

**Friday, July 9, 2021**

## **News for Faculty and Instructors: Penn State and COVID-19**

This weekly email is designed to provide faculty and instructors with Penn State's pandemic-related news and updates. Watch for these emails on 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 2021 Resources](#)" webpage.

### **LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY**

- International travel requests must be submitted 30 days in advance of departure date. Detailed information about how to submit an international travel request can be found [here](#).
- Faculty may post [this sign](#) in their individual offices if they wish to request that people entering wear a mask.
- Penn State researchers used sound signals captured by underground fiber-optic sensors to [understand how COVID impacted human activities](#).
- During the pandemic, Tech TAs helped faculty and instructors [manage the technology associated with their newly remote courses](#).
- Students are being asked to complete a [short and anonymous survey about their current COVID-19 vaccination status](#) or plans to get vaccinated before the start of the fall semester.
- Penn State researchers [designed a synthetic defective SARS-CoV-2 virus](#) that is innocuous but interferes with the real virus' growth, potentially causing the extinction of both the disease-causing virus and the synthetic virus.
- 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.

### **KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

- Penn State has updated its guidance for employees embarking on University-affiliated domestic travel. [Effective July 1, employees may resume domestic travel without unit executive approvals](#).
- Penn State has released [updated guidance and procedures for hosting events and large gatherings](#) both on and off campus.

- Penn State faculty and staff are being asked to [complete a short and important anonymous survey](#) about their current COVID-19 vaccination status or plans to get vaccinated before the start of the fall semester.
- Updated guidance for promotion and tenure that incorporates attention to the impact of the events of 2020/2021 has been posted to the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty affairs website. A summary of the changes can be found [here](#).
- The deadline to submit a faculty work adjustment request for fall 2021 is July 15. A document and request form are available at <https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/back-to-state-spring-2021-resources/> under the “Instructional Guidance” header.
- Penn State is continuing to [encourage students and employees to share their coronavirus vaccination status](#) to help inform the University’s decision-making and its COVID-19 management plan. Employees can provide their vaccination status using [SalesForce Health Cloud](#), a secure online platform.
- Penn State has announced [plans to transition its masking and physical distancing requirements](#) to more closely align with changes recently announced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Fully vaccinated individuals at Penn State are no longer be required to wear face masks indoors, and the physical distancing and outdoor masking requirements have been lifted for all individuals.
- [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 [“University Status” page](#) and [updated FAQs](#) regarding on-campus work and learning
- Penn State’s [“Keep Teaching”](#) and [“Keep Learning”](#) websites, including many [instruction-related FAQs](#)
- Penn State’s [COVID-19 dashboard](#)
- Previous issues of this [Digest](#)
- The [Office of Human Resources COVID-19 information site](#) and [“Return to Work on Campus”](#) resource site
- 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