Friday, September 24, 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: *What do I do if a student in my class has been placed on interim suspension due to noncompliance with the University's required weekly testing?*

A: University Park faculty and instructors received a [letter]() from Executive Vice President and Provost Nick Jones about students who have been placed on interim suspension due to failure to comply with the University's required weekly COVID-19 testing. The letter describes the consequences for students on interim suspension and how faculty and instructors should handle those students' absences.

LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY

- University Park students who are subject to required weekly COVID-19 testing and who have missed at least three weeks of testing have been notified that they are out of compliance with the University's health and safety policies and [have been placed on interim suspension]() through the Office of Student Conduct.

- The [COVID-19 testing site at Pegula Ice Arena closed]() on Wednesday, September 22. COVID-19 testing at White Building is available from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sundays through Fridays for students living on or near the University Park campus, and faculty and staff who are working on campus.

- University Park employees who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should use [this document]() to identify a testing site in the community.

- Penn State's [COVID-19 Dashboard]() will be updated [twice weekly](), on Tuesdays and Thursdays, during the fall semester.

- [Penn State and Centre Volunteers in Medicine will host a COVID-19 vaccine clinic]() at University Park on September 25 prior to the Penn State-Villanova game.

KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY

- This graphic was created by Denise Solomon, head of the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences, and was recently updated in collaboration with Penn State Contact Tracing. It is a clear representation of what faculty may do to assist the contact tracing process and their students.

- The U.S. Department of State is warning that passport processing times are taking, on average, 12 to 18 weeks, not including mailing time. More information is available here. Education Abroad is advising students that if they are planning to study abroad in spring semester, they must apply for a passport *immediately* and through the *expedited process*.

- COVID-19 vaccination data for all Penn State campuses is now available on the University's COVID-19 dashboard.

- Penn State Health is once again making a public COVID-19 dashboard available on its website. The dashboard includes vital information from each of its acute care hospitals. Statistics include total number of adult and pediatric COVID-19 inpatients, number of patients requiring intensive care unit care, and patient vaccination status.

- 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