Friday, July 31, 2020

News for Faculty: Penn State’s Preparations for Fall 2020

This twice-weekly email is designed to provide faculty with Penn State’s pandemic-related news and updates as the University prepares for the Fall 2020 semester. Watch for these emails on Tuesdays and Fridays, with additional “special editions” delivered periodically. Previous faculty news digests are archived here.

QUESTIONS FROM FACULTY

Q: What do COVID “mixed” courses look like?
A: In this article and an accompanying video, faculty can learn more about what some professors are planning for their "COVID mixed" (CM) courses this fall.

Q: How do I get my PPE and supplies for teaching?
A: The 500,000 cloth masks referenced by Dr. Barron, as well as the PPE procedure masks to support teaching and instruction, are scheduled to arrive on or around August 7th. The PPE will be distributed to individual campuses, colleges and administrative units the week of August 10th. There are no costs associated with these masks.

However, if you require PPE or supplies NOW, before the university supplied masks arrive the week of August 10th, units can order supplies through General Stores. Additional information on the EH&S Pandemic Supply List is available at https://ehs.psu.edu/sites/ehs/files/ehs-pandemic-supplies.pdf

Q: Will there be wipes at the podium to clean the mics?
A: Instructors will be issued alcohol-based hand sanitizer that can also be used to clean and disinfect the microphone in between uses.

Q: Will there be extra disposable masks locked in the podium for students who forget their masks?
A: Instructors will be issued an initial box of 50 procedure masks. It is recommended that the instructor bring 2-3 additional procedure masks to issue to students should they forget their mask. Instructors also may ask the student(s) to leave the classroom and retrieve their cloth mask before returning to class. Instructors will be able to obtain additional procedure masks through their Department or College.

You can read other FAQs related to Fall 2020 instruction on the Keep Teaching website’s FAQ page.
LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY

- **The University has released plans for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing.** Penn State’s testing program will consist of in-house and third-party contracted testing for symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals. In addition, Penn State’s contact tracing program will leverage and scale-up existing contact tracing protocols in place at the University.

- During a Town Hall yesterday, University leaders including President Barron shared specific plans that officials have been developing for the start of the fall 2020 semester. The virtual Town Hall will be archived and available for viewing soon at [https://LiveEvents.psu.edu/](https://LiveEvents.psu.edu/). Individuals who watched the event are encouraged to fill out this survey.

- A resource has been developed that provides a suggested timeline for communication to students regarding fall instruction, as well as templates to streamline this process and ensure consistency with key information. An overview of student-faculty communication recommendations and technical information on using Canvas for early communications will be presented at a [webinar on Tuesday, August 4](https://LiveEvents.psu.edu/), from noon–1:00 p.m.

  o Key dates for communications are:
    - August 3: Send initial communication to students (templates provided below)
    - August 10: Publish Canvas course and post an announcement (instructions provided with templates)
    - Before August 24: Publish syllabus with new University syllabus guidance
  o [Read the full details](https://LiveEvents.psu.edu/) (requires WebAccess login)

- The Child Care Center at Hort Woods and the Bennett Family Center at University Park will reopen on **August 19**. The University is developing plans in line with state, local, and CDC guidance for safely reopening the two centers and will continue to provide additional details in the coming days and weeks.

- The University has developed **requirements and expectations for students** to meet prior to returning to campus this semester. Among other steps, students must read and sign the new required “Penn State Coronavirus Compact,” complete mandatory pre-arrival COVID-19 testing, if notified, and self-quarantine for at least 7 days immediately prior to arrival.

- To ensure the University’s [virus information website](https://LiveEvents.psu.edu/) remains a key source of information, the [frequently-asked-questions section](https://LiveEvents.psu.edu/) was reorganized and streamlined with focused categories for students and families, faculty and staff, and the broader community. The University’s Back to State page also will
continue to be updated with the latest information and resources related to Penn State’s return, again with dedicated sections for students and employees.

KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- The new “Countdown to Fall: Student Support and Engagement Series” includes a series of hourlong Zoom sessions for instructors and staff at all Penn State campuses. Preregistration is not required. Upcoming sessions (all to be held from Noon to 1 p.m. EDT) include:
  - Monday, August 3: Academic Advising
  - Tuesday, August 4: Health and Wellness

The Zoom webinars can be accessed at [https://psu.zoom.us/j/99280363051](https://psu.zoom.us/j/99280363051).

- In addition to the aforementioned “Countdown to Fall” series, copious development and training opportunities are available to faculty in preparation for the Fall 2020 semester. [Upcoming webinars for instructors](#) at all Penn State campuses include:
  - Monday, August 3: [Canvas, Kaltura and Zoom: Enabling Continuity of Instruction](#)
  - Monday, August 3: [Who Are You Not Reaching? Designing Your Course to Gain Maximum Engagement from All Students](#)
  - Tuesday, August 4: [Creating, Finding, and Assessing Instructional Video to Engage Students](#)

Find information about many more faculty development and training opportunities on the "Keep Teaching" website’s dedicated webinar page.

- Penn State [faculty are encouraged to continue submitting questions](#) via [this online form](#) so leadership can respond to them in upcoming communication, such as this news digest for faculty.

- [Guidance for instructors regarding PPE](#) in classrooms and laboratory spaces is now available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To obtain comprehensive, updated information at any time, please review:

- The University’s comprehensive resources on its “[Back to State]” page and [updated FAQs](#) regarding plans to resume on-campus work and learning this fall
• Penn State’s “Keep Teaching” and “Keep Learning” websites, including many Fall 2020 instruction-related FAQs and new webinars
• The online archive of video messages from Penn State leaders and experts, previous news digests, and pandemic-related University news stories
• The Office of Human Resources COVID-19 information site and “Return to Work on Campus” resource site
• The “University Measures” webpage, which summarizes steps Penn State is taking in response to COVID-19
• The University’s health information page focused on personal safety practices for individuals at all campuses
• A robust, updated list of contacts and resources for the University community
• The Social Science Research Institute website featuring pandemic-related insights from University experts and other resources