

Southern Connecticut State University
Phase 1a – Procedures for reopening studios or labs effective June 29, 2020

All courses during summer 2020 will remain online and the campus will only gradually open in preparation for the Fall semester. Individuals who need access to laboratories, studios or comparable facilities where equipment and supplies are located that support their research and scholarship, or who need to prepare their space for the fall semester will follow a four (4) step process to:

- document appropriate safety training,
- submit a Lab/Studio safety plan for Dean's approval
- request approval for a campus visit, and
- report their status after the visit.

Access to the campus will be authorized in organized blocks of time to maximize access as effectively as possible while still maintaining a small number of individuals in any one space or general building area. In all cases, best practices regarding the use of face coverings, use of disinfectant/sanitizing supplies and maintaining standards of social distancing will be mandatory to help ensure good health and minimize any possibility of viral spread.

This plan will be in place starting June 29, 2020 through August 23, 2020, after which date, the Fall semester guidelines take effect.

General guidelines for reopening:

- People should not return to campus if that work can be done remotely. It is expected that people will continue to telecommute if the work can be done remotely.
- People in high-risk groups (comorbidities) and over the age of 65 are advised to continue work remotely.
- Individuals are responsible for self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 and should NOT visit campus if there is a possibility of infection.
- Visitors, on-site service providers, and delivery/shipping personnel should be limited to the minimum necessary.

The health and safety of faculty, staff, students, the public, and human research subjects will be protected.

- Directives and guidance from local, state, and federal authorities to minimize disease spread and exposure will be followed, such as restrictions related to essential businesses, social distancing, reduced density, stay-at-home, and the use of face masks.
- Principal Investigators (PIs) and laboratory or studio faculty leaders remain responsible for providing direction and oversight of their projects, labs, and/or research or creative works sites, and personnel including students and staff.
- Researchers must maintain plans and be prepared to halt all activities on short notice if this becomes necessary.

There are four (4) steps to the summer 2020 process:

1. Review the COVID-19 Safety Training information and complete the certification form

Southern Connecticut State University has been granted permission from the University of Connecticut (UCONN) to utilize the COVID 19 Safety Training course for our faculty, staff and students. Relevant faculty or staff will be responsible for any students that they are supervising in labs or studios. Students must complete COVID-19 Safety Training and certification in addition to any normal laboratory training or protocol.

This presentation was provided by the University of Connecticut. It is based on current CDC guidelines and UCONN procedures. Any updates to these guidelines or procedures will supersede the content in the training. All faculty, staff and students who wish to visit campus to pursue research or creative activities **must view the presentation located on the SCSU website and then complete the SCSU Certification.** Individual access to campus will not be approved without first completing this certification.

2. Submit a COVID-19 Safety Plan

Faculty will use the Research Lab Ramp-up Guide (referenced on the SCSU website) to develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan specific to their area/work. The Safety Plan will be submitted electronically for Dean approval. The approval of the COVID-19 Safety Plan is required before individuals are allowed to return to their research/creative activity spaces on campus.

Faculty and staff undertaking field work research are required to submit a protocol (per procedure outlined above) in advance for approval by the relevant Dean. Resuming field research will be part of the phased ramp up process and consistent with the requirements of the location of the field site, state and federal guidance, and any travel restrictions.

Labs, research programs, studios, or research areas must have the appropriate PPE and cleaning supplies onsite before resuming activities. Ordering of PPE and lab specific cleaning supplies is not sufficient to return to the labs. Research staff and personnel **are not permitted** to return to labs or resume research or creative activities if the necessary PPEs and cleaning supplies are not onsite. Faculty must contact Lisa Korfelt (SCSU Department of EHS) to secure PPE and cleaning supplies.

3. Submit the COVID-19 Request to Visit Campus

Documented approval from the Dean and University Police is required for all visits to campus needed to reopen on-campus laboratories, studios, or to resume research/creative activities. Requests to visit campus should be submitted electronically the week before the requested dates to allow adequate time for Deans' review and University Police to schedule the visit.

Use of laboratories or studios will be permissible for 3-4-hour blocks of time up to twice a week. This will allow for rotation of people through individual buildings and minimize the total numbers in a given building at any given time. Blocks available will be 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m,

scheduled on Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday.

Specific requests may be made for alternate hours or weekend activities, only with strong justification. Priority will be given to faculty who are preparing their lab/studio for the fall semester or conducting research/creative activities. Final scheduling of any campus visit is at the discretion of the University Police.

One time visits to campus can be requested and will be approved by the Dean, then scheduled by the University Police, based on planned priority visits and the need to monitor any campus activity within the appropriate limits for the building/space where visitation is requested.

All personnel approved for a campus visit must provide a cell phone contact number on the electronic form and must call SCSU University Police dispatch upon arrival and upon departure (203-392-5375) so they can monitor, in the name of campus safety and security, who is on campus.

While on campus, persons must wear a face covering and maintain full social distancing. This is absolutely required once a person enters a building. If the person is working alone in a safe, enclosed environment, they may, at their discretion remove their face covering.

All equipment and contact surfaces (such as doorknobs and door jams) used must be wiped with disinfectant cloths upon departure. Disinfectant cloths are well distributed in the hallways of our buildings and any necessary additional cleaning supplies will be provided by SCSU Department of EHS.

If equipment or supplies are used that are inherently dangerous, researchers cannot be in lab/studio spaces alone. Appropriate procedures must be identified in the approved protocol. In this case researchers will need to coordinate their visit with a colleague. No more than two or three individuals (limited by size of facility and required distancing), however, can visit and use a single facility at the same time and all names must be cleared for visits. In the facility, each person must then wear face covering and other protective cover.

Research protection committees should be consulted before resuming research involving human subject or animals. Committee chairs are revamping policies and procedure on an on-going basis to meet local, state and federal guidelines. For information check: <https://inside.southernct.edu/rpp>

Any use or restart of work that entails animals must be cleared with the IACUC. A schedule will also need to be created and approved that will permit access to maintain those animals.

Graduate and Undergraduate students will not be allowed to work alone in any laboratory, studio or other facility that has any inherent chemical or physical danger. Faculty/staff will need to coordinate visits as it is required that all students have appropriate supervision while on site during this time period. Students must be reminded of required procedures to minimize risks to health of those around them.

Researchers will limit movement between rooms in the building (i.e. limit movement to offices to retrieve or use equipment or supplies). They will not use their office as the venue for generating reports, manuscripts, etc.; their home office will continue to be the venue for these activities.

4. Submit an after visit report for every visit to campus

The electronic form “COVID19 Campus Visit Report” collects data about the actual visit to campus, including the date, time in, time out and any notable events that should be reported to the University Police. Faculty are required to include the names and contact information for any student who participated in an approved campus visit. Reference information on COVID-19 symptoms to report or watch for after the visit are included on the form.

For everyone’s health and safety, a new Campus Visit Report is required after every campus visit.

Compliance and continued approval

Faculty/PIs are responsible for ensuring their lab/studio and associated personnel are compliant with the safety protocols and submission of after visit reports.

Individuals who do not follow safety protocols will have access to labs, studios, and research spaces denied.

In response to public health concerns, labs/studios may be required to shut down or close.

All labs/studios must be prepared to immediately ramp down or shut down research and creative activities as our environment and monitoring requires and if instructed to do so. Labs/studios should maintain a ramp down checklist to ensure they can safely stop/ramp down research/creative activities immediately if required.