

Updated directions and guidance regarding on-campus research activities
To: All Investigators (cc to Research Assistants)

As our response to the global COVID-19 pandemic continues, this letter provides direction for all members of the faculty and staff who are responsible for directing research efforts at Lehigh. Below, we provide direction on the conduct of research and responsibilities in supervision of students and staff. This includes particularly important direction and guidance for those responsible for group working environments including laboratories, studios, and shared offices.

Our priority is the well-being of individuals and our role in the public health response to the pandemic. At this point, we are moving from anticipating the need to curtail research activities to limiting activities in the interest of social distancing. We also emphasize once again the need to think ahead to safe shutdown of on-campus activities should that be necessary. Each investigator responsible for a research group must attend to the following:

- Fully accommodate, in accordance with University policies and guidance, all students and staff who are sick, are self-isolated, need to attend to family members, or are uncomfortable coming to campus. Students and staff must be supported in attending to their own and their families' needs.
- Provide for social distancing in ongoing research activity. Social distancing measures include having people working separately, e.g., 6-10 feet apart, ceasing activities that require people to handle the same objects or materials, and frequent handwashing. Provision of social distancing will vary across types of research. Please work with your department chair and, if necessary, your research associate dean, on specific measures applicable to your area.
- Support, enable, and encourage working remotely. In support of social distancing and also in support of those unable to come or uncomfortable with coming to campus, direct students and staff to work that can be accomplished remotely.
- Have a plan for ramp-down of on-campus research activity. This includes having clear plans for shutdown if necessary, accounting for both safety and preservation of critical materials. Please see the guidance at <https://research.cc.lehigh.edu/lab-shutdown>

As you know, undergraduate students have been directed to disperse to their permanent homes and all coursework is being conducted remotely. This directive applies to engagement in research as well. Continued undergraduate involvement by electronic means is, of course, encouraged.

At this time, graduate students are permitted on campus in order to conduct research activities. Faculty members should be aware that these students may feel obligated to work on campus despite our efforts to support and encourage social distancing among individuals. It is important that as faculty advisors and leaders, we make it explicitly clear that this is not an expectation or a requirement. Compelling any student to come to campus is wholly inappropriate.

Stipend support for graduate students and salary support for staff paid off grants can generally continue. Work done remotely that constitutes continued contribution to projects will generally be recognized by sponsors as such. In addition, commitments of effort for stipend and salary support includes accommodation for interruption of work related to illness. We anticipate receiving further guidance from federal agencies. Principal Investigators should consult the information page at <https://research.cc.lehigh.edu/covid-19-information-faculty-researchers> or contact their Contract and Grant Specialists.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts in support of the Lehigh community as well as our efforts to contribute to the global response.

Sincerely,

Alan J. Snyder, Ph.D.

Vice President and Associate Provost, Research and Graduate Studies