Tuesday, March 30, 2021

News for Faculty and Instructors: Penn State and COVID-19

This twice-weekly email is designed to provide faculty and instructors with Penn State’s pandemic-related news and updates during the Spring 2021 semester. Watch for these emails on Tuesdays and Fridays, with additional "special editions" delivered periodically. Previous faculty news digests are [archived here](#). For current faculty guidance, resources, FAQ documents, and more visit the “[Back to State Info for Faculty” webpage.

LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY

- Penn State’s [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) shows ongoing results for all COVID-19 tests administered on campus since December 19, 2020, for faculty, staff, and students.

- **Wednesday’s spring webcast with President Eric Barron** will focus on topics affecting employees. Joining Barron will be Lorraine Goffe, vice president for Human Resources and chief human resources officer, and Kelly Wolgast, director of the COVID-19 Operations Control Center. The livestream can be viewed online at [https://liveevents.psu.edu](https://liveevents.psu.edu) beginning at 3:30 p.m.

- Students who completed quarantine and isolation at University Park are being surveyed to collect feedback about their experiences.

- Over the past year, the [Manufacturing and Sterilization to Address COVID-10 (MASC) Initiative](#) has mobilized to protect health care providers and communities across Pennsylvania.

- **Spring 2021 Holiday/Special Events Testing Schedule**
  - Friday, April 2: no random testing (all campuses); one walk-up testing site open (Pegula Ice Arena).
  - Saturday, April 3: no random testing (all campuses); no walk-up testing.
  - Saturday, April 17: no testing at Pegula Ice Arena or Beaver Stadium (Hintz Family Alumni Center and 101 N. Atherton St. open as usual for walk-up and random testing, respectively); testing at the Commonwealth Campuses remains unchanged.
  - Friday, May 7: no random testing (all campuses); one walk-up testing site open (Pegula Ice Arena).
  - Saturday, May 8: no random testing (all campuses); no walk-up testing.

WEBINARS

- **Plans to Support Residential Students Who Cannot Return in Fall 2021:**
  Tuesday, April 6, [12:00-1:00 p.m.](#)
KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- April 1 is the deadline for tenure-line faculty in the penultimate year of their probationary period to accept a one-year extension to their probationary period due to COVID-19. By completing the online form “Confirmation of Extension of the Probationary Period Due to COVID-19,” the faculty member’s probationary period will be extended by one year. Detailed information is available here.

- Penn State and local leaders today appealed to students and local residents to redouble their safety efforts to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

- Penn State held a livestream event for accepted students and their families considering applying to Penn State, “Class of 2025: A Virtual ‘Welcome to the Penn State Community,’” on March 25.

- In support of the “Mask Up or Pack Up” campaign, frontline healthcare workers share advice on staying vigilant and how everyone can do their part to help protect the Penn State community.

- University Park students are urged to take advantage of walk-up COVID-19 testing on campus if they are concerned that they may have been exposed.

- Walk-up COVID-19 testing hours at the University Park campus will continue as follows:
  - Walk-up testing at the Hintz Family Alumni Center will be available Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
  - Testing availability will change on the dates listed in “Latest News”. More information is available here.

This walk-up testing is available to employees who are in the Return to Work database at University Park. Employees in that database also continue to have the option to do the opt-in mail kit testing.

- Faculty can still submit questions related to Penn State’s COVID response. Questions may be submitted here.

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 on-campus work and learning
Penn State’s “Keep Teaching” and “Keep Learning” websites, including many Spring 2021 instruction-related FAQs
Penn State’s COVID-19 dashboard
Previous issues of this Digest
The online archive of video messages from Penn State leaders and experts
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