

From: [Bowman, Tim](#)
Subject: [SEAS-staff] SEAS Staff Return to Campus
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Dear SEAS Staff Colleagues:

Dean Doyle, Dean Habbal, and I, along with Human Resources and your department/office manager, look forward to welcoming you back to campus. While it took us only a few days in March of 2020 to move to fully remote work, the process of safely getting us back started last summer with the gradual return of our research community. We were extremely cautious as we did this, and it resulted in no work-place transmissions of COVID within any of the SEAS facilities. We know this because of the rigorous controls and data tracking put in place. We are being just as thoughtful as we plan for your return. Trends are very hopeful, an informal poll of about 700 individuals in SEAS and the Division of Science indicated over 95% are already vaccinated, and the University is expected to continue testing of all on campus persons through at least the fall semester. Below is a summary of our formal plan for your return, and as University health and safety protocols are updated as we approach August we will be sure you are informed.

I also want to share with you a couple upcoming events:

- We will be holding an all-staff meeting in early July to answer questions.
 - A July staff open house of the SEC is being planned.
 - Staff will be given the opportunity to visit their office/workspace before they return in August, allowing them to return any equipment or chairs they may have borrowed, to unpack if their office was moved, etc.
- More details on all of these are forthcoming.

Best regards,
Tim

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SEAS Staff Return to Campus Plan Summary

The University and SEAS are preparing for the return of staff to campus in August after 16-months of remote work as a result of the pandemic. At SEAS our overarching objectives in this planning process has been:

1. To assure a healthy and safe work environment for staff to return to.
2. To be thoughtful in addressing the challenges and concerns about returning.

3. To take a phased approach to allow us to experiment and fully benefit from what we have learned in an all-remote work environment in establishing new work norms.

In our work to achieve these objectives we have strived to consistently apply the following guiding principles:

1. The safety of our community is of the utmost importance.
2. We will preserve and enhance Harvard's core mission, ethos, and values.
3. We will balance collective effectiveness and room for individual preference.
4. We will organize thoughtfully to bring our shared vision to life.
5. We will be mindful that we are a residential campus and the expectations that come with this.

With the guidance of internal and external experts to the University as well as University and School leadership, the Management Operations Team prepared our plan, engaging with our staff in department meetings and all-staff meetings, and with faculty through information sharing facilitated by the Area Chairs. SEAS will implement the plan in three phases as outlined below.

Phase One – Summer/Fall 2021 (through December):

Each department/office created their own plans allowing for flexibility to best meet their roles and responsibilities. All plans have the following core components:

- All SEAS staff are expected to return to campus starting in August for at least two-days per week.
 - Managers may allow for the gradual return of staff starting in August through September, taking into consideration individual needs as they transition back, such as dependent care. Not all roles may allow for this.
 - Some positions require more than the minimum two-days/week.
 - Managers may work with their staff to schedule days in the office to allow for lower density. While it is safe to return to pre-pandemic density, lower density early on may help with the possible anxiety of returning.
 - Staff who have a compelling reason to delay their return should speak to their supervisor who will in-turn consult with Human Resources.
- Departments/offices must be fully operational and staff must be accessible during work hours.
 - Location schedules (in-person or remote) must be effectively communicated. This can be done on department/office web sites, in email signatures, postings on office doors, etc.
 - Office phones should be forwarded to home or cell phones when working remotely.
 - Response time to emails and voice messages should be appropriate to the role and timeliness of the topic, and every attempt should be made to respond within

- the same business day or sooner.
- Continue practicing strong IT security, including the use of VPN, strong passwords, and the use of collaboration tools
- Meetings should always allow for participation via Zoom. Larger meetings may want to use the video conference equipped meeting room located on the Allston and Cambridge campuses.

Phases Two and Three:

Phase two will start as of January 2022 and run through July. Phase three will start as of August 2022 and is expected to solidify the “new normal”. This phased approach will allow SEAS to make adjustments to our work practices between phases based on lessons learned from prior phases and updated University policy.

Communication and Updates:

As University plans and protocols are updated SEAS will make appropriate changes to our plans. Our primary form of communications will be through managers and in *Inside SEAS*. We will also send email updates and hold all-staff meetings as appropriate.

Questions: Start by checking the following resources, followed by checking with your supervisor or Human Resources.

Keep Harvard Healthy:

<https://www.harvard.edu/coronavirus/>

Environmental Health and Safety:

<https://www.ehs.harvard.edu/covid-19-resources>

Health Services:

<https://huhs.harvard.edu/>

Human Resources Policies:

<https://hr.harvard.edu/corona-virus-workplace-policies>

Transportation and Parking:

<https://www.transportation.harvard.edu/>

Work/Life:

<https://hr.harvard.edu/worklife>