Plan for Graduate Students to Resume On-site Research
Summer 2020

Rev. Date: May 25th, 2020

This plan assumes that the health and safety conditions are favorable. Details of this plan are subject to change based on recommendations from the president in following the governor’s orders. **Until further notice, it is still best practice to have graduate students work remotely whenever possible.** In cases that students’ research requires access to lab equipment this document outlines a plan for their return. **The document outlines the framework for graduate student return and additional documents outlining the details of lab safety and health recommendations will be provided. It is imperative to recognize that this is not business as usual and that extra precautions must be taken.**

*Only graduate students are addressed by this plan. Undergraduate students require supervisors to follow the exemption protocol for essential workers and must apply for special approval.*

*This plans contains additional measures required by the current COVID-19 situation. It is not a replacement of any laboratory safety requirement or procedures. For example, if lab safety requires at least two people in the lab, that requirement should not change but additional measure must be taken to ensure that COVID safe practices mandated by the State are observed to the fullest extent.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Safety Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Faculty / Supervisors develop a safety plan that optimizes lab usage and limits graduate student access to the absolute minimum</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Department chairs and division directors review and propose a collective plan for their department or division</td>
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<td>• Institution wide committee review and approve plans</td>
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<tr>
<th>2</th>
<th>Tracking</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Administrative assistants will maintain a tracking Google sheet logging key information including check-in/check-out of students</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Department chairs / division directors will review this sheet weekly to ensure that the safety plan is followed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• This Google sheet will also be available to administrators and the Institution wide committee</td>
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<td>• An additional Google sheet will be automatically generated to provide information per building</td>
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<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>Reporting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-policing is critical in ensuring not only personal safety but also that of others. In case of concerns a reporting mechanism will be easily accessible.</td>
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<th>4</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
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<tr>
<td>Violation of the guidelines in this document will result in denying students access to the labs.</td>
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Faculty / Research Supervisor Responsibilities

It is critical to ensure all recommendations are followed to avoid/minimize the risk of infection among students, faculty and staff.

As each faculty member/research supervisor is most familiar with their lab, equipment, and the needs of their students, they are asked to develop a plan to ensure:

1. compliance with COVID-safe practices promulgated by the State of New Mexico (e.g. 6 feet or more of social distancing required);
2. any additional state recommendations or mandates must be communicated to the students as they become available, for example, the 14-day quarantine if students travel out of state;
3. students using the same area are not there at the same time for extended periods of time;
4. a COVID-19 specific disinfection protocol is in place for all lab equipment and areas, including a protocol for what to do if someone working in the lab tests positive;
5. require frequent hand-washing especially if the lab has a sink;
6. proper communication mechanisms with the students to ensure they are in the lab to perform the specific tasks that can't be done otherwise (this may include virtual meetings to discuss student progress and optimized plan to finish the on-site tasks);
7. in the case of field work, the same measures apply, including travel in vehicles (a maximum one person per vehicle is required, unless large van as long as social distance is maintained);
8. train/document discussion of the plan; and
9. document that training has happened and obtain the students’ signature for completing the necessary training.

Each lab should have the following information posted on the door both inside and outside

1. Name of lab supervisors
2. Name of the department chair / division director to whom the lab supervisor reports
3. Maximum occupancy at which social distancing can still be observed
4. A URL and QR code for the reporting website (to be provided by AA)
5. Link to resources

Each faculty member or research supervisor needs to update the information regarding student presence in the lab every 14-days and include the following information to their department chair / division director as well as their administrative assistants:

1. Building and room number.
2. Their contact information in case of an emergency.
3. Contact information of each student that will occupy the lab.
4. Department chair / division director contact information in case of an emergency.
5. Maximum number allowed in the lab at any particular time that allows students to maintain social distance. Remember that there is a time factor as well. That is, risk of transmission is low if the students are 6-ft apart for a short period of time, but increases with the length of time in proximity.
6. Times windows that the students are expected to be in the lab.

Unless there is a change in the actual plan of how students will be managed in the lab this is all the information that needs to be updated every 14-days.
Student Responsibilities

NMT holds students health and safety as well as that of the community of paramount importance. It is critical that students understand that they are a key player in enabling the plan presented in this document. The success of the plan’s implementation is highly dependent on students taking the appropriate precautionary measures. Students need to

1. check-in / check-out (via email or other electronic means) with their department’s administrative assistant;
2. work with their supervisor to develop and follow an effective work plan that optimizes their presence on campus; and limit it to only essential activities;
3. immediately notify their supervisor of any health concerns;
4. observe all recommendations regarding good practices;
5. most importantly, keep labs and offices disinfected and ready for the next person’s use;
6. follow lab’s disinfection protocol;
7. fill out screening surveys;
8. report exposure to others known to have contracted the virus and accordingly impose a self-quarantine; and
9. wear face covering in common areas.
Department Chair / Division Director Responsibilities

Department chairs / division director need to review the faculty’s or research supervisors’ plan to ensure all guidelines are being followed. They are the first oversight body to ensure that plan is clear and fits within their department’s or division’s capabilities.

A Google sheet will be developed for each department. This sheet will be maintained and updated by the department’s / division’s administrative assistant.

Each department will have a Google folder that contains this Google sheet and as well as the safety plan. Administrative assistants and department chairs / division directors will have access to this folder and will be responsible of keeping it up-to-date.

Department chairs and division directors need to:
1. Review the faculty’s or research supervisors’ plan and communicate any recommendations within a week of receiving the plan.
2. Provide an overall plan for the department/division with top level information per lab, e.g., occupancy, etc. any additional requirements needed for their department/division (this plan must be made available to the oversight committee before any research lab within this department is reopened to graduate students)
3. Review the Google sheet weekly, especially as each request comes in to ensure that lab occupancy is not exceeded at any given time, and
4. Coordinated with their administrative assistants to ensure that students are checking -in and -out every time they access the lab.
Institutional Role

1. An institution wide committee will be formed to continuously review department folders, request changes, as well as require suspension of activities or lab closures, if concerns are not addressed or resolved.
2. Create a website with updated recommendations, surveys and reporting websites with instructions.
3. Ensure that there are multiple hand sanitizer stations on each floor of every laboratory building; ensure a sufficient supply of latex gloves for each laboratory.
4. Increased frequency of disinfecting common areas.
5. Communicate cleaning schedules to department chairs.
6. If possible, develop a mechanism for monitoring student health, e.g., requiring students to report their temperatures daily.
7. Provide easily accessible information for support/help/guidance, etc.
8. Generate a second Google sheet will automatically query information from the tracking sheet to generate per building data. Based on those results, further limitations may be imposed to minimize traffic on a particular floor or in a particular building. A committee will be formed to periodically review the sheet to make sure it is up-to-date.