

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Office of the Dean for Research

To: Members of the faculty
From: Pablo G. Debenedetti, Dean for Research
Subject: Planning for the eventual phased resumption of on-campus research
Date: April 25, 2020

Dear colleagues,

I hope that this message finds you and your loved ones safe and well during these very trying times.

I am pleased to report that planning is underway for the eventual phased resumption of on-campus research. Basic points underlying this planning process include:

- The proper time for implementing the phased resumption of on-campus research will be determined by the University's leadership, taking into account the health and safety of our faculty, students, and staff, and all relevant local, State, and National Public Health directives regarding stay-at-home and social distancing.
- All research that can be carried out remotely will continue to take place remotely.
- Neither this planning process nor its implementation are coupled to the resumption of on-campus undergraduate teaching and senior thesis work.

A faculty and staff committee has been tasked with formulating the plan. Its members are Bonnie Bassler (Squibb Professor of Molecular Biology and Chair of the Molecular Biology Department), Karla Ewalt (Associate Dean for Research), Robin Izzo (Executive Director, Office of Environmental Health and Safety), Tom Muir (Van Zandt Williams Jr. Class of 1965 Professor of Chemistry and Chair of the Chemistry Department) and Pablo Debenedetti (Class of 1950 Professor in Engineering and Applied Science and Dean for Research; Committee Chair).

Over the next month, we will be convening focus groups and town halls with the campus research community, including faculty, graduate students, post-docs, department chairs, and department managers. Our goal is to maintain fluid two-way communications prior to and during implementation.

The committee's guiding principles are:

- Protecting the health and safety of the campus community.
- Implementing, adhering to, and enforcing best practices for social distancing, cleaning, preventive hygiene and case reporting protocols.
- Ensuring that researchers are not pressured or coerced to return to the lab prematurely.
- Putting in place transparent policies and processes that allow phased resumption of on-campus research, and communicating with the research community prior to and during implementation.
- Designing plans that can be adapted to multiple scenarios, including the eventuality of a widespread infective resurgence requiring shut-down.
- Acknowledging the complexity of the research enterprise by consulting broadly in the formulation of policies and procedures.

I take this opportunity to thank the University's research community for its exceptional level of understanding and cooperation during these extraordinarily difficult times. Halting much of our on-campus research represents an uncommon sacrifice for a community driven by its passion for discovery.

With all good wishes,

Pablo

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