June 10, 2021

FROM: Jessi L. Smith, AVC-Research

TO: UCCS Researchers

We made it through another pandemic semester! As we look ahead to the summer months, the days are longer, and the outlook is brighter for our campus research operations. More and more people are vaccinated. University sponsored domestic travel is now allowable (with Dean approval) and Prospector is slowly coming back. What this means, is this summer you and your students will have nearly unfettered access to your research and creative materials, equipment, offices, studios, and labs.

It’s also true that summer research operations are not fully “back to normal.” The life-threatening pandemic crisis persists, and in line with recommendations in the new [Public Health Order](https://drive.google.com/file/d/137UVAaWEVIQ4AIzTtOaOXrvLMRfjhZ1P/view)issued by the Governor, it is important that we maintain some precautionary measures, especially to protect those who are not vaccinated. There remains a ban on university sponsored international travel, and in-person human subjects research still requires special protocol review.

Summer is a critical time to collect and analyze data, plan exhibits and performances, write articles and proposals, and submit to conferences. This summer, however, is still not like pre-pandemic summers. We must do our summer research while we stay committed to the health and safety of our campus community. This requires resolve to remain patient, flexible, and kind to ourselves and others, as we plan out our summer research activities. I know this is easier said than done, and indeed, there is an ever-[growing literature](https://research.uccs.edu/academic-impacts-covid-19) on the short- and long-term consequences of the pandemic on our researchers. Our wish for you is that your summer is replete with opportunities to read, write, think, reconnect, and recharge your drained academic battery.

**What can you expect for our “Cautionary” Summer 2021?**

**Research continues**

* There is unlimited access to campus for research and creative activities.
* Masks are required for unvaccinated people.
* Researchers can operate a full capacity in their research and creative indoor spaces but are encouraged to continue to wear face-coverings, especially when vaccination status is unknown; it can’t hurt to keep cleaning those shared spaces.
* Faculty are encouraged to support remote research opportunities for themselves and their students and their staff where possible.
* When possible, use Zoom or Microsoft Teams for research team meetings.
* Thesis and dissertation defenses can be handled remotely as needed and all submissions to Graduate School and the Library can be handled virtually.
* International travel (e.g., to field sites or conferences) using university sponsored funding is generally unallowable. Domestic travel is permitted with Dean approval.

**Access to research support**

* The **Kraemer Family Library** remains open. Their posted hours of operation [are here](https://uccs.edu/library/info/hours). Prospector is operational and online interlibrary loan processes are currently operating
* The [**Institutional Review Board (IRB)**](https://osp.uccs.edu/research-compliance/research-involving-human-subject-irb) will continue to review protocols for human subjects research. At this time, in-person research projects **may continue** or begin if approved through our current process. The documents and instructions for that process can be found here: <https://osp.uccs.edu/covid19-resume-research>. However, as campus, state, and county conditions change, this may change. We highly encourage all researchers to utilize remote methods to the extent possible to minimize disruption to projects, especially when vaccination status is unknown.
* The **Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Integrity** (OSPRI) staff will continue to work remotely this summer to submit proposals, accept awards, issue subawards, submit extensions, submit annual reports, and perform other sponsored program activities as usual.
* The [Office of Research](https://mlc.uccs.edu/organization/research) will host virtual workshops and professional development opportunities during the summer. [Register](https://mlc.uccs.edu/event/7090876) to join us for a virtual Commit to Submit: Grant Writing Bootcamp on June 22, 2021!
* The [Undergraduate Research Academy](https://ura.uccs.edu/) is underway with a full line up of summer activities.
* [Graduate](https://graduateschool.uccs.edu/uccs-finances/finance-resources) and [undergraduate student travel awards](https://studentresearch.uccs.edu/undergraduate-student-travel-program) and [faculty travel awards](https://research.uccs.edu/travel-funding-resources) are expanded to include participation in virtual research conferences, help support open access fees, and virtual professional development activities.
* If useful, **OIT** can assist you with setting up a VPN for remote access to lab or office computers, and help you consider cloud computing options.
* Many research support **staff** continue to work remotely and may require more time to accomplish their tasks. Please be patient and compassionate as they adjust to changing work demands. Let them know they are valued and appreciated whenever possible.

**Social distance does not mean disconnected**

The Office of Research is here to support you, offer advice, research the answer to your questions, and do our best to keep some resemblance of business as usual during this public health crisis. Stay connected via our:

* UCCS Research Listserv
* UCCS\_OOR Instagram page
* Email OOR@uccs.edu
* Office of Research Website: <https://research.uccs.edu/>

**Informational Resources:**

* [Campus information on COVID-19](https://covid19.uccs.edu/)
* [UCCS status board](https://statusboard.uccs.edu/)
* [UCCS Resources for Mental Health and Wellbeing](http://view.communications.cu.edu/?qs=f90d21b00fd00848fd26ad5fa8cf0673a84a1e99f8de12aca7a1dab667e5d4746955c2bc3285ae9d658994819addf4daa360da772387731ca4b9ff8f8e7994dc4c3bb5400c0fa4132fea067338740945)
* [CU System information on COVID-19](https://www.cu.edu/coronavirus)
* [State of Colorado information on COVID-19](https://covid19.colorado.gov/)
* [COVID-19 Impacts on Researchers](https://research.uccs.edu/academic-impacts-covid-19)