

**Tuesday, October 27, 2020**

## **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 Fall 2020 semester. Watch for these emails on Tuesdays and Fridays, with additional "special editions" delivered periodically. Previous faculty news digests are [archived here](#). For current Fall 2020 faculty guidance, resources, FAQ documents, and more visit the ["Back to State Info for Faculty"](#) webpage.

### **QUESTION FROM FACULTY**

**Q: *Will in-person undergraduate student research end after November 20, 2020?***

**A:** Undergraduate and graduate students are permitted to continue working in labs if they are in town. Students may not request to remain in an on-campus residence hall solely for the purpose of working in a lab. Undergraduate students, graduate students, external visitors, and visiting scholars must receive prior approval from the relevant academic dean for them to continue on-campus research. They must adhere to the standard operating procedures of the lab and be part of the person-count for square footage, scheduling, and any other relevant considerations. Faculty members cannot and should not require undergraduate or graduate students to come to campus, and undergraduate and graduate students who conduct on-campus research must be included in the research reductions and approaches to de-densification.

### **LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY**

- [Penn State has updated its public COVID-19 dashboard](#) with preliminary results from weekend testing. Symptomatic students are urged to seek out testing now so they can complete isolation prior to Thanksgiving.
- [President Eric Barron's next live webinar](#) will be held at 3 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 29, to discuss the University's continuing response to the coronavirus and other related topics. Faculty and staff are encouraged to join online. Joining Barron for the webinar will be Damon Sims, vice president for Student Affairs, and Kelly Wolgast, director of the COVID-19 Operations Control Center, to provide their perspectives to the conversation.
- In the wake of large gatherings of students at some off-campus apartment complexes in State College during the Penn State-Indiana University football game on Saturday, [Penn State and the Borough of State College announced Monday \(Oct. 26\) joint planning, enforcement and outreach measures](#) designed to help prevent similar gatherings during Saturday evening's home game against Ohio State and future games.

- Effective at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 1, daylight savings time ends in most of the United States. Faculty are encouraged to address this with students as this may impact deadlines and course times. Students located in other countries should consider their local schedule in conjunction with their Penn State classes. For more information visit the [Penn State Global programs website](#).
- The [Centre Area Transportation Authority \(CATA\) is adding new high-capacity buses](#) to its no-fare Blue Loop campus transit service. Beginning Monday, Oct. 26, the new 60-foot articulated buses will begin serving the Blue Loop route following two months of service on CATA's various community service routes. The buses can transport 55% more riders than standard buses, providing a greater ability to socially distance while riding.
- Penn State photojournalism students in Penn State's Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications [produced a series of photographs highlighting the isolation, masking and social distancing practices](#) happening around the University Park campus

## WEBINARS

- The “Keep Engaging” Fall Webinar Series will be delivered via Zoom from noon to 1 p.m. every Monday through November 16. Upcoming webinars include:
  - Monday, November 2, 12:00-1:00 p.m., [Tutoring in the Time of COVID](#)
- [Upcoming webinars for instructors](#) at all Penn State campuses include:
  - Wednesday, October 28, 4:30-5:45 p.m., [Addressing Ethnocentrism and Racism in the Classroom](#)
  - Thursday, October 29, 12:00-1:00 p.m., [How to Help Distressed Students](#)
- The [Transition to Remote Symposium](#) will help instructors prepare for the planned pivot to remote instruction on November 20. More than 25 experts, including faculty champions from six campuses as well as experts from TLT, the Schreyer Institute, World Campus, Penn State Harrisburg Center for Teaching Excellence, and more, will serve as co-facilitators/panelists during the event.
  - Friday, November 6, 10:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

## KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- The recorded Oct. 22 webinar with Penn State President Eric Barron is now available to view online at <https://liveevents.psu.edu/oct-22-2020-webinar/>. The ongoing series allows Barron to directly address questions from faculty and staff

about the University's response to the pandemic, as well as other related, critical topics. For more information about the webinar and the webinar series, please see today's [news story](#).

- Penn State has announced procedures and [assistance available to students for the fall departure from campuses](#), as well as COVID-19 testing and quarantine and isolation procedures after in-person instruction ends on November 20.
- Currently, there are three different types of tests to determine whether someone has COVID-19 or has previously been infected. A [news story](#) examines each type of test and the differences between each of them.
- At the [latest meeting of the Faculty Senate on October 20](#), senators received an update on the University's virus mitigation efforts, Penn State's fall departure plans, and changes to SRTEs for Fall 2020. The Senate also engaged in a discussion about a report on the 2020 Penn State Community Survey.
- In appreciation of the efforts of faculty and instructors to support students' learning, all members of Penn State's instructional community, at any location, are invited to attend the virtual [ITLC Lilly Conference - Enhancing Online, Onsite, and Hybrid Teaching & Learning](#), Nov. 30 to Dec. 4, 2020. We welcome all full-time faculty, part-time instructors, graduate students, teaching assistants, learning designers, and post-docs, but space is limited! To reserve your spot go to: [tinyurl.com/LillySignUp](https://tinyurl.com/LillySignUp).
- In order to encourage communication to students in preparation for the November 20th transition to remote teaching and learning, a series of templates has been created for instructors who are currently teaching In-Person or Mixed courses. This will assist in communicating key information to students to help them to prepare to be successful in their studies as they make this transition. We recommend all instructors [review these templates](#) and begin communicating this information as soon as possible.
- Penn State IT is working to assist instructors and students with preparations for the remote teaching period that will take place following the Thanksgiving break. Information on technology resources and the Technology Loaner Programs is available on Penn State's [Keep Teaching](#) and [Keep Learning](#) websites. For students, there is a limited supply of loaner laptops and mobile hotspots. For instructors who need assistance with digital annotation, there is a limited supply of loaner iPads. Instructors and students can [access the Mobile Technology Request Form](#) with their Access ID and password.
- Gathering feedback from students at an early point in the semester helps gauge students' learning and provides instructors with valuable data for making course adjustments. Students appreciate being asked for feedback, especially when instructors respond with changes to improve learning. Surveying students is one

method for gathering feedback. PSU learning surveys specific to the four COVID instructional modes have been created for you to download into your Canvas course to collect student feedback on the learning modes. Click [here](#) for instructions on how to download them into your course. For information about other options for collecting midsemester feedback, see the Schreyer Institute's Midsemester Feedback [page](#).

- Penn State Human Resources, in partnership with Health Advocate, has announced a [three-pronged approach for the 2020 flu vaccine clinics](#) throughout the commonwealth. Employees can choose one of three options to get a flu shot.
- [Faculty can still submit questions](#) related to Penn State's return to classrooms this fall. 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 this fall
- Penn State's ["Keep Teaching"](#) and ["Keep Learning"](#) websites, including many [Fall 2020 instruction-related FAQs](#) and [new webinars](#)
- Penn State's [COVID-19 dashboard](#)
- 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