

**Tuesday, March 2, 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.

### **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.
- With the conclusion of the required universal COVID-19 testing period, [Penn State resumed testing of its on-campus students and employees](#) on Monday, March 1 as part of the University's spring 2021 student testing strategy.
- According to a new model created by researchers at Penn State, [when healthcare workers become ill during a disease outbreak](#), overall case counts and mortality rates may significantly increase.

### **WEBINARS**

- **Mentoring March – A Workshop Series for Faculty Mentoring Graduate Students.** Effective mentoring is an invaluable component of graduate students' success, and is even more important and challenging during the pandemic, which has introduced even more complexity into developing and maintaining strong mentoring relationships.
  - Effective Communication, Wednesday, March 3, [12:30–1:30 p.m.](#)
  - Aligning Expectations, Thursday, March 11, [12:30–1:30 p.m.](#)
  - Addressing Equity and Inclusion, Thursday, March 25, [12:30–1:30 p.m.](#)

### **KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

- Penn State is planning a [phased return over the summer semester to a full on-campus learning environment for fall 2021](#). The University's priorities continue to be the health and well-being of its students, faculty, staff and local communities, and the plans for expanded in-person classes have the flexibility built in to quickly respond to changing pandemic conditions, if necessary.

- Penn State is adjusting its spring 2021 COVID-19 testing strategy to [increase the use of walk-up testing among students and implement additional rapid testing](#) at the various testing locations on the University Park campus.
- Gathering feedback from your students early in the semester helps gauge their learning and can provide you with valuable data for making course adjustments. Download a PSU learning survey specific to your COVID instructional mode and place it in your Canvas course to collect feedback. Instructions are provided: [how to import student feedback surveys from Canvas Commons into your course](#). Once in your course, you can customize the content to meet your needs. Read about additional [options for gathering feedback](#) on the Keep Teaching site or view the [Fall 2020 webinar](#) on this topic.
- Penn State Health [provided COVID-19 vaccines to more than 1,400 members of the public](#) who meet current Phase 1A eligibility on its first day operating four new, dedicated vaccine sites across central Pennsylvania on Monday, February 22.
- 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](#) 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