**Friday, March 26, 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](https://vpfa.psu.edu/academicaffairs/penn-state-pandemic-news-digest-archive/). For current faculty guidance, resources, FAQ documents, and more visit the [“Back to State Info for Faculty”](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/back-to-state-fall-2020-resources/) webpage.

**FEATURED VIDEO**

Elizabeth McGraw, professor and Huck Scholar in entomology, discusses whether [people who have already had COVID-19 should get vaccinated](https://news.psu.edu/story/652207/2021/03/23/should-i-get-vaccinated-if-i%E2%80%99ve-already-had-covid-19).

**QUESTION FROM FACULTY**

**Q: *How can I respond to students who are in need of support while also attending to my own needs?***

# A: The [Red Folder initiative](https://redfolder.psu.edu/) is a guide to help faculty, staff, and others who interact with students to recognize, respond effectively to, and refer distressed students at Penn State. The Red Folder is designed to provide a supportive framework and clear set of steps for referrals. Units within the university can request a training from CAPS on the Red Folder via the [CAPS outreach request form](https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/form/caps-outreach-request-form).

# As a faculty member, advising and supporting students who are overwhelmed with the stress of the pandemic and other stressful situations can be emotionally draining. A [document, developed by Health Advocate, provides tips for handling emotional fatigue and practicing good self-care](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/files/2021/03/Compassion-Fatigue_Faculty.pdf). More information about the services Health Advocate provides is available [here](https://hr.psu.edu/health-matters/employee-assistance-program).

**LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY**

* Penn State’s [COVID-19 Dashboard](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/covid-19-dashboard/) shows ongoing results for all COVID-19 tests administered on campus since December 19, 2020, for faculty, staff, and students.
* Penn State and local leaders today appealed to students and local residents to [redouble their safety efforts to curb the spread of the coronavirus](https://news.psu.edu/story/652675/2021/03/26/administration/university-local-leaders-call-renewed-safety-effort-covid-19).
* Penn State held a [livestream event for accepted students](https://news.psu.edu/story/652626/2021/03/25/campus-life/class-2025-penn-state-education-will-set-you-success) and their families considering applying to Penn State, “[Class of 2025: A Virtual ‘Welcome to the Penn State Community](https://classof2025.psu.edu/),’” on March 25.
* In support of the “Mask Up or Pack Up” campaign, [frontline healthcare workers share advice on staying vigilant](https://news.psu.edu/story/652551/2021/03/25/frontline-health-care-workers-share-perspective-and-advice) 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](https://news.psu.edu/story/649775/2021/03/03/campus-life/university-park-students-urged-utilize-walk-covid-19-testing) if they are concerned that they may have been exposed.
* An interdisciplinary team of Penn State College of Engineering and College of Agricultural Sciences researchers worked to [optimize the Building and Grounds’ hand sanitizer management and maintenance operation](https://news.psu.edu/story/652463/2021/03/25/campus-life/wireless-sensors-track-sanitizer-use-optimize-replacement-and), managed by the Office of Physical Plant, by designing and developing a wireless sensor system.

**WEBINARS**

* **Re-Writing Study Guides Using Depth of Knowledge Framework:** Tuesday, March 30, [12:05-1:05 p.m.](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/webinars/re-writing-study-guides-using-the-depth-of-knowledge-framework/)

**KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

* Penn State has [updated its guidelines for employees](https://news.psu.edu/story/651735/2021/03/19/administration/university-updates-guidance-visitors-campuses-during-pandemic) concerning [when to invite visitors to campuses](https://sites.psu.edu/academicaffairs/files/2021/03/Visitors-to-Penn-State-Campuses-03.16.21.pdf) during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.
* 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](https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cMggMoJLkm98TZP),” the faculty member’s probationary period will be extended by one year. Detailed information is available [here](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/files/2020/09/Guidance-on-Extension-of-the-Probationary-Period-Due-to-COVID-19-Updated-09.18.2020.pdf).
* 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.

* [Faculty can still submit questions](https://news.psu.edu/story/628322/2020/08/13/academics/penn-state-faculty-can-still-submit-questions-about-return) related to Penn State’s COVID response. Questions may be submitted [here](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fforms%2Fd%2Fe%2F1FAIpQLSdLJXKUWNxbcqBGf_NJ7x0734cy_GId-aIoiCNYpWPjXAEGsw%2Fviewform&data=02%7C01%7Cagc105%40psu.edu%7C8f277042fb7643a099cd08d86193f571%7C7cf48d453ddb4389a9c1c115526eb52e%7C0%7C0%7C637366635386023185&sdata=4wZ4CcAqoTh1WtIYTtTFGrM%2FfDae7jJurTnlT5C22KQ%3D&reserved=0).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**To obtain comprehensive, updated information at any time, please review:**

* The University’s comprehensive resources on its [“Back to State” page](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/back-to-state) and [updated FAQs](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/faq/topic/latest-updates) regarding **on-campus work and learning**
* Penn State’s [“Keep Teaching”](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/) and [“Keep Learning”](https://keeplearning.psu.edu/) websites, including many [Spring 2021 instruction-related FAQs](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/frequently-asked-questions/)
* Penn State’s [COVID-19 dashboard](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/covid-19-dashboard)
* Previous issues of this [Digest](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/penn-state-pandemic-news-digest-archive/)
* The online archive of [video messages](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/video-messages-fall-2020-preparations/) from Penn State leaders and experts
* The [Office of Human Resources COVID-19 information site](https://hr.psu.edu/covid-19-coronavirus) and [“Return to Work on Campus”](https://sites.psu.edu/returntowork/) resource site
* The [“University Measures” webpage](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/university-measures/), which summarizes steps Penn State is taking in response to COVID-19
* The University’s [health information page focused on personal safety practices](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/stay-well) for individuals at all campuses
* A robust, updated[list of contacts and resources](https://sites.psu.edu/virusinfo/contacts-and-resources-for-penn-staters/)for the University community
* The Social Science Research Institute [website featuring pandemic-related insights from University experts](https://covid-19.ssri.psu.edu/) and other resources