UT-Austin Laboratory Guidance for COVID-19

The following information has been developed as guidance for Academic and Research units related to the ongoing situation with COVID-19. Disruption of academic activities and research may happen as a result of the presence of COVID-19 in our community. The information provided below was developed to help prevent and minimize any disruption, postponement or cessation of laboratory activities. Should it become necessary to change or alter activities taking place in our teaching, FRI and/or research laboratories, please use the following information to analyze the activities and develop plans accordingly.

The University is taking steps to help prevent a disruption of University-provided services, including but not limited to electricity, water, sanitary sewer, building maintenance, waste removal (regular trash and all types of hazardous waste). However, it is impossible to predict the extent to which our campus and the community may ultimately be affected by the COVID-19 situation. If the University experiences significant staff shortages or supply chain disruptions, some of the services listed above could be affected. Basic services could be temporarily interrupted or it may take longer than usual for the service.

As you review your laboratory activities, please consider the following:

- Do you have adequate supplies on hand to continue laboratory operations? For how long?
  - Chemicals, reagents, biological agents, radioactive materials, glassware, etc
  - Gloves, lab coats, face shields, safety glasses, etc
- UT-Austin does not control the supply chain for the above items; are you prepared to handle a supply chain disruption?
- If staff within your research group become ill, quarantined, or are members of a particularly susceptible population, will you be able to continue the affected research activity?

Teaching Laboratory Guidance (for physical science and physical activity labs)

- Determine if Lab space allows appropriate social distancing for lab to continue
- Lab TA provides Healthy Horns info to lab participants
- Lab TA ensures all participants are wearing gloves
- Lab TA advises participants to remain 3-6 feet apart
- Lab TA advises participants to wipe down area surfaces with 70% alcohol at the conclusion of the lab
- Lab TA advises participants to thoroughly wash hands when exiting the lab
- If the above cannot be accomplished, lab should be cancelled

FRI Laboratory Guidance

- Determine if Lab space allows appropriate social distancing for research to continue
- If not, determine if participants can be scheduled to have fewer participants in the space at any one time
- Individual determination for each research project to be made by Faculty Oversight, should research project be continued or postponed?
- Lab participants are provided a copy of the Healthy Horns info
Lab signage advises all participants to wear gloves
- Lab signage advises participants to remain 3-6 feet apart
- Lab signage advises participants to wipe down area surfaces with 70% alcohol at the conclusion of the lab
- Lab signage instructs participants to thoroughly wash hands when exiting the lab
- If the above cannot be accomplished, research should be postponed or cancelled

Research Laboratory Guidance

- Determine if Lab space allows appropriate social distancing for research to continue
- If not, determine if research can be scheduled to have fewer researchers in the space at any one time. While fewer researchers in the space may reduce risks of infection, remember to avoid working alone in the lab.
- Individual determination for each research project to be made by the PI, should research project be continued or postponed?
  - For each continuing research project, PI must develop a written plan, including
    - Primary individual responsible for the project and a secondary individual
    - Written phone number for primary and secondary individuals
    - Communication (e-mail or oral) by the PI or Lab Manager each day with the primary and secondary individuals
    - What steps will be taken if the primary and/or secondary individual become infected or quarantined due to COVID-19
      - Research projects must not be left unattended due to illness or quarantine of researchers
- PI or Lab Manager provides Healthy Horns info to lab researchers
  - all researchers must wear gloves
  - all researchers must remain 3-6 feet apart
  - researchers must wipe down area surfaces with 70% alcohol at the conclusion of the lab
  - researchers must thoroughly wash hands when exiting the lab
- If the above cannot be accomplished, the research project should be postponed