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Research Activity at UNI During Coronavirus Pandemic, March 24, 2020

University of Northern Iowa

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University of Northern Iowa

Research activity at UNI during coronavirus pandemic

Dear Department Head, Faculty and Research Staff,

In the context of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 outbreak, the Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation and the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects provide guidance related to research activity at the University of Northern Iowa. This guidance is to protect research participants, researchers, and the larger UNI community from risk of infection from COVID-19.

Note: This email is sent to the dddh-expanded list and the IRB listserv. Please share, as needed, with faculty and staff.

Four documents are attached to the email: (a) [detailed guidance for researchers](#), (b) [research continuity form](#), (c) [lone worker guidance](#), and (d) [lab ramp-down checklist](#).

This email highlights information from the [guidance for researchers document](#).

Human Participants

All research involving data collection with person-to-person contact must pause until further notice. No human participants can be tested, in person. Data collection must occur remotely (e.g., phone, [Zoom](#), [Qualtrics](#), or other online platforms).

Changing the methodology for remote data collection requires researchers to submit a modification to [IRB](#).

Lab Activity – Current

Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to minimize access to lab spaces, particularly for noncritical laboratory research. Only essential personnel should access labs and [lone worker guidelines](#) need to be followed.

- Our campus remains open. Adopt these guidelines while accessing lab spaces.
- Shift to remote work as much as possible, including lab meetings
- Delay or stop any work that can be stopped
- Follow social distancing guidelines (less than 10 people taking up less than 1/3 of the room, 6 feet between people)
- Be cautious of the risks of starting a new research study
- Practice proper sanitation and cleanliness in spaces

- If you have any symptoms of illness, do not come to the lab

Lab Activity – Preparation

Researchers should prepare to ramp down their lab space. It is possible that the campus will close or that a researcher will be unable to return to the lab because of the coronavirus. A [checklist for ramping-down lab space](#) is provided so researchers can prepare for these potential events.

Each faculty/staff who oversees a lab space will complete the [research continuity form](#) by Thursday, March 26 at 5:00, to be sent to jennifer.waldron@uni.edu. This information will assist the campus in supporting equipment, animal lines, and other necessary tasks in the event of a "shelter-at-home" order.

Students in labs

Student access to labs should be minimized.

- The Board of Regents mandated all classes to move online. If students are engaged in research for credit, they are unable to meet face-to-face in the lab space.
- Students employed in labs, including GAs, may continue working if they desire.
- Students should adhere to the guidance in this document

I understand the difficulty of this situation and its potential impact on research; however, slowing the spread of the coronavirus is the most important thing we can do as a community.

Special thanks to Anita Gordon for creating the guidance.

Thank you for your work, and stay safe,

Jennifer

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