

Tuesday, July 7, 2020

News Digest: Penn State's Preparations for Fall 2020

This email provides faculty with Penn State's pandemic-related news and updates as the University prepares for the Fall 2020 semester. Watch for these news digests in your email twice each week, typically on Tuesdays and Fridays, with additional "special editions" delivered periodically. Previous news digests are [archived here](#).

NEW VIDEO MESSAGE

- **Faculty Leading Health and Safety Plans for Return to Campus:** Preparations are well underway to help mitigate risks for students, faculty, and staff as Penn State returns to classrooms and labs this fall, including implementation of new guidance for instruction. To learn more about the efforts in this area by the University's Public Health and Science Task Group, [view this informational video](#) featuring Dennis Scanlon, Distinguished Professor of Health Policy and Administration and director of the Center for Health Care and Policy Research, and Matt Ferrari, associate professor of biology in Penn State's Center for Infectious Disease Dynamics.

All video messages from University leaders and experts are [archived here](#) for viewing.

FACULTY FAQs

Q: Will Penn State adjust its approach to teaching and learning in Fall 2020 if COVID-19 infections increase or spread?

A: The University is concerned about recent trends and continuously monitoring state and national disease data and following guidance from state and local health officials. Based on that guidance, and in consultation with faculty experts in epidemiology, medicine and public health, the University is prepared to adjust its approach as necessary, including the possibility that Penn State would need to shift the semester to a fully remote learning environment.

The [University and Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf](#) have stressed the importance of following guidelines to protect community health and minimize the spread of the virus, and cautioned that lax behaviors could undo progress toward reopening campuses.

The answer to [this question](#) and others regarding the University's responses to the pandemic and planning for the fall semester can be found in the ["Latest Updates" section of Penn State's comprehensive FAQ](#). This page will be updated regularly with new or significantly revised questions and answers for students, faculty, staff, and the community. Also, monitor the ["Back to State"](#) and ["Latest News"](#) pages for more information.

Q: What resources are available to help faculty use the mode(s) of instruction they have chosen to deliver their course(s)?

A: A wide range of resources have been added to [keepteaching.psu.edu](#) for each of the four modes of instruction. Visit the webpages dedicated to [in-person instruction](#), [mixed-mode instruction](#), [remote synchronous instruction](#), and [remote asynchronous instruction](#) to learn more about these on-demand, collaborative, and online resources.

LATEST NEWS

- [Classroom guidance is now online](#) for faculty to manage COVID-19 concerns.
- The University has [updated directives for meetings, visitors, and Visiting Scholars on campus](#).
- Penn State has [updated guidance and requirements for University-related domestic travel](#) and for [meetings and events](#). All Penn State employees must follow [existing travel guidance](#). Travel during the pandemic, even in areas that have reopened, will be carefully monitored under new University guidelines, and faculty and staff are still asked to limit travel where possible and consider virtual options.

REMINDERS

- Penn State is augmenting outreach to all faculty via multiple platforms to share key information. To support this effort, [faculty are encouraged to submit questions](#) via [this online form](#) so leadership can respond to them in upcoming communications.
- Classroom [policies related to masking and social distancing](#) are in effect for Fall 2020 at all Penn State campuses.
- The University's "[Keep Teaching](#)" and "[Keep Learning](#)" websites are being updated regularly with resources for faculty and students to prepare for the fall semester. The latest updates:
 - Comprehensive lists of online resources have been added to the four flexible instructional modes' dedicated webpages, which are accessible from the [updated overview page](#).
 - The technology-related FAQs have been updated on the "Keep Teaching" site's [Frequently Asked Questions page](#).

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
- The Penn State websites dedicated to [teaching](#) and [learning](#) in Fall 2020
- The online archives 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](#)" 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