Friday, May 28, 2021

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

This weekly email is designed to provide faculty and instructors with Penn State’s pandemic-related news and updates. Watch for these emails on 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.

- Recognizing that travel presents additional risks for being exposed to and spreading COVID-19, Penn State has updated its travel guidance to address vaccination requirements for employees on University-funded travel.

- A project spearheaded by Penn State Extension addresses vaccine hesitancy in Pennsylvania, with a particular focus on the Latino population and senior citizens in rural communities.

- In The Medical Minute, Penn State Health providers discuss whether regular physical activity can help people lessen the impact of viruses like COVID-19.

- Penn State is reminding students who were awarded a first round Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) grant that they must log in to LionPATH to accept or decline the funding by 5 p.m. Eastern time on Tuesday, June 1.

- The Data 4 Action project, which documents the impacts of COVID-19 in Centre County, is also providing new and impactful opportunities for a growing group of students working as research assistants.

KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- At a special meeting on May 12, the Faculty Senate passed a nonbinding COVID-19 vaccine resolution as well as a letter addressed to the Board of Trustees related to the Next Gen Penn State and search process to find the University’s next president.

- Penn State is currently evaluating the new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and update from the Pennsylvania
Department of Health regarding masking for fully vaccinated individuals and will provide additional guidance to the University community. While the review is underway, masking and physical distancing is expected by all individuals — regardless of vaccination status — inside Penn State campus buildings and on public transportation across all campuses.

- Penn State’s COVID-19 Operations Control Center has announced the schedule for drop-in COVID-19 testing at University Park through late June.

- The Regional Vaccination Clinic at the Bryce Jordan Center has resumed operations as scheduled on Thursday, May 6, offering both the two-dose Moderna vaccine and the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Starting May 13, the clinic will only offer the second dose of Moderna and the single dose J&J vaccine.

- 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 “University Status” 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’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