

Research Town Hall – COVID-19 Response

March 17
12:00pm-1:00pm

Welcome! The session will start at Noon

To type in your questions use the Q&A feature of zoom (see below).

Please do not use the Raise Hand prompt

Audio is not enabled. We are taking text questions and will address them at the end of the presentation



Please note:

- Primary Resource: **researchcontinuity.uchicago.edu**
 - We will post townhall slides and the questions on this site after each session
 - Content will be updated regularly
- We will answer questions at the end of the session.
 - Questions have been pulled from those submitted at registration
 - Try to address questions submitted during the session.
- The situation is rapidly evolving. Expect updates and changes.

Introductory Remarks

Provost Ka Yee C. Lee

Guiding Principles

- We are uncompromising in our commitment to **safety first** for our students, faculty, staff and community
- We fully embrace our responsibility to join the global public health response to prevent, contain, and eradicate the COVID-19 pandemic
- The difficult decision to ramp down research personnel must be done with respect, transparency and a sense of urgency

Immediate directives – what must happen now:

Prioritize the health and safety of research teams

- No visitors or minors permitted in University research facilities
- Reduce the number of people on campus immediately
- All researchers must develop a plan for the possibility of a total closure of on-campus labs by Wednesday, March 18

Public Health Practices

- Work remotely
- Wash hands and sanitize surfaces
- Practice social distancing
- De-densify labs
 - Essential people only
 - Asynchronous/alternative staffing schedule
 - Virtual lab meetings
- Maintain safety requirements
- Respect personnel concerns about COVID-19 risk

Prepare for ramp down and possible lab closure

- Create plans to:
 - Identify essential personnel and alternative staffing plans
 - Prioritize **critical** versus **high priority** research
 - *Critical* experiments are required to preserve samples, animals, or functionalities critical to the **long-term** preservation of your lab or those supporting critical other projects.
 - *High Priority* refers to experiments in progress whose termination carry significant costs to graduate students, PIs or both. These experiments may be affected first in the event of lab closures.
- Make sure you have contact information for all research personnel
- Planning tools available at researchcontinuity.uchicago.edu

Human subjects research

- Human subject research that **does not involve direct contact** with participants can continue
- All human subjects research involving direct contact with participants that **does not directly benefit** subjects must be suspended immediately
- No new human subject research will be initiated that involves direct participant contact

COVID-19 related research

- Vital COVID-19 related research will continue
 - Existing projects will go forward
 - New projects can be proposed

- Containment guidelines and public health strategies will be implemented with close oversight from the Office of Research Safety

Animal Resource Center

- ARC will maintain essential functions with limited staffing
 - Many ARC services will be suspended to focus on husbandry and animal welfare
- Labs need to prioritize animals, ramp down colonies and non-essential experiments now
- ARC is prepared to modify standard animal care procedures when necessary to maintain critical animal resources
- ARC will support labs in developing contingency plans in the event of:
 - a total shut down (maintaining priority animals)
 - reduced availability of staffing

Core Facilities

- Some core facilities will remain available but unstaffed or minimally staff to limit personnel on campus
- Plans for ramping down operations will be completed this week
- Updated information will be provided by the individual core facilities regarding their ramp down plans

Research Computing

- All RCC computer systems (Midway, Midway2, MidwayR, GM4 and DaLI) will continue to be operational
- Faculty and researchers will continue to have access to their research data and be able to run jobs
- User support will continue during regular office hours via email at help@rcc.uchicago.edu
- Trainings and workshops will continue as scheduled remotely via zoom
- The in-person walk-in laboratory at Regenstein Library and the RCC data visualization laboratory will be **closed** until further notice. The in-person consultation will move to virtual meetings via Zoom.

Secure Data Enclave

- SDE resources (MidwayR and Virtual Machines) will be operational and accessible via virtual private network and virtual desktop interface
- Remote access to sensitive data sets must continue to comply with associated regulatory and contractual requirements
- Secure Room located in 1155 E 59th Street will have **updated procedures** to ensure the room is appropriately cleaned after each use

Secure Data Enclave

- Contractual agreements will continue to be reviewed by URA
- URA, BSD-CRI, IT Services and the Research Computing Center (RCC) are available to assist researchers and local IT personnel
 - Setting up secure remote access
 - Other questions
- Please contact securedataenclave@uchicago.edu for questions related to hosting or using sensitive data in the SDE

Sponsored Awards (awaiting sponsor guidance)

- Salary for individuals working remotely and **contributing to the project**, can be charged to the grant
 - There are many ways people can contribute: data analysis, manuscript preparation, grant writing, etc.
- If an individual cannot contribute to their current project but can contribute to another sponsored project or school activity, the salary should be moved to that funding source.
- The University is exploring various payment options for those who may not be able to contribute to the project – more to come on this
- The PI/lab should **document and retain information** on staff and related compensation that is charged to each award when no contribution is made to the project

Sponsored Awards

URA remains open and will process and submit applications. The following apply if you are unable to submit your proposal due to lab closure:

- NIH issued a notice, [NIH Statement on Late Applications Due to COVID-19](#), on March 10, 2020 to address late submissions.
- When delays occur because the applicant or recipient organization is officially closed or unable to submit grant applications due to the effects of COVID-19, [NIH Grants Policy Statement, Section 2.3.9](#)
- NSF ([FAQ # 17](#)) also states that researchers or sponsored projects office staff from organizations that have been affected and are unable to meet stated NSF deadlines should contact the cognizant NSF program office to discuss the issue.

Website for Research Resources and Updates

- researchcontinuity.uchicago.edu

Planning Tools

Laboratory Continuity Planning Template

Laboratory Full Ramp Down Checklist ([Word](#)) ([PDF](#))

Laboratory Partial Ramp Down Checklist ([Word](#)) ([PDF](#))

Ramp Down Checklist for All Remote Personnel ([Word](#)) ([PDF](#))

[Sample Letter Regarding Working Remotely](#)

Additional Resources

[UC Faculty and Staff Assistance Program—Perspectives](#)

[IT Services Resources for Working Remotely](#)



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Research Continuity Planning for COVID-19

Home Resources

This page will be updated regularly.

Guidance for Research Continuity Planning

March 16, 2020

The rapidly changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic requires us to continue to take deliberate steps to actively curtail its spread. Protecting the health and safety of our faculty, researchers, students, staff, and research participants is our top priority, and University leaders and deans have been unequivocal on this point. We – along with our peer institutions – are taking unprecedented steps to safeguard our

Additional Resources

- [University COVID-19 Website](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Website](#)

Exposure and Contamination Response

- If someone in your lab is sick
 - Tell them to STAY HOME

- If some in your lab tests positive for Coronavirus
 - Contact your Dean or Chair immediately

Communication process

- Submit general questions to coronavirusinfo@uchicago.edu
- Contact your local unit representative

Contact	School/Division
Conrad Gilliam	Biological Sciences Division
Eric Slauter	Humanities Division
Matt Tirrell	Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering
Aaron Dinner	Physical Sciences Division
Pietro Veronesi	Chicago Booth
Ethan Bueno de Mesquita	Harris School of Public Policy
Sydney Hans	School of Social Service Administration
Kate Cagney	Social Sciences Division