Friday, May 15, 2020

News Digest: Penn State and the COVID-19 Crisis

This email provides a high-level overview of University pandemic-related news and updates during the past week. Please review and forward this weekly news digest to colleagues to keep them informed of recent developments.

- Penn State is canceling, rescheduling, or moving to virtual delivery all nonessential events and meetings through at least June 30 at all university campuses. Any essential in-person meetings or events must have fewer than 10 attendees and maintain good social distancing practices, with all staff and participants wearing face masks.

- More than 25,000 Penn State students will receive cash grants of up to $1,000 each in an initial round of funding from the university’s share of the federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.

- Penn State announced plans and procedures for students to move out of campus residence halls. Also, in collaboration with the Centre Region of Council of Governments and State College Borough, Penn State sent a letter to University Park students offering safety guidance for moving out of off-campus residences.

- New default security settings for all university Zoom users took effect Monday, May 11. Review the full list of setting changes, a screencast, and other resources on the new Zoom Security webpage.

- Undergraduate Admissions announced details of its new “Flex Start” program, which offers students the flexibility to change their first-year campus of admission.

- On Thursday, Penn State held the first event in its series — Class of 2024: A Virtual “Welcome to the Penn State Community.” consisting of four livestream Q&A sessions with students, alumni, faculty, and members of Penn State’s leadership team. The archived live event can be viewed at Classof2024.psu.edu.

- University Libraries provided guidance for borrowers, including recent graduates, on returning checked-out books and other items, such as rented multimedia equipment.

- REMINDER: President Barron will host a virtual Town Hall at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19, about how Penn State continues to manage the pandemic’s impacts. The hourlong event (to be livestreamed at https://liveevents.psu.edu/) will include Provost Jones and key faculty and administrative leaders involved in planning the university’s return to work and learning strategies.
To obtain comprehensive, updated information at any time, visit:

- The University’s official [COVID-19 information site](#) and [FAQ page](#) (Note: The most recent FAQ updates are provided [here](#))
- The “[University Measures” webpage](#), which summarizes steps Penn State is taking in response to COVID-19.
- The [Office of Human Resources COVID-19 information site](#)
- A robust [list of contacts and resources](#) for the University community
- The University websites dedicated to remote [teaching](#) and [learning](#)