

# The virus and the neighborhoods around Lehigh and Moravian

The Bethlehem Gadfly coronavirus, Lehigh University October 28, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts on the coronavirus 

The Lehigh University COVID-19 spike three weeks or so ago has calmed down considerably.

Now only 17 off-campus active cases — the number Gadfly has been more concerned about.

And now we see the *Brown and White* reporter asking the right question: “How badly did Lehigh’s COVID-19 outbreak affect the greater Northampton County community?”

Gadfly can’t understand why there wasn’t/hasn’t been some notice of the substantial Lehigh outbreak to the Southside community.

Neighbors around Moravian College are reporting a similar concern about their off-campus students.

Moravian has consistently shown next-to-no active virus cases, but neighbors have determined that Moravian does not test asymptomatic students (like Lehigh does), and their efforts to get good information from Moravian have not been productive.

## Lehigh



*Selections from Nik Malhotra, “Lehigh’s COVID-19 outbreak a few weeks ago reflected in Northampton County data.” Brown and White, October 25, 2020.*

Data from both Lehigh's COVID-19 dashboard and the Pennsylvania Department of Health shows the potential impact the recent outbreak on campus has had on the larger community.

The chart above compares Lehigh's new COVID-19 cases to those of Northampton County. During the week of Sep. 28, new Lehigh cases made up over 50 percent of all new cases in Northampton County. The following week, Lehigh students contributed to approximately 40 percent of new positive COVID-19 cases in Northampton County.

These figures beg the question: How badly did Lehigh's COVID-19 outbreak affect the greater Northampton County community?

While there is no clear evidence that Lehigh students directly affected other citizens of Northampton County, the data does suggest that Lehigh's COVID-19 outbreak played a role in increasing positive cases in the area.

Lehigh said the spread of COVID-19 likely stemmed from large student gatherings at off campus locations.

Although it's understandable to have social bubbles in a pandemic, she said, these social bubbles are bound to overlap on a college campus. Freed said she has concern about how Lehigh is impacting the greater community in terms of COVID-19.