MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 20, 2021
TO: All Faculty
FROM: Dr. Charles De Leone, Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and Research
Regina Frasca, Director, Safety, Health, & Sustainability
SUBJECT: Research and Creative Activity Update – August 20

Dear CSUSM Faculty,

We would like to begin this update by recognizing the recent Summer Scholars Poster Showcase. Over 50 students presented the results of their research in front of the library last week. The polish of the student researchers and the quality of their research work is a testament to the commitment and resilience of our CSUSM faculty and staff. Thank you to all of the faculty mentors and staff who made summer research experiences for our students possible. Special thanks to Dr. Read and Dr. Jameson for leading the Summer Scholars Program. Photos of the event are available here.

As we move towards the beginning of a new academic year, we would also like to provide an update on the status of campus- and field-based research. As of today, campus- and field-based researchers may proceed with research and creative activity under pre-Covid conditions provided that all campus policies related to Covid-19 are enforced. These policies include:

- Students are encouraged to submit their COVID-19 vaccination record or have an approved accommodation/exemption on file as soon as possible. Students have until September 30th, to upload their vaccination record or have an approved exemption on file. More information available here.
- All employees and students—regardless of vaccination status—are required to wear a mask indoors while on campus. More information available here.

The above requirements are mandatory for all individuals involved in research or creative activity. However, it is important to recall that faculty may require more stringent safety protocols for their research partners as they deem necessary. This may include requiring the use of QR codes or other methods to document the presence of research staff and students, or voluntary reduced density while working in campus spaces assigned to you.

The California State University
We would also like to recognize and thank the members of the Reactivating Research Committee (RRC) for their efforts during the past year. Composed of administrators, staff, and faculty, the RRC met weekly over the course of the pandemic, developing and implementing a process to safely restart research and creative activity at CSUSM. The work included reviewing and approving research reactivation protocols for 53 faculty members and 194 student researchers during 43 meetings over the course of 2020-21.

The RRC has helped the CSUSM community balance the benefits of research, scholarship, and creative activity against the risks of the pandemic. As we transition to a new phase where most of our campus community will be vaccinated, and thus at very low risk of severe Covid-19 outcomes, we will continue to monitor the balance between CSUSM’s mission to support research, scholarship and creative activity against the risks associated with Covid-19, as we do with other risk factors associated with research activities. We have seen how effective faculty and supervisor leadership can be during challenging times. That leadership remains essential for successful research and creative activities as we enter this new academic year.

For more information regarding current campus COVID-19 protocols please visit the CSUSM as One web site.