

July 16, 2020

Dear MacEwan Research Community,

Thank you all for your efforts with respect to scholarly activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. I know this been a challenging time for everyone and I appreciate people's efforts and the flexibility they have shown in altering their research programs. While the health and safety of our staff and students, and community remains our top priority, we are also working on a strategy for the resumption of research activity.

Campus reopening is being planned by the MacEwan Relaunch Strategy Team (MRST) and I have been working with MRST to facilitate research resumption for both on-campus and field research.

Below I describe how research resumption will occur and implications for on campus and field and other off campus research.

Research Resumption Phases

Research resumption will be done in phases, to align with the broader re-opening of campus. The safety of our staff and students remain our priority.

The first phase, targeted to start in the latter part of July with the reopening of campus, will provide limited access for on-campus research with adherence to strict physical distancing protocols. Researchers requesting on-campus research access will have to submit a request form for approval before starting any on-campus activities. Researchers wishing to conduct field research will also be required to submit a pre-approval form. The second phase, which will begin later in the summer or early fall, will see a gradual increase in on-campus research activities in line with institutional protocols and guidelines from Alberta Health Services. The second phase will also include an increase in the scope for off-campus approval, again subject to institutional and AHS guidelines, as well as Federal directives around travel and border closures.

Requests for both on or off-campus research that involves human participants for the purposes of conducting focus groups, interviews, and creative or other face-to-face related activities will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. We strongly encourage wherever possible for such activities to continue to take place remotely.

On Campus Research

On campus research will be permitted on a pre-approval basis. This will consist of completing an on-campus research approval form and a hazard assessment and PPE request form for your research space. If you have already completed a resumption of on campus research form during the campus closure, you do not need to complete a new one. However, you will need to complete a hazard and PPE assessment form for your research space as well as a safe workspace plan. Please let us know if you require any of these forms.

Several factors will determine approval for on-campus research access. Approval will be done in consideration of capacity limitations, EDI principles, equity across faculties and schools as well as the urgency of research needs, for example, people doing COVID-19 related studies, or those with time sensitive data that could be lost with research delays.

Field and Other Off Campus Research

Field and other off campus research will also have a pre-approval process that will require completion of a request form and hazard assessment. Key public health restrictions and factors affecting field and other off campus research include:

- Government restrictions on travel. Global Affairs Canada’s global Level 3 “avoid all non-essential travel advisory” is still in effect. As a result, all university international travel remains suspended until further notice. Interprovincial and National travel may be permitted but requires pre-approval.
- Ability to adhere to physical distancing and other public safety guidelines from AHS
- Personal hygiene and cleaning requirements

Field research resumption will occur at different levels as outlined in the table below. ***Currently only requests for level 1 or 2 field or off-campus research will be considered.***

	Field Research (e.g. off campus research such as biological research in rural/remote regions)	Other Off-Campus Research (e.g. third-party host organization in the private or public sector, other community-based settings)
Level 1	<p>Field research below is considered low-risk with respect to COVID-19 and should be able to start immediately but must be submitted and considered for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is in facilities that have been opened Is local (i.e., no overnight accommodation required) Is in areas that are close to medical facilities Does not need any local services (e.g., food, retail) Individual transportation can be taken to the research site Involves working outdoors in non-strenuous conditions Does not require shared equipment. Working in groups of people where physical distancing can be maintained Is not near or in <u>vulnerable communities</u> 	<p>Third-party site research in facilities that have been opened and meet the following criteria is considered low-risk with respect to COVID-19 and should be able to start immediately but must be submitted and considered for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are local (i.e. no overnight accommodation required) Does not need any local services Physical distancing can be maintained Individual transportation can be taken to the site Approval is received or available from the organization Is not near or in <u>vulnerable communities</u>

<p>Level 2</p>	<p>Field research below is considered medium-risk with respect to COVID-19 and will require a mitigation plan:</p> <p>Requires limited local services</p> <p>Includes long-distance work requiring multiple stops for gas, food, washrooms</p> <p>Requires overnight accommodation in commercial lodging or multi-person housing with individual rooms</p> <p>Involves domestic commercial flights</p> <p>Involves work where personal safety has higher risk mitigated through specialized safety training (e.g., rough terrain)</p> <p>Involves work with specimens or samples that require simultaneous handling by multiple people</p> <p>Uses shared equipment</p> <p>Involves work with people where physical distancing can be maintained</p> <p>Involves work with more than 5 people outdoors while maintaining distancing</p> <p>Is not near or in <u>vulnerable communities</u></p>	<p>Third-party site research in facilities that have been opened and meet the following criteria is considered medium-risk with respect to COVID-19 and will require a mitigation plan:</p> <p>Requires limited local services</p> <p>Includes long-distance travel to research site with multiple stops for gas, food, and washrooms</p> <p>Requires overnight accommodation in commercial lodging or multi-person housing with individual rooms</p> <p>Involves domestic commercial flights</p> <p>Involves work where medium to large physical distancing cannot be easily maintained (e.g., shared vehicles)</p> <p>Uses shared equipment</p> <p>Involves in-person contact where physical distancing can be maintained</p> <p>Is not near or in <u>vulnerable communities</u></p>
<p>Level 3</p>	<p>Field research below is considered high-risk with respect to COVID-19 and the university will indicate when it can be resumed or started:</p> <p>Requires commercial flights and/or involves international work, but not in countries with high infection rates or compromised health systems</p> <p>Involves work in remote communities and/or work in collaboration with vulnerable populations</p> <p>Requires shared accommodation</p> <p>Requires access to indoor public locations with many people (e.g., transportation hubs, office buildings).</p> <p>Involves in-person contact where physical distancing cannot be guaranteed or maintained</p>	<p>Third-party site research is considered high-risk with respect to COVID-19 and the university will indicate when it can be resumed or started:</p> <p>Requires commercial flights and/or involves international work, but not in countries with high infection rates or compromised health systems</p> <p>Involves work in remote communities or work in collaboration with vulnerable populations</p> <p>Requires shared accommodation</p> <p>Requires access to indoor public locations with many people (e.g., transportation hubs, office buildings)</p>

	Adequate PPE can be used, but because of the nature of the work it may be difficult	<p>Involves in-person contact where physical distancing cannot be guaranteed or maintained</p> <p>Adequate PPE can be used, but because of the nature of the work it may be difficult to use PPE</p>
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Public health travel information resources for Planning Field or Off Campus Requests -

These resources provide information on travel isolation requirements, indoor and outdoor gatherings, travel within Alberta, public health orders, symptoms and testing, masks and PPEs, restricted services, etc

- [Government of Alberta COVID-19 Information](#)
- [Government of Alberta COVID-19 Travel Advice](#)
- [Global Affairs Canada Travel Advisories](#)
- [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#)
- [Government of Canada Travel Restrictions \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [MacEwan University COVID-19 Information](#)

Process for Approving Research Restart Plans (on and off campus)

All research restart forms (on-campus or off-campus) require the approval of the Dean of the academic unit, HSE and then the Associate Vice-President Research. The approval process is being finalized and details will be communicated as soon as they are confirmed. All forms needed for research approval will be provided through the Office of Research Services via our website.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us at research@macewan.ca

Stay safe and my very best regards to you all,



Craig Kuziemy, PhD
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