

From: Provost, University of Kentucky <provost@email.uky.edu>

[To: Deans, Chairs, and others; forwarded by the Graduate School to DGS and DGS Staff]

Sent: **Tuesday, March 24, 2020 5:01 PM**

Subject: Clarifications regarding faculty and staff access to facilities during COVID-19 campus restrictions

Colleagues,

In the context of this health emergency, I write today to clarify the University's policies on faculty and staff access to campus facilities during the COVID-19 event.

First, I want to applaud those colleagues who are required to work on campus because they provide critical services. We are taking every precaution with these colleagues to prevent the further spread of the virus.

Second, everyone has a responsibility to do their part to protect their own health, the health of the UK family, that of our own families and loved ones, and that of our broader community.

I want to emphasize that beyond those colleagues who are providing absolutely essential and fundamental services, all others are required to work remotely with some exceptions described below. Deans and Associate Provosts are to ensure compliance with these policies.

Given our concern for the health of everyone in the community, the University is following the principles below when it comes to decisions about using our facilities:

- * We will all do our part to slow down this lethal virus, reminding ourselves constantly that our actions today can impact many others, including our own loved ones.

- * We will use common sense about using campus facilities—including offices and laboratories—for preparing to deliver online courses, performing research, or engaging in other endeavors that would typically be part of our daily routine. All decisions to come to campus will be made understanding that isolation is key; we will practice social distancing while on campus; and we must aggressively perform infection control.

- * Our protocols and actions will respect everyone—including staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students. We will not pressure any of our colleagues into making decisions about coming to campus or other UK work locations that would put them or others at risk. And remember, it is their judgment as to whether they are at risk. Respect their judgment.

Based on the above, listed below are expectations for all faculty and staff under the Office of the Provost for accessing campus facilities. These policies do not apply to faculty and staff in academic units supporting UK HealthCare. In addition, the Vice President for Research has issued guidance for the transition of research activities, referenced below.

1. Faculty and staff members (including student employees and graduate assistants) will operate remotely as much as possible. This means that they should only be on campus or other

UK work locations for essential work that cannot be performed remotely, and if so, only for the limited period of time absolutely necessary to complete the task. For example, instructors may require a classroom for recording a lecture; faculty and staff may need to access their offices briefly to obtain files or books; or there may be critical maintenance of research equipment or completion of previously initiated experiments.

2. When faculty and staff are on campus, they will self-isolate, practice social distancing in cases where self-isolation is not possible, and regularly wash hands and disinfect surfaces.

3. No one will pressure others to work in a shared space, or to be on campus for work that is not absolutely essential for base operations. For example, the first-choice option for meetings should be via conference call or Zoom. If you or your staff have to come to campus for brief periods of time, work schedules must be communicated in advance so that social distancing can be coordinated.

4. Although faculty and staff who come to campus intermittently for the reasons stated above are expected to work in isolation, it is important to ensure safety. We must avoid working alone with dangerous equipment or materials; and we must establish work protocols and rules that ensure the safety of any individuals who must be working alone.

These measures are intended to decrease the spread of the virus in the interest of public health and the University expects strict adherence. Deans and Associate Provosts will ensure that faculty and staff members follow these policies. Further, Deans and Associate Provosts are empowered to render guidance to their units based on unit-specific circumstances, but that adhere to the principles expressed in this communication.

Below are some examples of acceptable reasons to be on campus for limited periods of time, while practicing isolation as much as possible:

- * An instructor must use a classroom to record a lecture. The instructor should disinfect surfaces (such as a keyboard and mouse) before and after recording the lecture.
- * A faculty or staff member needs to come to their office to access a file or textbook.
- * A faculty or staff member lacks sufficient internet access at their home and must use a campus computer for a Zoom meeting.
- * A faculty or staff member is needed to come on campus for maintenance of equipment that cannot be easily shut down or would damage the equipment, or to care for animals required for maintenance breeding or with special needs (e.g., specific types of food).
- * A faculty or staff member lacks the necessary specialized equipment or other resources to do their work from home and must briefly come to campus.

Note that these examples are not exhaustive, but representative of the types of permissible reasons to use offices or other campus facilities.

More specific guidance from the Vice President for Research on conduct of research during the COVID-19 event can be found at <https://www.research.uky.edu/resources/covid-19-guidance-researchers>

Finally, I emphasize once again that no one is to pressure colleagues or staff members—including graduate or undergraduate student employees—to risk their health or the health of others by coming to campus. If any faculty member, staff member, or student feels undue pressure, I ask them to contact their Dean or Associate Provost immediately.

These policies apply to all of us. I expect us to lead by example.

Please refer any questions to Vice Provost Larry Holloway (holloway@uky.edu<<mailto:holloway@uky.edu>>). Thank you for your leadership and hard work during these challenging circumstances.

Regards,
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