**Friday, July 23, 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](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 2021 Resources”](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/back-to-state-fall-2020-resources/) webpage.

**QUESTIONS FROM FACULTY**

**Q: *Are the COVID-19 vaccines associated with fertility issues?***

**A:** The COVID-19 vaccines do not cause fertility issues, according to Catharine Paules, infectious diseases physician, Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. Read the [full FAQ here](https://news.psu.edu/story/663939/2021/07/16/are-covid-19-vaccines-associated-fertility-issues).

**Q: *Will COVID-19 variants continue to emerge if vaccination rates don’t rise?***

**A:** Andrew Read, director of the Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences, explains that viruses experience frequent changes in their genetic code, and sometimes these mutations could make a virus more dangerous. Read the full FAQ [here](https://news.psu.edu/story/664456/2021/07/22/impact/will-covid-19-variants-continue-emerge-if-vaccination-rates-don%E2%80%99t).

**LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY**

* University Health Services will host a [second COVID-19 vaccine clinic for all students](https://news.psu.edu/story/664242/2021/07/20/campus-life/university-health-services-host-second-covid-19-vaccine-clinic) at the end of July.
* Cara Exten, assistant nursing professor, was recruited by the University to lead in the formation and execution of the [COVID-19 testing and contact tracing initiatives](https://news.psu.edu/story/663582/2021/07/14/nursing-faculty-utilizes-epidemiology-contact-tracing-and-screening-efforts).
* 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.

**KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

* During the pandemic, Tech TAs helped faculty and instructors [manage the technology associated with their newly remote courses](https://news.psu.edu/story/662940/2021/07/01/academics/tech-tas-helped-faculty-navigate-remote-teaching-technology-during).
* Students are being asked to complete a [short and anonymous survey about their current COVID-19 vaccination status](https://news.psu.edu/story/663405/2021/07/08/campus-life/students-asked-complete-anonymous-survey-covid-19-vaccination) or plans to get vaccinated before the start of the fall semester.
* Penn State is continuing to [encourage students and employees to share their coronavirus vaccination status](https://news.psu.edu/story/661579/2021/06/15/campus-life/students-employees-strongly-encouraged-share-their-vaccination) to help inform the University’s decision-making and its COVID-19 management plan. Employees can provide their vaccination status using [SalesForce Health Cloud](http://psu-healthcloud.force.com/vaccine/login), a secure online platform.
* [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 [“University Status” page](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/university-status/) 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 [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 [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’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