**Friday, October 15, 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://vpfa.psu.edu/back-to-state-2021-resources/) webpage.

**QUESTION FROM FACULTY**

**Q: *Are faculty ‘work adjustments’ available for spring semester 2022?***

**A:** Guidance has been updated and released to inform faculty and instructors of on-campus work expectations and the [work adjustments process](https://news.psu.edu/story/672689/2021/10/14/administration/faculty-work-adjustments-process-renewed-spring-2022) for spring 2022. A document describing the work adjustment process and criteria is available [here](https://vpfa.psu.edu/files/2021/10/Faculty-Work-Adjustments-Process_10-14-21.pdf). Faculty with an approved work adjustment for fall 2021 may apply for an extension of their work adjustment to spring 2022 [here](https://forms.office.com/r/EH4YjD44bp). The form for faculty who do not currently have a work adjustment, but who want to request one for spring 2022, is available [here](https://sites.psu.edu/academicaffairs/files/2021/10/Faculty-Work-Adjustment-Request-Form_10-14-21.docx). The deadline to apply for a spring semester work adjustment is October 29.

**LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY**

* In compliance with President Biden’s executive order requiring COVID-19 vaccination for all federal employees, contractors, and others, Penn State has determined that [all University Park faculty and staff must submit proof that they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by December 8](https://news.psu.edu/story/672455/2021/10/12/all-university-park-employees-subject-federal-covid-19-vaccine-mandate).
* A research project conducted jointly by the Penn State College of Medicine and Penn State University Libraries will [assess COVID-19 beliefs, including vaccine hesitancy](https://news.psu.edu/story/672053/2021/10/11/research/penn-staters-invited-take-survey-about-covid-19-behaviors-vaccine), throughout the Penn State community.
* A Penn State-led research team will measure the [rapid changes in greenhouse gas emissions](https://news.psu.edu/story/672390/2021/10/12/research/researchers-receive-grant-study-pandemics-impact-greenhouse-gas) that resulted from lower traffic levels and efforts to curb transmission of the virus.
* According to Penn State College of Medicine researchers, more than half of the 236 million people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 worldwide since December 2019 will [experience post-COVID symptoms](https://news.psu.edu/story/672142/2021/10/13/research/how-many-people-get-long-covid-more-half-researchers-find) up to 6 months after recovering.
* Penn State will [award $50 million in emergency relief](https://news.psu.edu/story/672705/2021/10/14/administration/penn-state-award-50m-student-covid-19-relief-grants-fall) to help students enrolled during the fall 2021 semester to cover any component of their cost of attendance or other emergency expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Penn State’s [COVID-19 Dashboard](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/covid-19-dashboard/) will be updated [twice weekly](https://news.psu.edu/story/666726/2021/08/20/campus-life/covid-19-dashboard-be-updated-twice-weekly-during-fall-semester), on Tuesdays and Thursdays, during the fall semester.

**KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

* More than five weeks into the fall semester, the [COVID-19 vaccination rates among students, faculty, and staff at University Park are continuing to rise](https://news.psu.edu/story/671352/2021/10/01/campus-life/more-87-university-park-students-vaccinated-positivity-rate) as the positivity rate of University COVID-19 testing declines. As of October 7, the overall vaccination rate among all students at University Park is more than 87%, and the seven-day positivity rate of all testing conducted by Penn State at University Park is 0.4%. Penn State is urging students who have not yet been vaccinated against COVID-19 to begin the process now so that they can be fully vaccinated before leaving campus for the Thanksgiving break.
* A “contingency planning” [document](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/contingency-planning-for-academic-unit-heads-doc/) has been developed that assists academic unit heads (department heads, director of academic affairs, school directors, division heads) in planning for the possibility of a faculty member’s extended absence from a class, or multiple student absences in a single class, that may strain instructional capacity. Faculty members may also find this document useful to review.
* [COVID-19 testing at White Building](https://news.psu.edu/story/670178/2021/09/21/pegula-covid-19-testing-site-close) 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.
* 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