Dear Rutgers Research Community,

The new and improved **Return to Research Portal** is now live and accepting requests for approval for **undergraduate students** to participate in research this semester in accordance with the existing policy guiding undergraduate student research activity.

The new, more streamlined process:
- eliminates the DocuSign signature requirements;
- makes it easier for Principal Investigators (PIs) and students to track the progress of every request; and
- provides a more visual reporting approach to facilitate compliance for PIs, department chairs or equivalents, and research deans alike.

Please note that **all undergraduate students who were approved in the Fall and are continuing to participate in research in the Spring 2021 semester must also be processed through this new system**.

The New Process:

PIs will continue to initiate requests through an online form, found on the **Return to Research Portal**.

The following information should be on hand to complete the form:
- **NetIDs** for the undergraduate student, undergraduate program director, and department chair or equivalent (View a 20-sec tutorial on how to find an individual's NetID);
- Each student's school, major, class standing (i.e. freshman, sophomore, junior, senior).

Once a form is submitted, email notifications will be sent sequentially to the student, undergraduate program director, department chair or equivalent, and research dean (and chancellor in cases of requests for exceptions to the policy).

If a request is approved by all parties, an email notification will be sent to the student, PI and department chair or equivalent outlining required next steps (i.e. initial negative test for SARS CoV-2, online REHS safety training). Once these steps are completed, a final email will be sent declaring that the student is cleared to participate in research. **Before this final clearance email is received, undergraduate students should not participate in research activities on campus.**

If a request is rejected by any individual, an email notification will be sent to all in the chain with reasons for the rejection derived from his/her entry on the form.

Tracking Requests & Monitoring Compliance

The **Return to Research Portal** will serve as your gateway for information to track the progress of each request you have submitted as PI or that has come your way as a decision-maker. PIs and department chairs or equivalents can also monitor weekly COVID-19 test clearances for undergraduate students in their labs through the portal.

Requesting Approval for Graduate & Postdoctoral Student Researchers

A new process is currently under development for processing graduate and postdoctoral students. For now, please continue to add any faculty, staff, or graduate and postdoctoral student researchers using the existing process in place by your research deans.

Thank you for your continued support as we endeavor to ensure a safe and productive research environment at Rutgers.

Best regards,
Return to Research Team