**Tuesday, March 30, 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.

**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.
* [Wednesday’s spring webcast with President Eric Barron](https://news.psu.edu/story/652938/2021/03/29/administration/first-spring-webcast-president-barron-focus-faculty-staff) will focus on topics affecting employees. Joining Barron will be Lorraine Goffe, vice president for Human Resources and chief human resources officer, and Kelly Wolgast, director of the COVID-19 Operations Control Center. The livestream can be viewed online at <https://liveevents.psu.edu> beginning at 3:30 p.m.
* [Students who completed quarantine and isolation at University Park are being surveyed](https://news.psu.edu/story/652848/2021/03/29/campus-life/ongoing-survey-those-quarantineisolation-helps-improve) to collect feedback about their experiences.
* Over the past year, the [Manufacturing and Sterilization to Address COVID-10 (MASC) Initiative](https://news.psu.edu/story/652453/2021/03/25/research/university-wide-covid-19-response-initiative-marks-year-solutions) has mobilized to protect health care providers and communities across Pennsylvania.

* [Spring 2021 Holiday/Special Events Testing Schedule](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/testing-support/)
	+ Friday, April 2: no random testing (all campuses); one walk-up testing site open (Pegula Ice Arena).
	+ Saturday, April 3: no random testing (all campuses); no walk-up testing.
	+ Saturday, April 17: no testing at Pegula Ice Arena or Beaver Stadium (Hintz Family Alumni Center and 101 N. Atherton St. open as usual for walk-up and random testing, respectively); testing at the Commonwealth Campuses remains unchanged.
	+ Friday, May 7: no random testing (all campuses); one walk-up testing site open (Pegula Ice Arena).
	+ Saturday, May 8: no random testing (all campuses); no walk-up testing.

**WEBINARS**

* **Plans to Support Residential Students Who Cannot Return in Fall 2021:** Tuesday, April 6, [12:00-1:00 p.m.](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/webinars/plans-to-support-residential-students-who-cannot-return-in-fall-2021/)

**KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

* 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).
* 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.
* Walk-up COVID-19 testing hours at the University Park campus will continue as follows:
	+ Walk-up testing at the Hintz Family Alumni Center will be available Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
	+ Testing availability will change on the dates listed in “Latest News”. More information is available [here](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/testing-support/).

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