

Research Advisory Update: March 19, 2020

In order to protect the health, safety, and well-being of individuals in our community, undergraduates should not enter any Kennesaw State University facility to conduct research. Faculty with undergraduates in their research groups should contact each student to determine what activities they can complete remotely to fulfill any course requirements for the remainder of the semester.

Research groups should begin restricting on-campus activities with the following considerations:

- PIs should identify non-critical activities which can be ramped down, suspended, or delayed. Definitions of what constitutes critical or non-critical research activities should be discussed with one's Associate Dean for Research, in consultation with the Vice President for Research, if necessary.
- Do not initiate any new experiments.
- To the extent possible, do not order any new materials for research and ensure that any materials en route are appropriately received and handled. Consider cancelling any unshipped orders.
- Work by members of a research group should be staggered in such a way to maximize social distancing. However, no researcher should be in a laboratory completely alone, for safety purposes.
- If critical to safeguard the research, ensure that you and your group have access to all necessary equipment to finish in-progress experiments.
- Within reason and safety, graduate students working on their theses and dissertation projects may be granted continued access to university facilities, following best prevention practices (social distancing, hygiene etc). Faculty committees supervising thesis and dissertation projects should be flexible in allowing those students who decide they need to return home or socially isolate to do so without penalty. Faculty may need to provide alternative methods for students to complete their work in a timely manner, and for scheduling defenses using electronic technologies.
- Please remember that any animal or biological material protocol changes still need to be submitted for IACUC or IBC review as usual.

Research groups conducting research with human subjects should begin restricting on-campus activities with the following considerations:

- PIs should identify non-critical research which can be ramped down, suspended, or delayed. Definitions of what constitutes critical or non-critical research activities should be discussed with one's Associate Dean for Research, in consultation with the Vice President for Research, if necessary.
- Researchers should postpone or reschedule in-person interviews or focus groups, or make arrangements to find alternative forms of data collection using virtual methods.
- Studies with time-dependent factors, such as periodic monitoring of subjects on a particular regimen, will need to consider the effects of rescheduling on their study data and outcomes but operate with an abundance of caution for all involved.
- Researchers working at off-campus locations should verify procedures with their site contacts.
- Research with human subjects that is online or virtual may continue, including recruitment of new subjects.
- Online surveys that automatically collect data may be left open, and data analysis can continue remotely if data security plans do not prescribe otherwise.
- Please remember that any changes to research protocols, including personnel, interview procedures, or data storage, should be submitted for IRB review via a modification request.