**Friday, June 19, 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 it to colleagues in your units.

* **Penn State announced its plans to resume on-campus work and learning in the Fall 2020 semester.** The University’s [official “Back to State” plans](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/back-to-state) call for a flexible, adaptable schedule, with campus-based instruction August 24 through November 20. The remainder of the semester — including final examinations — will be administered online beginning November 30 (after Thanksgiving break). [**Read the full announcement here**](https://news.psu.edu/story/623188/2020/06/14/penn-state-plans-resume-campus-work-and-learning-fall-semester).
* In conjunction with the Fall 2020 announcement, Penn State launched a webpage featuring answers to a [new, extensive list of FAQs](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/faq/topic/back-to-state) for University faculty, students, and staff.
* The University will offer a robust portfolio of remote learning options and experiences through [Penn State Start at Home and Continue at Home](https://news.psu.edu/story/623602/2020/06/18/academics/students-who-remain-home-fall-will-have-opportunities-keep), so students who must remain home this fall can begin or continue to make progress toward their degrees. More details will be announced at [keeplearning.psu.edu](https://keeplearning.psu.edu/fall-2020/learning-at-home/).
* [Two virtual town halls will be held Monday, June 22](https://news.psu.edu/story/623237/2020/06/15/administration/virtual-town-hall-events-address-questions-around-return) — one for faculty and staff from 2-3 p.m. and one for students and families from 3:30-4:30 p.m. — focused on returning to on-campus work and learning. Questions for the town halls, to be live-streamed at [https://liveevents.psu.edu](https://liveevents.psu.edu/), can be submitted anonymously via separate online Google forms for [faculty and staff](https://forms.gle/3yynXzGWENpD1Jti9) and [students and families](https://forms.gle/Rn49b9YscZ6SvwT18).
* New [“Keep Teaching”](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/) and [“Keep Learning”](https://keeplearning.psu.edu/) websites provide resources for faculty and students to prepare for Fall 2020.
* Penn State faculty and the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence are creating a [video series focused on best practices for remote instruction](https://news.psu.edu/story/623047/2020/06/11/academics/penn-state-faculty-share-remote-teaching-strategies-video-series).
* [Applications for the second round of CARES Act student emergency grants](https://news.psu.edu/story/623185/2020/06/15/administration/application-second-round-cares-act-student-emergency-grants)are now being accepted.
* Due to pandemic-related restrictions, [incoming Penn State students are experiencing orientation virtually](https://news.psu.edu/story/623369/2020/06/16/academics/orientation-leaders-extend-virtual-welcome-incoming-students) this summer.
* [Virtual office hours with Penn State Student Affairs](https://news.psu.edu/story/618502/2020/05/04/academics/student-affairs-host-virtual-office-hours-students) resumed June 18. Students can connect via Zoom to speak with a Student Affairs director on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
* Penn State announced that S[pring 2020 and future graduates can purchase a Certified Electronic Diploma](https://news.psu.edu/story/623280/2020/06/15/academics/penn-state-introduces-certified-electronic-diplomas-graduates), or CeDiploma, in addition to receiving a traditional paper diploma issued after degree conferral.
* **REMINDERS:**
  + All University employees who are currently working remotely should plan to do so until further notice.
  + Penn State is canceling, rescheduling, or moving to virtual delivery all nonessential events and meetings [through at least June 30](https://news.psu.edu/story/620141/2020/05/14/penn-state-canceling-postponing-offering-virtually-all-events-through-june) 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 participants wearing face masks.

**To obtain comprehensive, updated information at any time, visit:**

* The University’s comprehensive [“Back to State” page](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/back-to-state) and [updated FAQs](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/faq/topic/back-to-state).
* The [“University Measures” webpage](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/university-measures/), which summarizes steps Penn State is taking in response to COVID-19.
* The [Office of Human Resources COVID-19 information site](https://hr.psu.edu/covid-19-coronavirus) and [“Return to Work](https://sites.psu.edu/returntowork/)” resource site
* The University’s [health information page focused on personal safety practices](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/stay-well) for Penn Staters at all campuses
* A robust, updated [list of contacts and resources](https://sites.psu.edu/virusinfo/contacts-and-resources-for-penn-staters/)for the University community
* The Penn State websites dedicated to remote [teaching](http://remoteteaching.psu.edu/) and [learning](http://remotelearning.psu.edu/)
* The Social Science Research Institute [website featuring pandemic-related insights from University experts](http://covid-19.ssri.psu.edu/) and other resources