

**Tuesday, February 16, 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.

### **QUESTION FROM FACULTY**

**Q: *What should I do if I'm showing symptoms of COVID-19 or think I've been exposed?***

**A:** Penn State employees who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or think they've been exposed should notify their supervisor, leave work immediately or remain at home, and contact their personal health care provider for a phone assessment. Your supervisor will contact Occupational Medicine at [psuoccm@psu.edu](mailto:psuoccm@psu.edu) or call [814-863-8492](tel:814-863-8492) on your behalf. Occupational Medicine will follow-up with additional information, based on your situation. Occupational Medicine also will contact your supervisor and the University's Absence Management unit on your behalf to inform them about when you will be out of the office and when you may be able to return.

Read the full FAQ [here](#).

### **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.
- Head football coach [James Franklin welcomed students back to campus](#) and reminded everyone to keep following COVID-19 prevention guidelines.
- [White Building will be the site of universal re-testing](#) for students (Feb.15-26). The site was selected by a team of experts who looked at many factors and layered multiple precautionary measures to create an environment for testing that reduces risks as much as reasonably possible.
- Penn State will offer a [full slate of courses in summer 2021](#). Students will have the flexibility to take courses at any Penn State campus.

- The [2021 Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon \(THON\) will be held virtually](#) from 6 p.m. Friday, February 19, through 4 p.m. Sunday, February 21.
- The University has updated its guidance for students, faculty, and staff [in the event a campus ceases normal operations](#) due to weather, power outages, or other emergencies.

## WEBINARS

- **Engaging Students in a Multi-Audience Classroom via Active Learning:** Thursday, February 18, [1:00-3:00 p.m.](#)
- **Addressing Intersectionality to Transform Leadership at Penn State:** Friday, February 19, 2:00-5:00 p.m. and Friday, February 26, 2:00-5:00 p.m., via Zoom. Interested parties can register via this [Zoom Meeting Registration form](#).

## KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- Mindful of Penn State's close connection to the communities it serves, [University Park leaders are meeting with local authorities](#) to share the planned return of students, the University's testing and contact tracing strategies, and other potential questions from the community at large.
- As part of a video series where Penn State faculty experts help educate the community on the latest information related to the COVID-19 vaccine, Bernice Hausman, professor of humanities and public health sciences, explains that [vaccine hesitancy is not new](#).
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, new legislation permits employers to allow [employees more flexibility in how they utilize unused 2020 and 2021 Health Care and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account \(FSA\) monies](#).
- A new survey, published by Penn State's Teaching and Learning with Technology, aims to gather feedback from faculty and students about their respective [experiences with remote and hybrid education](#).
- The Testing and Surveillance Center (TASC) will start providing [in-house diagnostic COVID-19 testing at the University Park campus](#).
- During the first two weeks of in-person learning (Feb. 15 to Feb. 26), [Penn State will conduct universal COVID-19 testing](#) of all students who are taking in-person classes or who are taking a fully remote or online course load while living in Centre County or within a 20-mile radius of a Penn State campus.

- Walk-up COVID-19 testing hours at the University Park campus will be extended in the coming weeks.
  - Week of Feb. 15 and onward: Walk-up testing at the Hintz Family Alumni Center will be available Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
  - Beginning Feb.15, employees and students will have separate entrances and separate queues.

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.

- In Pennsylvania, the state Department of Health and county health departments are responsible for [COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#), which is being done in a phased approach with health care workers and those in long-term care facilities in the initial phase (Phase 1A). At this time Penn State is not a point of distribution for the vaccine, but has a comprehensive plan developed for how the University could quickly activate should this change. In the meantime, those that are eligible are strongly urged to sign up as soon as possible. Faculty, staff, and students should visit [Pennsylvania's vaccine website](#) for information on when they may be eligible to receive a vaccine and where those vaccines may be available in their communities.
- [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