College eyes fall reopening as Holyoke Community opts to stay online

By RON CHIMELIS rchimelis@repub.com

Separate announcements by two Western Massachusetts colleges this week underscored a fact worth remembering as schools look toward the fall term: One size doesn't fit all.

The president of Hampshire College says his institution is preparing to welcome students back to campus, less than six months after the coronavirus pandemic emptied dorms and forced education into remote learning at the college in Amherst and throughout the nation.

Ed Wingenbach described that scenario as "likely," but emphasized it remains up to the state government to allow it.

Just 17 miles to the south, Holyoke Community College officials felt the reasons to make a decision outweighed those to delay. Basing it largely on the demographics of their students, HCC administrators declared the fall semester — with very few exceptions — would be handled online or

remotely, just as the spring semester has been conducted.

Differing strategies, announced on the same day, deliver an important message about college reopenings: a return to traditional classroom learning and campus activity will not be done uniformly.

Rather, throughout Western Massachusetts, New England and America, unique circumstances at each school, along with varying state restrictions on social gatherings, will create a jigsaw puzzle of solutions. Assume one institution's decision will provide clues for the next is a mistake.

"As long as the State of Massachusetts allows colleges to open, which seems likely, Hampshire fully intends to welcome students to campus in the fall," Wingenbach said in a letter to the college community. "Our class sizes are small, allowing students and professors to spread out in classrooms."

Hampshire is projecting 550 to 600 SEE CAMPUSES, PAGE A2

National Nurses Week May 6th - 12th Thank You For Your Compassion, Kindness & Bravery FSi Oil and Propane fuelservices.biz

First 3	\$200	\$1,000	May 6	2-4-21-32-38-43
Last 3	\$132	\$187	Doublers: 8	
Previous numbers drawn	\$132	\$562		
Saturday	9365	6642	May 7	3-8-22-23-45
Friday	2049	8742	Lucky Ball: 15	
Thursday	6713	9181	May 4	15-20-22-37-48
Wednesday	8213	5956	Lucky Ball: 11	
Tuesday	7314	1748		
Monday	1158	7278		
MEGA MILLIONS			POWERBALL	
May 8	5-20-22-61-70		May 9	12-18-42-48-65
Megaball: 4; Megaplier: 2			Powerball: 19; Power Play: 5	
May 1	28-30-31-35-66		Estimated jackpot: \$70 million	
Megaball: 14; Megaplier: 2			May 6	7-8-35-50-65
			Powerball: 20; Power Play: 4	

TODAY'S OBITUARIES

Listed by name, these obituaries can be found in today's paper. You may view these obituaries and sign the guest book at masslive.com/obituaries.

Butler, SSJ, Sr. Ann
Desrochers, Earl
Lawson, Susan

Lussier, Romeo
Sheehan, Francis
Silansky, Jan F.

To place an obituary, please contact Classified-obits@repub.com or call 413-788-1262.

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Campuses

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

students on its 800-acre campus, making social distancing viable. The irony of Hampshire's situation — not referred by Wingenbach, but unmistakable — is that a college whose financial crisis was coupled with low enrollment seems unusually positioned to reopen in the fall, precisely because a relatively small number of students attend it.

Wingenbach said Hampshire has been rallying from its financial straits and will continue to do so, despite the indisputable economic impact of COVID-19. At Holyoke Community College, a close look at the two-year college's demographics caused school officials to commit to online education in the fall - four months before the 2020-21 academic year begins.

Holyoke Community College has a significant population of students who are older, serve as essential workers or have children. As a rule, that makes them more susceptible to COVID-19 contact than teens or young adults in college.

The biggest difference, though, is that Holyoke Community is a commuter school and Hampshire College is not. It might be tempting to look at this as an obvious apples-versus-oranges comparison, but the issues raised by their distinct populations will be faced by countless other institutions as well.

“Unlike residential campuses, some of whom are indicating a commitment to reopen in the fall, we have very limited control over where our students sleep, eat, work, and congregate.”

Rachel Rubinstein, HCC vice president for academic and student affairs

Any institution, in fact, whose student body consists of both commuter and residential students (and often, international students) will face the same questions and decisions within their own campuses.

“Unlike residential campuses, some of whom are indicating a commitment to reopen in the fall, we have very limited control over where our students sleep, eat, work, and congregate. Our students are firmly embedded in local community networks,” wrote Rachel Rubinstein, HCC vice president for academic and student affairs, in a memo to staff on Tuesday.

“They are more likely to belong to low-income and communities of color, that nation-wide have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. This makes them, and all of us, all the more vulnerable. The responsibility

to keep everyone as safe as possible weighs heavily.”

In early April, Boston University became the first major institution to publicly recognize the possibility of closed campuses in the fall. The BU statement described continued remote learning as only one of many options, but it was a nonetheless chilling reminder of the uncertainty of the next few months - and raised an option that most other colleges were contemplating more privately.

Aware that a second wave of coronavirus has been found in some fall forecasts, HCC officials decided to give students, faculty, and staff time to prepare for continued remote learning. The shuttered spring semester has forced officials at colleges and universities (including those who anticipate fall reopening) to examine where remote education fits into the broader higher education package, and how it can be best utilized.

Rubinstein said HCC administrators remain optimistic that in-person activities will gradually resume at a community college that serves 11,500 students each year. Their wariness of a second wave of COVID-19 could foreshadow an agonizing late-summer decision at countless institutions: whether to reopen campuses as faculty, families and students all crave, or keeping them closed for fear of reigniting the pandemic, despite alluring numbers suggesting it had passed.

“Hampshire has some significant advantages for ensuring health and safety of our students on campus, and has already taken steps this spring to institute protocols.”

Ed Wingenbach, president of Hampshire College

Is Wingenbach's cautious optimism misplaced? Did HCC act prematurely? Or is it possible, even likely, that each is making the proper calculated analysis required at this moment. Campuses around the region and across the nation will face similar choices with only state regulations and informed analysis — and not the examples of neighboring institutions — as a guide.

“Hampshire has some significant advantages for ensuring health and safety of our students on campus, and has already taken steps this spring to institute protocols,” Wingenbach said in his qualified yet optimistic outlook. As colleges and universities await the day campuses are alive again, it appears certain that day will come more fully or at least sooner for some, but months later or in piecemeal for others.