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On the Front Line: URI's Response to COVID-19 and the Role of the Student-Run Emergency Medical Services

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MICHAEL BRENNAN (Cell and Molecular Biology)

On the Front Line: URI's Response to COVID-19 and the Role of the Student-Run Emergency Medical Services

Sponsor: Andrea Rusnock (History)

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of society, including universities, and we are just beginning to understand its impacts. This project looks at how universities have responded to the pandemic by focusing on the University of Rhode Island, the largest university in the state of Rhode Island. A key aspect of this project is a timeline that documents the policies implemented by URI leadership and relevant policies adopted by the state of Rhode Island. The timeline also includes data about the number of cases at URI and state-wide, as well as figures for the number of students in isolation and quarantine. Data has been assembled into weekly case counts and plotted in order to clearly visualize trends. Compiling this information into a single document facilitates comparison and is vital in associating specific URI or state policies with potential spikes in case numbers that may directly succeed them. The results of this analysis will be used for a brief comparison against other past and present institutional responses to infectious disease.

In addition to documenting URI's policies and responses to COVID-19, I have included a personal, qualitative reflection on working in healthcare during the pandemic. As a lieutenant for URI's Emergency Medical Services, I am tasked with leading ambulance crews, completing operational department duties, and providing continuous training to all of our members. As a medical scribe in the emergency room, I have also experienced the pandemic from the hospital perspective and witnessed the vast effects of COVID-19 on both patients and providers. Descriptions of the challenges faced while working on an ambulance and in a local emergency department were documented.