

**Friday, July 16, 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.

### **QUESTION FROM FACULTY:**

**Q: *Can I require students to wear a mask in my class?***

**A:** As of June 28, masks are optional for those who are fully vaccinated (two weeks after the second dose in a two-dose series or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine), including in classroom, advising, and student services spaces. Unvaccinated individuals must continue to wear masks indoors at all times. If you want someone to wear a mask when interacting with you, you can request that they do so, but cannot require it. It is important to note that those who are working in or visiting designated health care environments must continue to wear masks indoors and maintain distancing regardless of vaccination status.

In individual offices, faculty may post [this sign](#) if they wish to request that people entering wear a mask.

### **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.
- Faculty and staff are [asked to complete a short and important anonymous survey](#) about their current COVID-19 vaccination status by today, Friday, July 16.
- This [article](#) discusses the delta variant and ways to protect against it.

### **KEY REMINDERS FOR 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](#).
- 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 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.
- [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