



TEXAS

The University of Texas at Austin

Office of the Vice President for Research

This letter is addressed to PIs with experimental labs, leaders of analytical labs, supervisors of human subject research and chairs and ORU directors with such labs or research in their units.

Dear PI Colleagues:

With President Fenves' announcement that undergraduates will not be returning to campus, we are updating a few of the items that were in [our memo of Sunday, March 15](#). At the moment, the policies in that memo all remain in effect.

Undergraduates in Laboratories: Undergraduate researchers in your laboratories should be told not to return to campus after spring break. Return waivers will not be granted solely for the purpose of working in labs. Please work with undergraduates who are working in your laboratory for course credit to find research-related activities for them that will permit them to obtain course credit for the full semester. Please do not terminate appointments for undergrads appointed on grants. Guidance will be issued later, when agency guidance is available, about how to account for their effort.

Graduate students: For the purpose of laboratory activity policy, all graduate students will be treated as graduate students first and foremost, whether they are paid GRAs, TAs, paid on an external fellowship, registered for research, or otherwise present as lab members. We re-emphasize that, until you are notified otherwise, graduate students have the absolute right to decline to come into work in the lab and must have this choice without fear of retribution or penalty. As of now, graduate students may, if they desire and if you permit it, continue to work in research laboratories operating under the rules and practices laid out in the 3/15 memo or any more restrictive policies put in place by colleges, ORUs, or departments.

Please keep abreast of research policies by looking for documents or reviewing FAQ responses at: <https://research.utexas.edu/covid-19-research-faq/>. A copy of this memo, as well as all other campus-wide COVID-19 research memos I have sent, are posted there.

If you have additional questions, please send them to vp-research-sr@austin.utexas.edu with the subject line "FAQ". We will answer you directly and then post your question and answer for other researchers.

Sincerely,

Vice President for Research

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