

Policy 2.A.16 - Protocol for the Safe Return of Undergraduates to Mentored Research and Scholarship Activities of Wake Forest Faculty

Revised: April 2021

Wake Forest University recognizes that the ability for undergraduate students to conduct mentored research on campus during summer 2021 is important for both the education of our students and for the productivity of our faculty. This document provides general safety guidelines for conducting scholarly projects with Wake Forest faculty members (or their designates) in laboratories, studio spaces, offices, and other areas in which mentored scholarship may happen between faculty and undergraduate students from Wake Forest or elsewhere.

The guidelines provided here will be in effect from May 24, 2021 through August 22, 2021. These guidelines only apply to mentored research and scholarship activities. These guidelines apply to undergraduate students who are engaged in mentored research with Wake Forest faculty.

These guidelines take into account the latest CDC recommendations for vaccinated people as well as unvaccinated people. The University is planning on face-to-face ("F2F") summer courses (as well as hybrid and online modalities). In compliance with the CDC recommendations, the University will require masks and social distancing in spaces where mentored research and scholarly projects take place. No person should work or study in these spaces if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19.

Group activities such as regularly scheduled laboratory group meetings, journal clubs, student presentations, virtual scientific research interventions, and research planning meetings, may be conducted F2F, if the meeting space and size comply with the University's policies for gathering size and public health safety protocols. All participants, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status, will need to comply with applicable policies for the use of face masks and social distancing. Participants should not participate in F2F activities if they have experienced a possible exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19 unless cleared to do so by a public health or healthcare provider. If a group activity is convened, data/discussion points must be projected on a wall screen so that no one has to view the same monitor.

These guidelines are a supplement to Project 1.A.03 - Protocols for Conduct of Research Activity, a revised version of the [Research Restart Guide](#) from last summer. Faculty and laboratory managers should be familiar with and follow both these guidelines and the Research Restart Guide.

Additional resources can be found at:

- [CDC Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education](#)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>
- <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>
- <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance>

Goals

- Allow students to continue to participate in research and scholarly activities during summer 2021.
- Encourage safe community health practices within the guidelines recommended by the CDC and consistent with University policies to protect the health and safety of employees, students, patients, and visitors.

Integration of Students into Mentored Research & Scholarship

Undergraduate students (both Wake students and undergraduates from elsewhere) will be permitted to engage in on-campus mentored research & scholarship activities from May 24, 2021 through August 22, 2021 under the following conditions and standards. This guidance will remain in place during the summer period unless public health guidance changes, in which case, the guidance will be updated.

The most important four elements that will help keep students and others safe are:

- Daily symptom and exposure monitoring - do not come to your scholarly space (i.e., office/laboratory/studio) if you are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19. If you are exposed to or are diagnosed with COVID-19, you are to follow instructions from Student Health Services (SHS) or the Wake Forest University Contact Tracing Team.
- Wear a [CDC recommended face covering](#) (i.e., multi-layer cloth mask, surgical mask, or any N95 mask that does not have an exhalation valve - no bandanas or single-layer masks, etc.). However, N95 masks are generally not to be worn, unless a specific procedure requires it, as indicated in the table at the end of the Human Subjects part of the revised [Research Restart Guide](#). Masks must cover your nose and reach below your chin.
- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly.
- Keep at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and others whenever possible.

As faculty consider re-integrating undergraduates into their laboratories and other creative activities, they must consider the plausibility of whether these general guidelines can be applied on a case-by-case basis. For new undergraduate students, in some instances it may be possible to train remotely or with sufficient distancing. However, in other cases it may be impossible to train a new undergraduate while maintaining a safe distance. Faculty members, as they choose/offer to work with students, must be cognizant that some forms of training and research may simply not be possible within the constraints of ongoing public health recommendations. If that is true for any individual case, then the undergraduate is **not permitted** to engage in the project.

Conditions that must be met and/or maintained to engage in mentored scholarship:

- No current Shelter in Place Orders (Federal, State & Local)
- Compliance with continued guidance from clinical and public health experts is possible.
- Adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) for clinical, research, and education enterprises must be maintained by those mentoring such students. As recommended by the EH&S office, there is a need for a two-week supply of PPE for any office, laboratory, studio, or research space in which one-on-one mentoring will happen between faculty and students.
- Ability to implement and comply with requirements to reduce potential COVID-19 transmission in the workplace. Faculty mentors of students must be in compliance with guidelines for Building Standards, Requirements on Use of Personal Protection Equipment and Face Coverings prior to engaging in mentored scholarship, and provide training for their students on the

Requirements to Access and Use Research Laboratories as outlined in Project 1.A.03 (Protocols for Resumption of Research Activity - the revised version of the [Research Restart Guide](#)). Students who receiving training during the 2020-2021 academic year are not required to be retrained for the summer sessions unless there is a change in the student's research activities or unless the University requires additional training due to changes in public health guidance.

Personal Responsibility and Notification Requirements:

Prior to beginning mentored scholarship and creative activities with a faculty member, the student should consider if s/he might be at a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. If so, these concerns should be discussed between the student and the faculty member (without the student having to disclose the reason why the student is at higher risk), *prior to* the beginning of the on-campus activity. However, a student may prefer to discuss these concerns with the Learning Assistance Center – Disability Services or the Student Health Service, and the student may submit a request for an accommodation.

Without exception, students must stay home if they are sick. On a daily basis, students must monitor for [symptoms of COVID-19](#) and report any symptoms to the Student Health Service for evaluation prior to coming to campus or leaving University housing.

Students who have experienced a possible exposure to, tested positive for or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 must contact Student Health Services, and they will provide instructions about what the university requires as next steps. .

- **Students** should report a positive test result to the Wake Forest Student Health Services at (336-758-5218/traceshs@wfu.edu). Also if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, then you must contact SHS.
- **Current guidance states that anyone *not fully vaccinated* who has been within 6 ft. of someone who tests positive with COVID-19 for >15 minutes cumulative over a 24 hour period will be required to quarantine for up to 14 days.**

Necessary training for Students prior to engaging in on-campus mentored scholarship:

The Reynolda Campus has a revised [Research Restart Guide](#), which outlines Building Standards, Requirements on the Use of Personal Protection Equipment and Face Coverings, and specific Requirements to Access and Use Research Laboratories (which are applicable to all spaces in which mentored scholarship is to happen). The **Guide** also specifically outlines safety guidelines specific to the conduct of Human Subjects Research, which are required of all personnel (including students) involved in such projects.

The **Guide** applies to all researchers including students. Faculty, staff, and all students should read and abide by all of the standards and procedures set therein.

All newly engaged students must follow the steps below prior to beginning research in Reynolda Campus programs (including those located at Wake Downtown or other locations where doing research under the mentorship of WFU faculty). If you have been engaged in research with the mentor already, then you may continue conducting scholarly activities under the same guidelines you operated under during the academic year (2020-2021).

1. *Read and understand the revised [Research Restart Guide](#).* It is required that faculty mentors will discuss the implementation of the *Guide* as it relates to the student's project and work within the laboratory/studio/research space. A record of this discussion is to be made, and kept on site.

2. *Understand your laboratory or studio cleaning protocols.* Prior to reopening, research and performance spaces are required to have a standard operating procedure for cleaning and sanitizing workspaces (see Protocols for Resumption of Research Activity [Research Restart Guide](#)). Undergraduates must read and understand the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for any laboratory, studio, or research space where they are conducting mentored scholarship. If needed, faculty should update the SOP on file to incorporate undergraduates.

3. *Understand your PPE requirements.* To minimize viral spread, all members of the research team (including faculty and undergraduate students) should wear their daily-cleaned face covering or one time use disposable face mask and wash their hands regularly. Laboratory gloves, lab coats, and goggles should be used, as appropriate, based on the demands of the research project.

Guidelines for how to select, wear and wash face coverings can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

4. *Schedule your time in the laboratory.* Faculty and students should work together to discuss those research activities that must be performed in the laboratory. Activities should be pre-planned by the research team in order to ensure that social distancing requirements are met. Current recommendations include maintaining a 6 foot distance between individuals while team members are in the lab; in some cases this may necessitate rotating shifts with other lab members. *Pre-plan your time in the laboratory or performance area.* Design the experiments to be conducted on campus efficiently, minimizing your time in the laboratory when possible.

In all circumstances, adherence to the revised [Research Restart Guide](#) is expected. If Environmental Health and Safety personnel observe violations to these guidelines, they will notify researcher supervisors, who should take appropriate action by changing work practices or by re-emphasizing practices already expected to be adhered to for the safety of all. Of course, ultimately each person in a shared space is responsible for individually adhering to the guidelines established by the university and by their mentors and the research group.

Note regarding shared research and performance spaces: The above training and guidelines are the minimum required for a student to begin working in research spaces. Specialized facilities, such as the Microscopy Core (Winston Hall) or the Special Collections (in ZSR library) may have additional rules and requirements for safety and training than those provided here.

Scholarly Activities in Scales Fine Arts Center

Many faculty in the Theatre and Dance, Art and Music departments conduct research with students throughout the school year and summer as they rehearse, design, and prepare for productions in our theatres, studios, shops and practice spaces. Often, these spaces are also used as teaching spaces as well as for scholarship, as there are no dedicated research spaces separate from where classes are conducted. The safety plans and protocols approved for use of these spaces during the 2020-2021 academic year will remain in effect for summer 2021. The Tedford mainstage may be offline for some or all of the summer (to be determined) in order to repair the broken hydraulic lift in the orchestra pit. The Tedford Stage, and related control booths, scene shop, costume shop, 211 design lab will remain available research spaces. The Hanes Gallery space will not be open during the summer, nor will the stArt Gallery in Reynolda Village. Brendle Recital Hall remains active for individual faculty and select students for creative work and rehearsals, but not for any public performances (creative scholarship).

Scholarly Activities at the WFU School of Medicine

Undergraduate students can engage in research and scholarly activities with mentors at the Medical

School, as long as they agree to abide by the guidelines established by the medical school for employees engaged in research. This means that the students must adhere to the medical school's COVID-19 policies and those of the collaborating department.

Managing Student Access during Summer 2021

Undergraduates who receive Wake Forest Research Fellowships for on-campus work will be granted access to the appropriate building(s) for their projects. Faculty mentoring students outside the WFRF are responsible for sending names of undergraduates and building access requests to Rebecca Alexander (alexanr@wfu.edu) by May 20 or at least 3 business days before access is required.

Building Access:

Gate access and public-facing buildings (ZSR, wellbeing center, bookstores) will be open beginning May 1, 2021 from 7 AM to 10 PM, and badge access will be required from 10 PM – 7 AM or faculty, staff and enrolled students for research and SS1 and 2. Academic buildings will remain badge access only. Wake Forest Research Fellows will have access beginning May 24, 2021.

Scholarly Activities Form for Students

Wake Forest University has developed a revised [Research Restart Guide](#). The **Guide** applies to all researchers including students. All newly engaged research students who have not done so already should read and abide by all of the standards and procedures set therein.

Students beginning to conduct scholarly activities in research spaces (laboratories, studios, other work spaces) **for the first time** must follow the steps below to restart research activities in Reynolda Campus programs (including those located at Wake Downtown or other locations where doing research under the mentorship of WFU faculty).

1. *Read and understand the revised **Research Restart Guide**.* Contact your advisor with any questions. Not all sections will apply to all undergraduates, e.g. the part on Human Subjects research will only be required by those working with patients or other participants needed for their research or scholarly activities.
2. *Understand your laboratory cleaning protocols.* Work with your advisor and research group members to develop an appropriate cleaning regimen and understand your part in the process. Work with your advisor to ensure you have training in all safety practices needed to maintain a safe work environment in your advisor's spaces in which you will be working.
3. *Understand your PPE requirements.* To minimize viral spread, wear your daily-cleaned face covering and wash your hands regularly. Use laboratory gloves, lab coats, and goggles where appropriate based on your research protocols.
4. *Schedule your time in the laboratory.* Contact your advisor to discuss those research activities that must be performed in the laboratory. Work with your advisor and group members to schedule your time to ensure that social distancing requirements are met, current recommendations include maintaining a 6 foot distance between individuals while in the lab; in some cases this may necessitate rotating shifts with other lab members.
5. *Pre-plan your time in the laboratory.* Design the experiments to be conducted on campus efficiently, minimizing your time in the laboratory when possible.

In all circumstances, adherence to the revised [Research Restart Guide](#) and other applicable University policies is expected. If Environmental Health and Safety personnel observe or are informed of violations to these guidelines or policies, they will notify researcher supervisors. Failure to comply could result in a student's removal from research and scholarly activities or conduct violations.

If you have specific health and safety concerns about your return to the laboratory or scholarly space, please consult with your advisor, the Learning Assistance Center – Disability Services, or the Student Health Service.

Signature Required. Before restarting research or scholarly activities at Wake Forest, undergraduate students must sign this form to attest that they have read, have understood, and will follow these guidelines.

Sign: _____

Print name: _____

This page must be signed and turned in to your mentor/advisor.