

July 31, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to provide you with a brief report on the status of our research ramp-up. As you know, we are in Stage 3 of our [Ramp-up plan](#). I want to once again recognize the hard work and dedication of our campus research community in this extraordinary time. Whether you are working remotely or participating in carefully coordinated, on-campus activities, we know that it is a struggle to keep your research on track and that the current mode of working has been a tremendous, albeit necessary, burden. Meanwhile, the increase in the number of COVID cases recorded in the community over the past month warrants greater caution as we consider next steps in our research ramp-up. With these things in mind, all Academic Deans, Senior Officers and other leaders and experts on the Ramp-up Oversight Committee have begun a review of how current research is proceeding and have also started to discuss whether or not to increase the number of researchers on campus. Any increase will be smaller than originally planned at this point, and would represent a slight expansion of Stage 3 and a partial opening of Stage 4. The exact timing of this step is uncertain, but it would not happen before mid-August.

We are currently peaking at about 600 research personnel on campus at any one time, with approximately 1900 unique persons being granted scheduled access to on-campus research facilities and off-site research locations. As noted in our planning documents, the opening of a new stage is contingent upon the prior stage being well-established and smoothly functioning with research personnel demonstrating full compliance with the protocols and requirements established by building committees and Principal Investigators.

The Oversight Committee is charged with reviewing the status of ongoing activities and of the spread of COVID-19 in the local community in order to make a determination as to whether or not to proceed to the next stage of the ramp-up. The committee met on July 21 to review reports based on information collected by the building committees and to discuss what additional buildings and what new categories of researchers to include in Stage 4 (e.g. special categories of undergraduates and possibly some types of human subject research) in addition to increasing the limits on numbers of researchers in existing categories. There was sufficient information for an assessment of Stage 3 in some cases, but a number of building committees had only just begun to conduct regular walkthroughs to monitor and ensure compliance with their approved plans. It was also agreed that more discussion would be needed about some of the new categories and so no decision was taken regarding Stage 4 at that meeting.

The committee is scheduled to meet again on August 7. This gives building committees additional time to gather more information on operations and compliance and also gives us a bit

more time to see how the current surge in COVID cases is evolving. The surge has also had a significant local impact, as presented in plots included at the end of this memo. For this reason, we are considering adding no more than 250 on-campus researchers at the start of Stage 4 instead of another 500 as originally planned. Note that we are told that the Governor may provide some guidance for higher education any day now, which could also impact our planning and discussions. Below I include some additional detailed information that came out of the July 21 committee meeting and subsequent smaller meetings that were scheduled as follow up to that meeting.

Some buildings have implemented version 1 of the building access app. This app, which is available on both iPhones and Androids, allows the user to scan a QR code at building entrances and exits on campus. It is required for researchers to log their entrance and exits from buildings and individual laboratories and the campus has rolled out this app to help facilitate that requirement. It was reported that higher numbers of ingress counts than egress counts are being logged - so please be sure to also use the QR code each time you exit a building, as well as when you enter it. There was a report of a problem with Android phones that is being addressed in version 2 of the app. We will be opening up the app to additional buildings when version 2 is available. Data from the app will involve use of code numbers for individuals to protect their privacy. They can only be used to identify individuals by a small, restricted group of people in the event that there is a need to contact-trace as a result of a COVID case in the building. The coded information will be provided to building committees to ensure that buildings are not exceeding the approved maximum number of researchers. Of course, this does not alter the need for online calendars to schedule access as outlined in building plans.

We have also implemented a COVID symptom screening checklist that researchers are required to complete each day prior to coming to campus or conducting research in the field. It is recommended that you carry out the screening even on days when you are not going to do research in order to have a more continuous awareness of your physical condition. The screening does not require you to specify specific symptoms. It only records whether or not you have passed or failed the screening. It will soon be available by self-enrollment. We will keep you updated with more details as we move to the next version.

In summary, the Oversight Committee will meet again next week to continue discussions on next steps for the ramp up. We appreciate all that you are doing to keep research going in this difficult period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Incandela', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Incandela

# COVID Case Trend Plots in SB County through 7/28/2020

The plots that follow make use of data from the SB County Public Health website. As can be seen in the first 2 plots, daily 7-day-averages of case counts in our area have picked up significantly starting around mid-June. The last plot shows positivity, or fraction of tests that indicate positive for infection by the SARS-COV-2 virus. It has been steady or trending slightly higher even as testing has risen between mid-July and now from around 900/day to 1200/day.

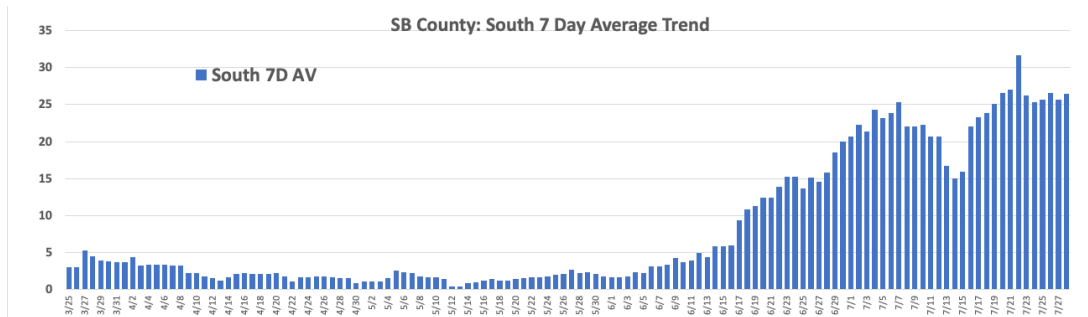


Figure 1. The daily 7-day-average of new cases in South Santa Barbara County alone.

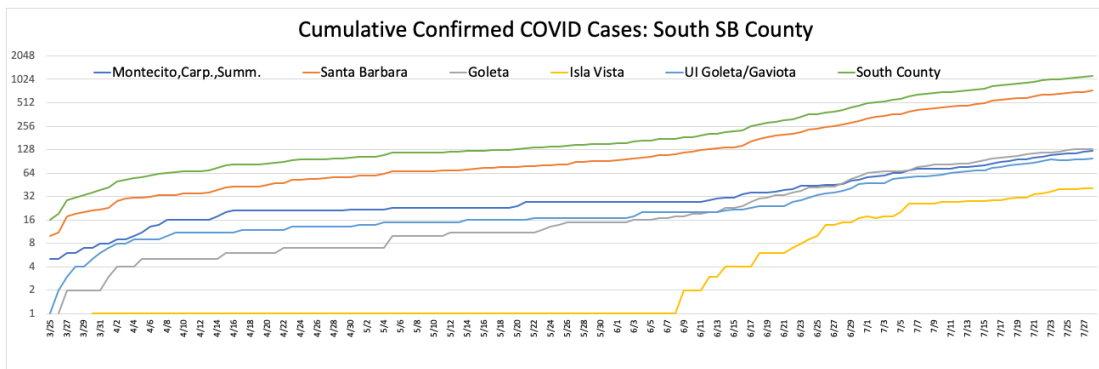


Figure 2. The cumulative count of COVID cases in South Santa Barbara by community or group of communities.

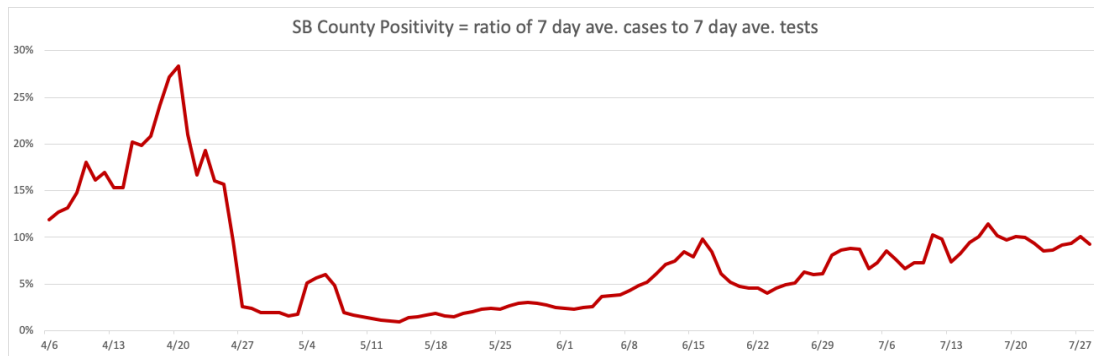


Figure 3. The positivity of tests performed in Santa Barbara County.