**Friday, April 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](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**

Leslie Parent, vice dean for research and graduate studies in the Penn State College of Medicine, discusses [why some people develop fever, fatigue, headache, and muscle aches after getting the COVID-19 vaccine](https://news.psu.edu/video/653174/2021/03/30/covid-19-asked-answered-differences-side-effects), while others have no symptoms at all.

**QUESTIONS FROM FACULTY**

**Q: *When is the next wellness day?***

Wednesday, April 7 is Penn State’s third and final wellness day of the spring semester. More information is available [here](https://wellnessdays.psu.edu/). On wellness days, no class meetings will happen (unless the faculty member has received an exemption) and no assignments are due.

**Q: *Can visitors still come to campus?***

**A:** Units are strongly encouraged to [continue to engage with visitors remotely whenever possible](https://news.psu.edu/story/653223/2021/04/01/campus-life/coronavirus-faq-can-visitors-still-come-campus). Full guidance on bringing visitors to campus is available [here](https://sites.psu.edu/academicaffairs/files/2021/03/Visitors-to-Penn-State-Campuses-03.16.21.pdf).

**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 is strongly encouraging all students, faculty, and staff to sign up to get a vaccine as soon as they are eligible to receive one](https://news.psu.edu/story/653458/2021/04/01/campus-life/students-employees-encouraged-get-vaccinated-soon-they-are). Phase 2, which extends vaccine eligibility to all Pennsylvanians age 16 or older, will begin on April 19.
* President Eric Barron and guests [answered an array of questions from Penn State faculty and staff during a livestream about the University’s response to the coronavirus](https://news.psu.edu/story/653350/2021/03/31/administration/barron-guests-answer-employee-pandemic-questions-during), employees returning to work on campus, health and safety of the community, and others topics related to the pandemic.
* Physicians at Penn State Health urge people to [continue to wear a mask and follow other COVID mitigation guidelines](https://news.psu.edu/story/653353/2021/04/01/medical-minute-proceed-caution-even-after-vaccination), even if they have been vaccinated.
* Penn State students are serving as data collectors and data managers in a [nationwide research study to understand mask usage](https://news.psu.edu/story/652408/2021/03/31/research/penn-state-students-participate-cdc-led-research-project-mask) on college campuses.
* Researchers in the College of Medicine found an [increase in the number of cigarettes smoked per day during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic](https://news.psu.edu/story/651393/2021/03/30/research/pandemic-stress-boredom-caused-some-pa-residents-increase-cigarette) by nearly a third of surveyed Pennsylvania smokers.
* Penn State Health, with the assistance of community organizations and local government officials, has [provided pop-up vaccination clinics](https://news.psu.edu/story/653322/2021/03/31/feeling-relieved-pop-vaccination-clinics-reach-underserved-populations) at locations in Berks, Dauphin, Lancaster, and Lebanon counties, specifically targeted to underserved communities.

**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/) and [3:00-4:00 p.m.](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/webinars/plans-to-support-residential-students-who-cant-return-in-fall-2021/) Read the news article [here](https://news.psu.edu/story/653288/2021/04/01/academics/april-6-webinar-cover-planning-students-who-cannot-be-campus-fall).

**KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

* [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.
* 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 above. 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