

Subject: Reawakening KU research

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From: Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research

To: KU Lawrence All Staff, Faculty and Affiliates



OFFICE OF RESEARCH

Reawakening KU research

Dear Faculty and Staff,

What does reawakening research look like for the University of Kansas?

As the chancellor and provost noted in Friday's message about "[Restoring the KU Community](#)," a gradual expansion of research activity will be among the university's first areas of attention. Like [Governor Kelly's phased plan to reopen Kansas](#), our journey to resuming on-campus research will prioritize safety and deliberate, data-driven decisions over a rush to reactivate. We ask for your continued patience and caution during this transition.

Our first priority continues to be assuring the safety of our community. As campus activity levels increase, we must take steps to minimize the likelihood of viral transmission in our facilities. We hope that no one becomes infected by returning to campus. In the event that someone does test positive for COVID-19, however, these steps will decrease the likelihood that we see a cluster of infections, enhance our ability to perform effective contact tracing, and prevent what starts as an isolated case from shutting down campus again.

A safe reopening requires buildings that are safe to occupy. Before any facility opens to additional researchers, a number of steps will be completed:

- Deep cleaning
- Adjustments to building systems
- Provision of sanitizing supplies and personal protective equipment
- Installation of traffic-control signage in hallways, elevators and stairwells

This is a significant project for each building in a global environment where many of the necessary supplies are severely limited. As a consequence, it will only be possible in the early phases to open one research building at a time.

Determining the order in which buildings will reopen is not easy. Any of KU's extraordinary researchers, scholars and creative artists could make a compelling argument for the importance of what they do and describe the terrible harm caused by not being able to access the campus facilities they rely upon to engage in the full scope of their work. Nevertheless, some will be denied access while they see their colleagues return. Even as individual buildings open, it may not be possible to allow all the occupants to resume work simultaneously, and everyone will have to endure strict limitations on their activities. But this is the only path that leads to a future in which the full richness of KU's inquiry, innovation and creativity can flourish again.

As we begin the challenging process of preparing facilities, providing guidance to those scheduled to regain access, and fortifying campus services, I ask for your patience and understanding. There will be missteps, and it will not always be clear why some activities resume before others. Please understand that our goal is to restore as much activity as possible in the shortest feasible timeframe, but with the health and safety of our community as the overriding imperative. I welcome your suggestions and feedback.

Details of reopening plans for researchers will be communicated directly to individuals, and information about the status of campus facilities will be available at coronavirus.ku.edu and the [Office of Research website](#).

Respectfully,
Simon

Simon Atkinson
Vice Chancellor for Research



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KU is an EO/AA institution.