

Tuesday, August 4, 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: *Do I need to wear a mask when I am outside on campus?*

A: In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and public health guidelines, wearing face masks and adhering to social distancing practices, including maintaining six feet of physical distance between another person, are critical components in helping to maintain the health and safety of the entire campus community. [Students, employees and visitors are required](#) to practice physical distancing and wear face masks/coverings at all times in campus buildings; outdoors when they cannot be physically distant from others; and whenever state or local laws require.

For the full response, please visit the [article in Penn State Today](#).

Q: *Am I required to provide my course in an alternate delivery mode for students who cannot participate in the particular delivery mode designated for my course?*

A: No, instructors are not required to provide courses in delivery modes other than the delivery mode designated for their course. Instructors should consider [how students may make up missed work if students are out](#) for short or lengthy periods of time.

For student expectations for in-person courses, review the [in-person details page](#). Students are expected to attend all classes in-person. Instructors should follow [Faculty Senate policy 42-27—Class Attendance](#), with some flexibility. If a window of absence is lengthy, instructors may need to consider additional flexibility.

Although instructors are not required to provide courses in delivery modes other than the one designated or prepare their courses in multiple delivery modes, they may be asked to consider alternative ways for students to participate, especially if students who have chosen Learn from Home options have no other course sections to choose from. Not all courses can be offered in a different mode than that originally scheduled.

You can read other FAQs related to Fall 2020 instruction on the [Keep Teaching website's FAQ page](#).

LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY

- This week, approximately 24,000 Penn State students from identified areas with a higher prevalence of coronavirus and those who will be on the front lines to welcome and work with students [will be receiving at-home saliva COVID-19 testing kits](#) to be taken before arrival on Penn State campuses.
- President Barron [wrote a letter](#) supporting a Borough of State College ordinance that would enforce face coverings, limit lines outside of businesses, and limit the size of gatherings.
- The Return to Campus task group has [issued guidance](#) related to expectations for student behavior and safety compliance when visiting University offices.
- The University has announced student [move-in dates for all campuses](#) as well as information on the arrival process, what to pack, and other resources.
- The July 30 virtual Town Hall is now archived and available for viewing at <https://LiveEvents.psu.edu/>. The event addressed a range of topics, including plans for coronavirus testing, surveillance and contact tracing.
- Fast Fact: Penn State has [purchased more than 2.6 million masks](#) since March 1.

KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- The University has released [plans for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing](#).
- 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.
 - [Read the full details](#) (requires WebAccess login)
- The University has developed [requirements and expectations for students](#) to meet prior to returning to campus this semester.
- [Guidance for instructors regarding PPE](#) in classrooms and laboratory spaces is now available.
- 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:
 - Wednesday, August 5: Student Care and Advocacy

- Thursday, August 6: Academic Support
- Friday, August 7: Special Student Populations

The Zoom webinars can be accessed at <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:
 - Wednesday, August 5: [Engaging Students Asynchronously](#)
 - Thursday, August 6: [Looking through the Faculty Lens: Nearpod](#)
 - Friday, August 7: [Instruction, Universal Masking and PPE Recommendations](#)

Find information about many more faculty development and training opportunities on the [“Keep Teaching” website’s dedicated webinar page](#).

- To ensure the University’s [virus information website](#) remains a key source of information, the [frequently-asked-questions section](#) 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.
- 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.

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