



To: Research Deans
From: Dawn Bonnell, Vice Provost for Research
Date: March 16, 2020
Re: **Implementation of Restrictions on research operations amid COVID-19**

The purpose of the research ramp down is to depopulate the campus. The data unambiguously support the positive impact of social distancing on public health. Further, the sooner and more vigorously social distancing is implemented, the smaller the number of cases and the more lives are saved. As the cities, counties, and state governments enact closures in our region, and across the nation, we cannot take this less seriously than the rest of society. In fact, we should take the lead in doing the right thing. Our goal is to reduce population to a skeleton staffing levels for all activities including research.

The earlier communication regarding the research ramp down stated that beginning March 18, access to labs will be limited to essential personnel who perform critical procedures or processes. Faculty were asked to provide divisional/departmental business offices with an updated list of proposed essential personnel and contact information by March 17.

The schools should encourage the lists to be submitted as soon as possible. Many if not most on the lists of essential personnel are expected to be staff in facilities and researchers maintaining equipment and systems that require attention. Each school should identify a process for review and approval of the activities in the list. Although a first level review may be performed by department chairs, final approval of activities beyond simple equipment or sample maintenance must be obtained from a vice dean or appropriate leader.

In any case where the activity goes beyond simple equipment or sample maintenance, the request should include a justification of the essential activity, a social distancing plan, and a contingency plan. Beginning March 18, approval must have been obtained before any on campus activity occurs.

The obvious challenge with this process is to distinguish activities that are 'essential'. The justifications of essential activities listed below illustrate principles that underly the designation. Other activities might be considered essential but would need to represent the same level of necessity to operations.

Justifications of essential activities

- Activity that if discontinued would generate significant data and sample loss
- Activity that if discontinued would pose a safety hazard
- Activity that maintains critical equipment in facilities and laboratories
- Activity that maintains critical samples and animal populations
- COVID-19 related activity that has a timeline for deployment that could address the current crisis
- Clinical trial activity that if discontinued would negatively impact the patient's care
- Activity necessary for delivery of remote instruction

Invalid justifications of essential activities

- It will take time to get the lab up and running again
- Lab results are needed for a Science paper submission or other deadline