UMKC Faculty and Researchers,

March 19, 2020

The rapidly evolving nature of COVID-19 has required a swift response to this extraordinary challenge, and the Office of Research Services has developed a resource page for the research community. Please monitor the page often as we will update these resources frequently. As always, the university continues to communicate its responses on COVID-19 through its official website on coronavirus.

We are taking measures to protect the health and well-being of our campus community. Therefore, all on-campus research laboratories will be restricted to only essential activities (meaning those approved by your chair and dean) by close of business March 20.

Many peer institutions, including some within the UM System, already have begun ramping down all on-campus research laboratory activities. The goal is to implement minimal access to laboratories so that essential and critical activities, such as maintaining unique reagents and equipment, can continue.

UMKC deans, department chairs, and directors have been apprised of this notification about ramping down research activities where possible. All faculty researchers should work with their laboratory personnel including students, postdocs and staff to scale down operations as soon as possible. Ramp down must be completed by close of business March 20.

The UMKC Laboratory Animal Research Core (LARC) staff are considered essential employees and daily animal care will continue uninterrupted during reduced operations. Operations will be restricted to husbandry and veterinary care and LARC staff will not perform research tasks nor will they transport animals. However, research tasks and transportation that have been deemed essential may be arranged and performed by laboratory staff. Additionally, no new animal studies are to be initiated during this period.

Those of you requiring more time to reduce research activities to only those determined to be essential, must inform your department chair and your dean by providing a clear justification and receive written approval. Any questions should be addressed to your department chair or dean. Additionally, please make the appropriate plans to work remotely and ensure that your personnel are equipped to do so.

We understand the disruption these actions will cause and we are here to support you. Please take some time to establish what activities can be completed remotely, including writing papers, grant proposals and data analysis. You may consult UMKC Information Services’ remote work resources for further information on setting up a remote plan.

Faculty researchers will be responsible for assigning and overseeing the work of their students, postdocs and staff. The Office of Research Services (ORS) will be available to enable faculty to submit grants and grant reports. Please continue to charge grants as you would normally, ORS is prepared to work remotely and to support you. We have established an ORS resource page that we will update as information is available, please check back often.

Please complete contingency plans for your research efforts immediately keeping these details in mind:

- Beginning March 20, access to labs will only be available to essential personnel who are expected to perform critical procedures or equipment management. For example, liquid nitrogen
tank filling, maintaining shared computational equipment, etc. You will need to share the names of these essential personnel with your department chair and dean immediately. **Please remind personnel they must have their employee ID at all times.**

- Faculty researchers should identify essential research experiments that are at a critical phase, meaning that abandoning them would cause a major or irreversible loss in project momentum. This high-priority work should be a limited set of the current laboratory bench-based experimentation.
- Conduct all lab meetings, including one-on-one meetings, online or by phone.
- If you are conducting human subjects research, please refer to the continuously updated guidelines on the [resource page](#).
- All essential work in labs should be staggered minimizing contact between laboratory personnel.
- Please continue charging to grants as normal.
- No undergraduates or external visitors are allowed in labs unless a well justification is worked out with the chair and dean.
- No graduates are allowed in labs unless a plan has been arranged with faculty researchers and approved by their chair and dean.
- Maintain a list of contact information for your students, postdocs and staff.
- Review contingency plans and emergency procedures with your group.
- Those carrying out critical research activities who demonstrate minor symptoms of illness, including but not limited to cough or fever, must stay home. Please consult the [CDC’s coronavirus resource site](#) for more information on the symptoms of coronavirus and how to protect yourself.
- Protecting critical laboratories and those who are using them is paramount. Essential personnel should disinfect common laboratory areas with 70 percent ethanol or disinfectant at least twice daily, including bench tops and shared keyboards/mice, as well as high-traffic touch points, such as doorknobs, sink handles, freezer doors, and telephones.

UMKC is taking these substantial steps to limit the spread of the virus and to protect our students, faculty and staff. Please remember to practice social distancing and to wash your hands frequently.

Thank you for your patience and assistance in this critical time and check the [resource page](#) frequently for research updates. If you have any questions, please contact your department chair or dean.

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Dr. Chris Liu, Vice Chancellor for Research