

On Behalf of The Student Body of Saint Anselm College

THE STUDENT RESPONSE TASK FORCE

Respectfully submits for consideration

**A REPORT ON
THE STUDENT RESPONSE
TO THE COLLEGE POLICIES
REGARDING THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

December 28, 2020

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Section 1: Preamble

The COVID-19 reality students and educators have been thrust into is vastly different from the traditional college experience that both groups once enjoyed. The Student Body indeed recognizes that we are operating in a different reality: we must be distant from loved ones, friends, professors, and others in the college community. It is obvious that previous social and academic customs are untenable for this reality; the safety of students, educators, staff, and the monastic community must be considered and protected, and changes must be made accordingly. These changes are of profound importance to life on the college campus; there is nothing that these decisions do not touch.

The fall semester of 2020 was unprecedented. The efforts and thought that went into decision making didn't lack earnestness, nor intelligent and compassionate thought. The Saint Anselm College Administration undoubtedly spent a considerable amount of time in planning the transition from a reality we once knew and enjoyed on the hilltop, to a necessarily different hilltop. However, this decision-making process was ultimately flawed. On-campus students have a unique perspective on the hilltop: we eat here, we live here, we sleep here, we build the foundations of our adult lives on this campus. Commuters and online students likewise share the academic struggles of this reality, but we recognize that the particular social and mental health challenges presented to students on campus are uniquely burdensome. Because of this, their burdens must be given considerable weight in the planning process to ensure the best possible on-campus experience.

The purpose of the Saint Anselm Student Response Task Force was, and will continue to be, to advocate for the students' interests at Saint Anselm College through working with the administration of Saint Anselm College. This pandemic may persist well into the future, and student voices must be heard loudly and clearly for the duration of the pandemic. We, the Student Response Task Force, and its supporters are advocates for the student body. We are an arm of the student body, ensuring student representation will manifest itself in policies that consider students first.

We do not call issue to every policy made in the planning process: some are appropriate and will be discussed later. It is the researched and method-driven opinion of the Student Response Task Force that the totality of the COVID-19 policies was overall detrimental to the on-campus student experience.

While we are encouraged by student representation in the newly formed committees, students have largely felt left out of the decision making process. As was the case in the spring and summer, students and their elected representatives were either not given proper representation in policy decisions, or were given none. During this pandemic, many feel as though they have little

control over things they once did. This feeling has been exacerbated among students because they feel even further removed from decisions that go into life on campus: a life that only they and the monastic community can fully understand. As a result of this lack of consideration, student morale and mental health have considerably declined. This has been the key grievance of the struggling and beleaguered student body: we are not considered and consulted adequately, and we feel powerless.

The only way to move forward is to properly consider all voices in the Saint Anselm College community: staff, administrators, students, and monastic members alike. Therefore, each of these groups, especially those groups who live on campus, requires adequate representation and consideration of any policy decisions. Part of this consideration must be a willingness to adapt and make changes, especially those supported by a wide base of students and their representatives. A higher-learning institution that does not consider the concerns of students and does not provide substantial representation to student voices cannot adequately adapt to the COVID-19 circumstances.

The Student Response Task Force, through careful, thoughtful, and deep consultation with the student body, has enumerated several proposed changes that would improve the on-campus experience and will be discussed at length. The Student Response Task Force was entirely composed of only students and considered students first in their planning.

These proposed changes and the remainder of this report must and will be discussed with the Administration throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. A complete response to this new and difficult reality would be impossible without a deep, ongoing, and mutually-considerate dialogue. This is the hope and mission of the Student Response Task Force and all of its supporters.

Section 2: Data-Gathering

The Student Response Task Force collected data and responses from 533 students by means of the following:

- The Student Response Task Force held two in-person listening sessions open to the student body exclusively. Moderators prepared questions but encouraged open dialogue. Participants are, and will remain, anonymous. Total attendance for both sessions was 40 students.
- The Student Response Task Force created an online form with which students could submit a response if they did not wish to attend the listening sessions. The only information collected from respondents was their year of graduation. Respondents are, and will remain, anonymous. The number of submitted student responses totaled at 45

responses. Percentage of student respondents was 9% from the class of 2021, 33% from the class of 2022, 33% from the class of 2023, and 15% from the class of 2024.

- The Student Response Task Force created an Instagram profile in order to conduct polls and surveys of the student body. Any references to empirical data are derived from the results of these polls and surveys. The total number of students who voted was 448 students.

Section 3: Helpful School Policies

In this section, we will provide an overview of enacted policies that the student body found beneficial. While these policies cover many aspects of campus life this semester, they have provided peace of mind for a student body that yearns for a sense of normalcy. This is an admirable achievement, one for which the administration deserves praise.

Communication

- **Town Halls** - In Student Response Task Force listening sessions, many students responded positively to Dr. Favazza's town halls. Several students felt that these town halls kept them up to date with the situation on campus, and made them feel safer and more confident that they would remain at Saint Anselm through the remainder of the semester. In particular, they drew attention to the frequent updates about outbreaks on campus, and how the administration was working to isolate and end them. It was suggested that Dr. Favazza should continue to hold these town halls even after the end of the pandemic to continue to provide the student body with important news.

Campus Life

- **Move-In** - In general, most students felt happy with the way in which move in was handled at the beginning of the semester. Although some felt that the phased move-in was held over too long a time period, the general consensus was that it went smoothly and efficiently. The check-in process was quick, as was testing. Lower student density made moving belongings into rooms quicker, allowing students to begin settling in and parents to leave campus with minimal contact with others. Move-in was a bright start to a challenging year.
- **Dining Services** - Many students felt that the modifications to dining services have not posed a significant issue, and the transition to an online reservation and ordering system has been smooth. Beyond a few minor technical issues, the system has worked well. Several students voiced appreciation for the changes made to Davison Hall to allow them to continue to eat with their friends.

Student Health

- **Testing** - Multiple students reported feeling satisfied with the level of testing that has been occurring on campus. Although there were some complaints about early testing time, most felt that the process was quick and easy, and made them feel safer. The number of tests that were conducted and the speed of the results helped to paint a clear picture of the prevalence and severity of COVID-19 on campus and allowed the administration to take rapid action to isolate clusters and prevent further spread. As the college begins next semester, this testing regimen should remain in place.
- **Snow Day** - Student response to the “snow day” was mostly positive. Although there were some concerns about its timing and announcement, many felt that it was a welcome break from the rigorous, non-stop schedule of this semester. The day off provided a much-needed opportunity to rest and take a break from work. Without breaks, this semester has proven to be more intense and stressful than those previous, and this day off provided many students with a moment to focus on their mental health. More of these “snow days” should be included in next semester's modified schedule.
- **Low Positivity Rates**- The college has been successful in keeping virus breakouts from spreading and endangering the on-campus experience. Although there have been cases on campus, they have been found and isolated quickly before they could spread throughout the student body. This has allowed students to remain on campus and to sustain their college experience for the entirety of the fall semester.

Section 4: Areas of Student Concern

In this section, we will attempt to synthesize the areas of greatest student concern. We have attempted to categorize this feedback for efficient review, but please note that each of the twenty seven proceeding areas of concern is of incredible importance to the student body. Many of these issues overlap with one another, compounding into a rather frustrating and disheartening experience for students.

Administrative Communication/Empty Promises

- **Lack of Opportunities for Student Input** - Perhaps the most pressing concern from the student body is the lack of opportunities presented by the administration for student input. In the words of a student “a lot of student concerns went heard, but unresponded to” and many students “feel like the administration didn’t engage with a lot of it [feedback], with the exception of the snow day.” Those students who did raise concerns through emails or

private conversations often felt like they were consoled, but none of their concerns were resolved. Furthermore, throughout the semester there have been very few formal channels which the administration has opened to receive student feedback.

We are cognizant that in recent weeks the administration has formed multiple working groups and committees to examine the college's move-in procedures, COVID-19 policies, etc. but we would be remiss if we did not express the concern that student participation in these groups is too limited and their formation has come too late in the year. In President Favazza's Nov. 5 Town Hall, he mentioned that the college had formed multiple committees which included student participants, and furthermore he mentioned that the college had been working closely with SGA. The Administration has done little to consult SGA as a whole in its policy decisions or COVID-19 response.

- **Need for Greater Transparency** - In the Oct. 28 and Nov. 4 Student Listening Sessions, many students called for the need for greater transparency. One student said, "I think that there's information that the students should definitely know." On the school's website, one can find a copy of the Community Care Covenant under the rightly named Anselmian Community Care Covenant page. One can also find the Community Care Covenant under the Community Standards of Health page, but if examined, these two documents do not match. This could have been an administrative oversight, but given that students signed this document with the understanding that it was a binding agreement between student and administrator, any changes made to this document should be fully disclosed to all signatories.
- **Unresponsiveness to Student Concerns** - Multiple students raised concerns about administrative responsiveness, specifically in regards to academic deans. One student said "Many people feel as though the academic deans haven't been very responsive." Though we understand that this semester has been difficult for all of us at Saint Anselm College, there is a significant amount of pressure on students, and when they seek assistance it only seems right that it should be given.

Another issue that was raised by a group of students was the question of where to present feedback or questions for the administration. Students are unaware of what opportunities they have to present their concerns or to seek answers to the many questions that they have. One obvious outlet of information between administrators and students is President Favazza's Town Halls, but even then some students expressed frustration with the lack of concrete information being presented in these events. When students submit their questions, if they are answered by the president, then they often receive an answer along the lines of "We'll look into that." However, specific students with specific concerns

deserve direct responses, and methods of directly responding to individual students should be instituted.

- **Constant Review of COVID-19 Policies** - Since the beginning of the semester, students were told that the college administration was reviewing COVID-19 policies, including occupancy limits, intervisitation, and dining operations. Though this may have been intended to give the students hope that change was coming, the fact that change never came was deeply frustrating to the student body. Students are also frustrated with their peers for breaking the college's guidelines, but an equal amount of frustration is placed on the administration for not cracking down on rulebreakers, instead defaulting to the claim that the college would loosen restrictions if the students behaved better. The students who are breaking the rules don't care. The students who do follow the rules have been holding their breath for months, waiting for change, yet to no avail.
- **Policies Regarding Off-Campus Visitors** - The college has prohibited students from having family, friends, or any other visitors on campus. This was begrudgingly understood and accepted as a step towards protecting the school's protective bubble. However, a source of great frustration for many students is the occasional wedding ceremony and the seemingly-constant stream of off-campus visitors participating in tours. This policy has deeply upset many students who have forgone visiting with their parents, siblings, significant others, and friends due to the college's declaration that these campus visits were not allowed and it was the student body's responsibility to protect the campus from COVID-19. For that reason, it is hypocritical that large tour groups would be allowed on campus, and in Davison Hall and the Student Center in particular. One member of the class of 2021 said, "I have always felt that Saint A's has supported their students except for this year. It is beyond frustrating to see the school hosting tours and weddings yet I am not even allowed to have my mom or my friends to my apartment for lunch." If large groups are going to be allowed on campus on a continuous basis, there is no reason that part of a student's family cannot be allowed on the grounds.
- **Need for Clarification of COVID-19 Policies** - A group of students expressed confusion over what COVID-19 policies are actually in place. In regards to essential travel, students are confused about what is acceptable and what is not. One student said "I know we shouldn't be traveling off-campus, but that means not seeing your family. Family is family." Students are left wondering "What is essential travel?" and why the college is treating everyone who travels off-campus equally. Students believe that those going off-campus in packed cars to spend hours at bars while not wearing masks should be treated differently than people going off-campus for groceries or medication.

Students are also unclear on the policies within their dorm halls. This is an area that needs clarification. Some students are confused about whether they can visit other rooms or floors and why some buildings have one-way staircases and others do not.

Community Care Covenant

- **Lack of Enforcement** - One of the largest areas of concern, which has been unequivocally agreed upon by all students which we were able to speak with, is the college's lack of enforcement of the Community Care Covenant and correlating COVID-19 policies. In the weeks leading up to the college's reopening the administration outlined an inextricably clear two-strike policy. This policy was not utilized to its full extent and for that reason, students soon came to see it as an empty scare-tactic. Students were told that after their second documentation they would be asked to leave the college, but students saw little follow through on this threat. Consequently, partying on campus increased and students grew more desensitized to the ever-present threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. One student said that "not enough was done in the beginning, there were no consequences for actions that [administration] said there would be consequences for." Another student said, "They didn't do enough in the beginning for sure [...] and they didn't crackdown."

Multiple students made reference to Campus Security and the role they played in the minimal enforcement of college policies. The Student Response Task Force understands and recognizes that Campus Security is not responsible for crowd dispersal, but neither are the RAs, and if neither of these parties are responsible for enforcing social distancing and crowd dispersal the question must be asked: "Who's job is it?" Sadly, this question has gone unanswered for the duration of the semester. Despite this, the narrative has remained the same that these gatherings are not allowed, but with almost no enforcement the college cannot expect that students will abide by the policy.

Students referenced the move-in period where over 100 students were partying on the Alumni Quad for multiple nights and Campus Security Officers told students that they were allowed to stay there as long as they wore masks and were socially distanced. This went largely ignored, and nothing was done to reaffirm it. Students feel that "by never enforcing those [policies], people learned the rules were more just suggestions," and "enforce the policies that they said they would enforce and things would've been a lot different." If action had been taken earlier in the year it would've changed the course of the semester.

"Coming back in the spring, I think the college should take a more hardball approach," said one student. However, if the college is going to have such restrictive rules once

again in the Spring Semester, then it must enforce these rules. Not the students, but the college. We can not make the same mistakes again, hold students accountable for their actions and the students will hold the administration accountable for their words.

- **Additional Pressures for Resident Assistants** - The general lack of enforcement from the college administration has placed an additional and unfair burden on the school's Resident Assistants. These students are not only deemed responsible for informing students of school policy but also holding them accountable for their actions. When the school passed along the harsh rhetoric of the two-strike policy to the Resident Assistants, they dutifully passed that knowledge along to their residents; unfortunately, the college failed to enforce the full weight of its two-strike policy, and large crowds were allowed to gather in central areas. This undermined the authority of Resident Assistants, adding additional resistance and stress to an already difficult job. Nonetheless, RAs were still pressured by administrators to continue enforcing policy and holding students accountable. An RA said, "We were told that we wouldn't be mask police, that campus security was there to help, that the quads weren't our responsibility, and that the administration had our backs. These were all lies." One student asked, "How are RAs, students, expected to do anything when campus police don't?" Another student claimed, "Resident Assistants have been very overwhelmed with little support from the school."

Many RAs, as well as concerned students, are upset with the lack of follow-through from the administration. Seemingly, the responsibility of holding students accountable has fallen solely on the shoulders of students themselves - a situation one student responded to by saying "The school could do more to regulate their own policies rather than just relying on students policing students."

- **Off-Campus Travel Restrictions** - Many students we spoke with were upset with the constant reminders not to travel off-campus, but little action was taken on the part of the college to ensure students who do travel off-campus for unnecessary and dangerous reasons are held accountable. Students also made multiple references to the barricades at the entrances and exits not being as effective as the college imagines them to be. One student remarked "We have the checkpoints set up, but I've only ever been asked where I'm going" to which many students agreed. The checkpoints were intended to serve as a deterrent, but as people learnt that "It's just for show. It's not actually serious [...] they're not effective" it became increasingly easier for students to ignore the deterrent and travel off campus anyways. Another student echoed the sentiment of their peer, saying "It's just for show, it's not really doing anything and it seems like there's a lack of care about people leaving campus."

Many students made specific reference to students traveling to off-campus bars throughout the week and weekend and expressed their hope that the college would specifically hold those students accountable. “I know this is something that the school cannot control, as it is off campus, but I believe it is really something that the school should focus on deterring.” As one student put it, “You can say ‘Oh please don’t go’ but that’s not doing anything.” Many students want to see a firmer rebuking of students traveling to bars and a more effective method of deterrence.

Another area of concern in regards to the college’s off-campus travel restrictions was the lack of any barricades or people checking I.D.s as people were entering or exiting the campus during Halloween weekend. This was a massive oversight, and it made students question the basic necessity of the barricades. A student in Hilary Hall got into a physical altercation with an off-campus individual, and the police had to be called. This could have been avoided if the college had had barricades and volunteers checking I.D.s on perhaps the busiest weekend of the school year. However, that didn’t happen.

Many students were deeply displeased with the timing of the November 5th decision to intensify off-campus travel restrictions. The administration waited until the last two weeks of the semester to crack down on travel, when perhaps if the college had done more to enforce their policies earlier, we would’ve been loosening restrictions by October and November. Students felt more restricted and demoralized as a result of the college’s inconsiderate timing. The assertion that testing positive may lead to students being unable to return home after four long months away from our homes was received poorly. Furthermore, the enforcement of this policy was wildly inconsistent. In the numerous days following the decision, coverage of all entrances and exits were inconsistent and porous. Additionally, the college should not place arbitrary time limits on student travel off campus, as essential travel may take longer than the time allotted by the college.

- **Need for Incentives** - Although students are frustrated with their peers going off-campus to bars, many students also understand the appeal. When there is little incentive for students to remain on campus and socialize with their friends, especially as we enter colder seasons, it doesn’t come as a surprise to the majority of students that people are traveling into Manchester, Bedford, and Goffstown to socialize and do things with their friends. One student said, “We would all be naive to think that we could keep students from going off-campus.” They continued on to say that the college should consider holding those students accountable and/or incentivizing *not* going off-campus. “They need to get the incentives down, you can’t expect students not to socialize, but then get upset when they go off campus or in the woods.” Another student said, “If you want students to be happy and to want to live on campus, you need to loosen up the rules in some departments.”

As was previously expressed, students feel that there has been a constant promise that the administration is looking into the possibility of loosening restrictions, but students have yet to see any follow-through. For that reason, many students felt that if some minor restrictions were lifted, it would eliminate the need for off-campus entertainment and incentivize staying on campus. Such policies could have included opening the Pub, or if policies such as intervisitation, building hours, and dining occupancy were reformed then students would have more opportunities to socialize on campus. However, the student body has yet to see this and thus they can't blame their peers for going off-campus to bars - even though it shouldn't be happening.

- **Intervisitation** - One such incentive that was discussed at great length by students we spoke with was the need to reform the current intervisitation policy. One student spoke to this by saying "I think there needs to be some sort of incentive to keep people on campus, and if that's intervis then that's what it needs to be." Students are fed up with not being able to visit their friends' dorms or even friends on different floors of the same building. Students expressed, at every opportunity given, a collective desire to loosen intervisitation restrictions within individual dorm halls. "Intervis within your own dorm, and I think most people would agree, is something that we could accomplish." Many students do agree with this idea, as seen in a poll conducted by the Student Response Task Force, where 94% of respondents said that some form of intervisitation should be reinstated. A resolution also passed unanimously through the SGA Student Senate on Nov. 2 requesting that the college loosen restrictions on intervisitation within dorms. One student said, "I know it would be a lot of work, but if we were to do something like that [intervisitation] it would be a safe way to loosen restrictions."
- **Building Hours/Signage** - Hours of operation for public spaces like the student center and the Library were also heavily criticized by students. Students said things like "I think the student center should be 24 hours again," "The student center should be open much longer," and "I 100% agree that we should extend the hours." For many students, the student center's current hours are not only less than optimal, but they're also frustrating. Especially when students have limited opportunities on campus to mingle with their friends, many students agreed that "It's unfair to not allow the people who still want to study or be with their friends." The argument has been presented to the student body that the hours of the student center were dramatically reduced because of instances of damages or inappropriate behavior late at night, but many students felt that this was not a good enough excuse to close one of the only places on-campus students are allowed to be inside together. One student remarked "I think that the weekend hours are ridiculous, why is it closed at 8 or 6? Not all students go out to party, some students actually need

the space to do homework.” In a poll conducted by the Student Response Task Force, 95% of respondents said they favored extending student center hours.

In addition to building hours, multiple students expressed their discontent with the one-way staircases in the student center. Many felt that it was counterintuitive to make the “Up” staircase the one closest to the main entrance, and the “Down” staircase the one closest to the exit. Others mentioned that it seemed strange to regulate which way students should move around the building despite all being in relatively close proximity to each other. One student said, “I think the whole concept is foolish, are we going to pretend that COVID-19 only flows in one direction?” Many students are annoyed with the added hassle of needing to walk to one end of the building to go down the stairs, and then walking back towards the front of the building to go up the stairs and once again walk to the opposite end of the building to exit. One student spoke to this, saying “Keeping people in buildings longer because they have to spend more time getting from one side to the other seems counterintuitive.”

Students were also frustrated with having to walk all the way around the student center to access various areas within the building. In order to access the bookstore, one has to walk nearly all the way around the building outside. This poses an additional nuisance and frustration that, to many students, seems unnecessary and counterproductive.

Bathrooms were also an area of discussion at both listening sessions and students felt that single-use bathrooms in public buildings were preferable to communal bathrooms, but some students felt frustrated waiting in line for the bathroom assigned to their gender when the bathroom of the opposite gender was not in use. One student said “If they’re single-use bathrooms, I say we just take down the gender signage. If there’s only one person going into it, no one’s going to care.”

Student Well-Being and Mental Health

- **Lack of Breaks** - With the return to campus came the decision to hold students on campus for the entire semester, and eliminate all regularly scheduled holidays and vacations. On its face, this seemed like a reasonable decision, but at this point in the semester, many students feel that the lack of breaks throughout the semester has negatively impacted their mental health and made it exponentially more difficult to complete an already difficult semester. “We have no breaks and we’re all getting burnt out” and it’s no wonder students are burnt out after a four-month-long academic sprint.
- **Lack of Social Opportunities** - In a poll conducted by the Student Response Task Force, 74% of respondents believe the college has not done enough for student socialization.

Though CAB, SEAL, and other college organizations extended programming opportunities this past semester they were no substitute for organic social interactions in private settings amongst friends. One student said, “It’s a whole lot for the college to assume that students if they can’t see each other, can’t see their friends, will be okay.” As mentioned previously, students are restricted to visiting in a socially distanced capacity in Davison Hall, the student center, or outside, with few other options. Due to the fact that the student center is no longer open for 24 hours, Davison Hall closes at 8:00 p.m. on most nights, and the library closes at midnight, students are restricted to being confined to their rooms or staying outside. As the winter months draw closer, this becomes less of a viable option for students and measures must be taken to ensure students can still have meaningful social interactions.

- **Academic Burnout** - One of the largest factors affecting students’ mental health this semester has been a steadily decreasing will to focus on academic coursework and other responsibilities. Students are struggling beyond comparison to any other semester. “We’re all exhausted, we’re burnt out, it’s just been a sprint the whole time,” said one student in regards to the demanding course loads imposed on students this semester. As is mentioned later in the report, overbearing course loads have had a significant impact on student mental health and “mental health is at an all-time low at Saint Anselm College.”
- **Snow Day Concerns** - Many students viewed the decision from the administration to make Oct. 21 a “Snow Day” positively, as was mentioned in Section 3 of this report. However, in an effort to convey *all* student feedback that we received the following statements highlight some of the concerns or issues raised in regards to the snow day.

For many, the sentiment was appreciated, but unfortunately, for some, it was viewed as too little too late. After nearly three months on campus with no breaks, few social outlets, and an unusually demanding course load the students were offered but a single consolation of a day off. One student remarked of the Snow Day, “It was one of the few tools that they had in their toolbox [...] but like many students, I just wish they had more tools.” Another student said, “It felt like a bandaid solution and I don’t feel like it did enough for enough people.”

For some students, the Snow Day actually had unintended consequences which only added more pressure to an already stressful semester. Holding an unannounced snow day in the middle of the week threw the schedule of students and professors alike into uncertainty and confusion. Many students scrambled to ascertain whether their professors still expected them to complete and submit assignments or take quizzes. Professors didn’t reduce student’s workload, they simply changed due dates to later in the week meaning that students couldn’t have a true break where they could relax and tend to their mental

health. Rather students resorted to spending the day working on their copious amounts of homework because they now had “less time to do more work.”

- **Students Ready to Leave** - In a poll conducted by the Student Response Task Force, 28% of respondents said that their experience at Saint Anselm college this semester had been negative. As a result of this, students mentioned in the Student Listening Sessions that they were looking forward to leaving campus and returning home. One student remarked, “I feel like I’m excited to go home in two weeks, and I feel like I shouldn’t be,” another student said, “Nobody can wait to get off campus, which is the opposite of how we should normally feel.”

Academics

- **General Ineffectiveness of Remote Learning** - “I’m logging off of my zoom meeting wondering why I should even show up to my next class,” as one person said, sums up the general consensus among students. We feel that this grievance would be best conveyed through the words of students themselves. These are some of the things that students said to us: “I do not learn jack-shit when I am in my online courses,” “Pulling teeth would be easier than trying to start discussions,” “Each class is costing me hundreds of dollars and this is what I’m getting?” “I picked Saint As because I would get smaller classes where I could talk to my peers and engage in conversations and learning [...] and you just don’t get that in a zoom meeting.” In a poll conducted by the Student Response Task Force, 73% of respondents believed that online courses were less productive than in-person classes.
- **Overbearing Course Loads** - At the beginning of the semester, students were hit with a flood of assignments as professors rushed to front-load their instruction and assessment in the event that we would be sent home early. The number of assignments that students were given in the first few weeks of the semester contributed to an overwhelming sense of burnout which has persisted for months on end. Though at first, it seemed like front-loading, the assignments never slowed down. One student said, “I just don’t feel like I’m learning a lot right now, I’m just doing what I can to get my work in on time.”

A student summarized their experience as having two main problems. First, in many of their courses, it has felt like there has been much more work assigned to them than in past semesters and with fewer opportunities to discuss course material in person. Second, in their in-person courses, they felt unmotivated to participate due to the fact that only half the class was present in addition to the overwhelming course load.

Midterms, for many struggling to keep up with day to day to course work, was a poorly organized and stressful period for the student body. With little coordination, it seemed that midterm exams were so spaced out that it felt like a never-ending string of exams, projects, and essays. Some students endured midterm exams and assignments alongside their already overwhelming course loads for 3-4 weeks. The midterm exams have always been coordinated with one another to coincide within at least a week or two of each other, but this semester, for many students it contributed to their burnout and lack of motivation going into the remainder of their time until thanksgiving.

- **Need for Increased Support of Professors** - Though many of the aforementioned areas of student concern coincide directly with the student's experience on campus, students are also concerned about the additional burden placed on their professors. Some professors, who are teaching remotely from their homes due to health concerns or personal constraints are placed in an environment where they must effectively teach their students from afar while also managing interruptions from family, pets, etc. Students want to know that support systems are being provided to these professors, and how they can do more to help.
- **Technical Barriers to Effective Learning** - With online courses comes increased technical difficulties, delays, and barriers to learning. Many students have had professors delay starting class in order to figure out any given aspect of new technology. One student said, "It's frustrating for the students, it's frustrating for the professors, and I think it's unfair that they're the ones responsible for figuring out the technology when they haven't been trained thoroughly." Technical difficulties are frequently impeding student learning, and even when classes are partially meeting in person it takes time away from class for the professor to be able to incorporate the students on Zoom. Some students also expressed discontent with various methods of teaching over Zoom. One such complaint was in regards to break-out rooms, one student saying "It's not a substitute for actual instruction."
- **Students Taking Leaves of Absence** - A few students also stated that they will not be returning to Saint Anselm College in the spring due to the effect that the school's COVID-19 policies are having on their schooling. One student credited this decision to the overbearing classes on "the academic side of it, on top of the Coronavirus, has caused my mental health to just be so low that I can not bring myself to put as much energy as I need into my classwork." Some students are taking leaves of absence for academic or financial reasons, others for mental health, but overall nearly every student the college loses can be attributed to the overall weight placed on students this semester. "I think that the lack of ability to socialize with our peers is really negatively affecting mental health.

This needs to be addressed in the future semesters or else I assume many will not want to attend next semester.”

- **Pass/Fail** - At the second listening session, a student who has already made the decision not to return in the spring, mentioned that in the SP2020 semester the college had granted students the opportunity to take their classes Pass/Fail, and at the time it relieved a great deal of stress for students put into a challenging and unfamiliar situation. This policy helped students struggling in the SP2020 semester, why couldn't it have done the same for students in the FA2020 semester?

COVID-19 Testing and Tracking

- **Questioning Whether COVID-19 Tracking is Accurate** - Though it was not a big point of conversation, some students were confused by the college's COVID-19 Tracker, specifically the “error” portion. Students requested clarification on that point and expressed a desire for more frequent updates and emails when the tracker is updated. Other students raised issues with the frequency with which commuter students have been tested. One student said, “As a commuter, I would have expected to be tested more often. It is October 22, and I have only been tested once since the move-in process began.”
- **Desire for Explanation of Positive Cases** - One student raised concerns about the reasons students were testing positive for COVID-19 and inquired whether or not HIPAA regulations would allow for the college to release information, excluding personal information, pertaining to where students are catching COVID-19. A student said, “I wish the school was more transparent in regards to how, where, and why students are testing positive.” If there were general patterns to locations students were going and then subsequently testing positive, students felt that there should be repercussions for travel to those areas specifically.

Return to Campus

- **10 Day Move-In Process** - Though in many ways it was well planned and efficient, some students referred to the 10-day move-in process as “a hellscape” and as “a retirement home for college students.” With little to do throughout the move-in period, students had too much free time to begin establishing a prevalent campus culture of breaking the rules. “Partying was worse when we were moving in, there were people under the tents at the alumni quad, and I remember that people had little faith we'd make it to September.” In this decisive period, the administration and campus security did little to hold students accountable and reinforce the policies that the school had outlined.

Many students also felt that the college should have moved roommates in at the same time so that they could isolate together and be cleared from quarantine at the same time. It made little sense that some roommates moved in up to 10 days apart after one roommate had already been cleared and the other had yet to be released from quarantine. It was a confusing and counterintuitive policy that was given little explanation.

Dining Services

- **COVID-19 Precautions in Davison Hall and Coffee Shop** - It came as no surprise to students that Davison and Coffee Shop would look very different from previous years, but the campus dining hall became a source of frustration for many. One of the things that students mentioned in relation to dining services was the lack of consistency regarding meal-time reservations. Sometimes there was an attendant at the door checking to ensure students were making reservations, and sometimes there was not. When there was an attendant at the door, sometimes they asked to see students' reservation confirmation, and sometimes they did not. This lack of consistency has undermined the need for a reservation system and many students see it as another example of the college stressing the need for a policy, but not enforcing it.

Some students also feel that Davison Hall has loosened too many of their restrictions, and failed to enforce those that are still in place. In regards to the fact that students do not wear masks, sit 3-5 people to a table, and are generally careless in Davison Hall, one student remarked "I do not eat in Dave because I don't feel safe at all, which is sad because it's one of my only opportunities to see my friends." Another student said that having to get food in Davison made them scared and overwhelmed by the number of unmasked people.

Students also expressed their desire for seating in the Coffee Shop. If it is acceptable for Davison to be crowded, why then can students not sit with their friends in a limited capacity at the Coffee Shop? Students have also advocated for the Pub on campus to be open, so as to be an alternative to going off-campus to bars.

Section 5: Moving Forward

After reviewing all of the data gathered and all of the aforementioned areas of student concern, the Student Response Task Force will move forward with a series of resolutions to be presented to the SGA Student Senate for review. These resolutions will consist of recommended policy changes, some of which are enumerated below.

Recommended Policy Changes

- **Intervisitation** - Intervisitation must be reinstated. We do not object to the idea of a gradual transition from our current status to full intervisitation; in fact, starting next semester by allowing intervisitation only within dorm halls is an ideal step, but it must remain a short-term step. Allowing students to visit their friends without locational restriction is the single most effective action that the college can take to reduce the number of students leaving campus to attend bars and parties. In addition, it will reduce the effect of burn-out on the student body by allowing students more effective means to unwind with friends. Room capacities should be determined by multiplying the number of students living in the room by two, excluding students volunteering into the room.
- **Student Input** - Going forward, the administration must include ample student representation in the creation and amendment of COVID-19 policies. This should include students from a variety of clubs and organizations across campus and elected SGA representatives. This would allow administrators to receive input from the student body that is both holistic and comprehensive. The lack of student input on COVID-19 policy this semester is a root cause of the student body's discontent with the situation on campus.
- **Transparency** - Administration must be open and honest about all rules relating to COVID-19. Administrators should be open in regards to the reasoning behind the various school policies. They should be willing and eager to explain their reasoning and if they cannot do so, perhaps the rule should be revisited. The student body should also be notified formally of any changes to the Community Care Covenant or any other COVID-19 policies.
- **Travel Restrictions and Enforcement** - Enforcement of COVID-19 policies, especially in terms of the off-campus travel restrictions, must be reexamined. The college took no visible action regarding students who were going to bars and parties on weekends even when there was photo documentation. The administration must focus its enforcement efforts on those whose actions invite danger. There should be an ongoing dialogue between administrators and students about which activities would necessitate enforcement.
- **Building Hours** - The Student Center must have greater hours of operation each day, especially in light of the cold weather of the winter months. Administration told SGA that the reason for which the building has limited hours is the fact that "students are not following policy." This is not an acceptable reason to shut down a critical student

resource. Now that students are so strongly encouraged to remain in their rooms, students must have a place to which they can go to do schoolwork at most hours of the day. The drastically increased workload of this past semester made the Student Center even more relevant to student productivity.

- **The Pub** - The Pub must be allowed to open for business. Students will be less inclined to go to an off-campus bar if there is one available on campus. The pub should be opened following the New Hampshire guidelines for restaurants and bars as part of the state's "Safer at Home" guidance for the food services industry. To open the pub in a safe manner, the reservation function on the GET App should be utilized to further enhance capacity limits and physical distancing.
- **Barricades** - The administration should continue to keep outside visitors off of campus grounds on weekends with the barricades, but the barricades should not serve to deter everyone from leaving campus. There is no way to track the places to which people are going, so the focus should be on punishing those for whom there is documentation of violations, for example, pictures of someone going to a bar on a Saturday night.
- **Academic Calendar** - Students cannot work as hard as they have had to this semester, under all of the difficulties and stress imposed upon them, without breaks. The "snow day" was an appreciated gesture of goodwill, but it did little to alleviate the burn-out effect on students. We require a break akin to the one we often get on the weekend of Columbus Day: one or two days without classes and attached to the weekend.

Section 6: Reassertion and Conclusion

COVID-19 has created a reality that presents unique challenges to all of us in the Saint Anselm College community, but the student body bears the brunt of the hardship. The college's policies, made without ample student input, proved to add additional pressures on students' academic and residential experience. We convened the Student Response Task Force to focus the many voices within the student body, and we present, by means of this report, a representation of those many voices. This collective report calls resoundingly for change.

Students have asked for reasonable policies created with student input. The student body has received limited opportunities to provide input and minimal justification or reason behind various COVID-19 policies. Ours are not unusual grievances. Instead of working with us to develop a plan that considers safety, freedom, academic success, and mental health equally, the administration seemingly turned a blind eye to these critical student concerns. Subsequently, more restrictions were piled onto demoralized students that had become desensitized to adhering to the various COVID-19 policies on campus.

We ask for a seat at the table; we want to work with the college to make higher education feasible during the pandemic.

This report comes from a place of love for the college. The Student Response Task Force wants the best for the college, as does the administration and monastic community. We recognize that the administration has done what it believed it must to bring students back to campus for the FA2020 semester, and we appreciate the intent behind their efforts. Student perspective must be considered and student representation included in all decision-making processes in this new reality. Only with the full participation of all who care for Saint Anselm College will a considerate, safe, and positive on-campus experience exist during the COVID-19 pandemic.

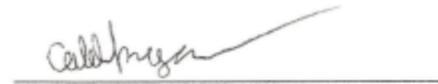
As students, we cannot improve our community alone. The administration, monastic community, and all others who love this school must engage with the student body to enact change. We request an ongoing commitment to communication and collaboration for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic will affect the Saint Anselm College community for years to come, and we must adapt together.

This report enumerates and amplifies many students' voices, diligently collected by their duly elected representatives. Now, its voice must turn into action. The Student Response Task Force calls on the Saint Anselm College Administration to work with students for that change.

Petition of Endorsement

The undersigned signatories consist of the membership of the Student Response Task Force. All members of the Student Response Task Force, by which this report has been compiled, are students. All comments, data, and quotations included in this report are derived from student feedback.


Student Body Vice President, Kevin Chrisom


SGA Chief of Staff, Caleb Kruger


Chair of Room and Board, Ben Mickens


Chair of Welfare, Tyler Cullen


Chair of Academic, Aidan Pierce


Secretary of Internal Procedure, Spencer Dias


Secretary-General, Josh Pratt


Class of 2024 Senator, Saylor Garcia


Class of 2022 Vice President, Jackson Peck


Class of 2022 Senator, Connor O'Neill


Class of 2023 Senator, Chris DeMarkey