

Tuesday, August 11, 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: Will faculty and staff be required to sign a compact or waiver similar to the student compact?

A: No, Penn State employees are not required to sign a waiver or compact. Some faculty who enter LionPATH through Self-Service, rather than through the Faculty Center or Home Base, may see the Compact, but they do not have to sign it. If you have any Compact-related questions, please contact covid19studentsupport@psu.edu.

Q: I know that I, and everyone in my class, is required to wear a mask at all times. How do I find information on the best type of mask for my teaching situation?

A: The task group on Instruction, Universal Masking and PPE Recommendations has just released an updated report that provides guidance on different types of masks and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in a wide range of instructional settings to ensure the safety of our faculty, staff and students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The task group further sought to balance the need for an instructor to be heard intelligibly for in-person instruction while also being mindful that students may be participating through the remote environment, made recommendations regarding the accommodation of disabilities, and examined different instructional settings ranging from traditional classrooms to laboratories and performance spaces. The full report and detailed recommendations are available [here](#).

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

LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY

- A [second round of recommendations](#) on the use of universal masking and other personal protective equipment (PPE) from the Academic Matters Coronavirus Task Force is now available. An updated document pertaining to the use of face masks and PPE in the classroom is posted [here](#).
- As a part of Penn State's comprehensive safety guidelines, and in accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Health requirements, each college, campus, or administrative unit will be required to [designate a pandemic safety officer](#) for

each work location to respond to questions about the University's COVID-19 safety plan requirements.

- The Faculty Senate has a [dedicated web page](#) for both required syllabus language (not related to COVID-19) and for suggested syllabus language related to COVID-19 topics.
- During the fall 2020 semester, Penn State undergraduate and graduate students who wish to complete [required experiential learning opportunities](#), such as internships and practicums, in person, will need to secure prior approval from University leadership.
- Revised [guidance pertaining to meetings and events](#), as well as an [Acknowledgment of Risk document](#) that can be used by units hosting visitors for meetings or events, is now available.
- Employees from Penn State's Office of Physical Plant (OPP), Housing and Food Services (HFS), and other units are [hard at work behind the scenes](#) preparing campus for the arrival of students, faculty and staff for the fall semester.
- Several faculty and staff members in Penn State Harrisburg's School of Behavioral Science and Education came together before the summer began to [help ensure students met their internship requirements](#).

KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- Students are [required to agree to the Penn State Coronavirus Compact](#), which is now available in LionPATH. The compact – which all undergraduate and graduate students at every campus location must confirm that they have read before returning to Penn State or beginning classes – outlines health and safety expectations and requirements for the upcoming semester.
- A [faculty and staff COVID-19 symptom checker](#) is now part of a new employee-centered experience in the Penn State Go app. In addition to the symptom checker, the new Faculty and Staff Experience will feature access to Penn State email, Canvas Teacher, a link to Workday, and more.
- The State College Borough Council [passed a temporary ordinance](#), supported by Penn State, that mandates mask wearing and social distancing in most instances and limits the size of gatherings in the borough.
- 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 12: [Career Success and Leadership](#)
- Thursday, August 13: [Supporting Students on and off Campus](#)
- Friday, August 14: [Academic Engagement](#)

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 12: [Engaging Students through Assessment](#)
 - Thursday, August 13: [Using iTwo to Access Your Students’ Intentions to Return to Campus](#)
 - Friday, August 14: [Integrating Penn State Tools in Canvas for Better Teaching and Learning](#)

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 communications, 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