

# The University of Mississippi

## Office of Research and Sponsored Programs



## **COVID-19 BRIEFING**

**Josh Gladden**  
**Vice Chancellor for Research and Sponsored Programs**  
**Professor of Physics**  
**April 27, 2020**

# Agenda



- Welcome and general remarks: Dr. Josh Gladden, VCRSP
  - National landscape
  - Current guidelines and posture
  - Federal needs / opportunities
  - Looking forward
  
- Participant Polls
  
- Q&A: On hand to answer questions
  - Sponsored Programs Administration: Melissa Hodge-Penn, AVCRSP
  - Research Development: Jason Hale, Director
  - Division of Research Integrity and Compliance: Mandy King, Director
  - Office of Technology Commercialization: Allyson Best, Director
  - Economic Development: William Nicholas, Director

# Housekeeping



- This is a large group, so please stay on mute.
- Use the Chat to type questions at any time. Sarah will read and the ORSP team will do our best to answer.
  - If we can't answer in real time, we will research and post in the FAQ on [keepdiscovering.olemiss.edu](https://keepdiscovering.olemiss.edu)
  - If an explanation is needed on a question, Sarah will unmute you.
- There will be several poll questions before the Q&A.

# National Landscape



- Universities across the country have had to make dramatic shifts in how they deliver on their core mission: teaching, research, and service.
- All institutions are unique, but through strong collaboration and information sharing, many have followed a similar path.

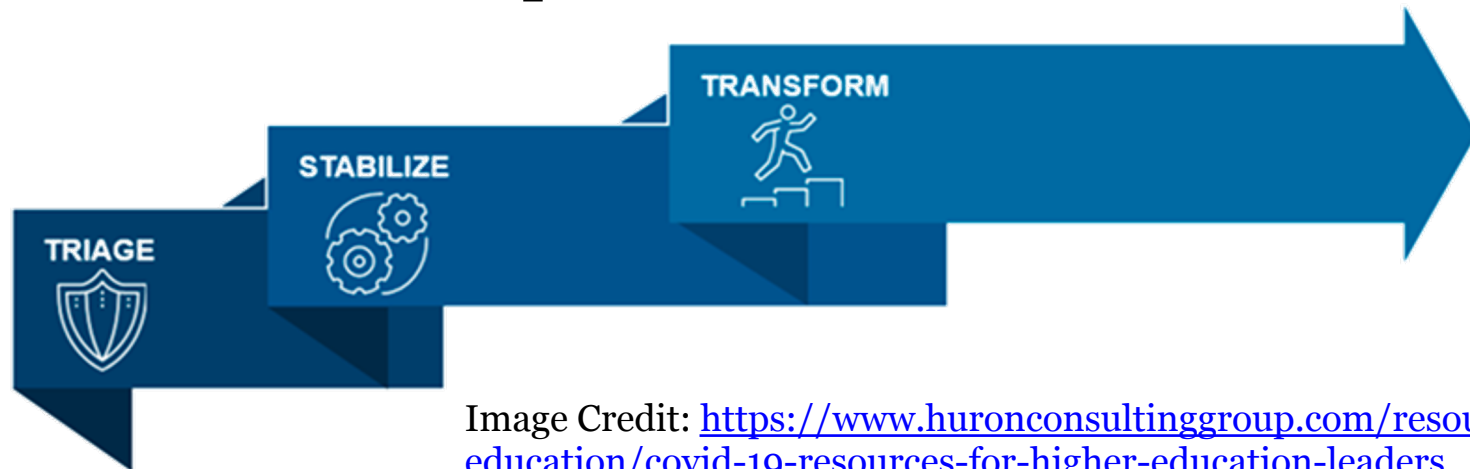


Image Credit: <https://www.huronconsultinggroup.com/resources/higher-education/covid-19-resources-for-higher-education-leaders>

# UM National Activities



- **APLU – Council on Research (CoR)**
  - Our primary national organization
  - VCRSP and AVCRSP participate in weekly Council on Research video conference
  - Represent our interests and concerns to congress & share solutions to common problems
- **Council on Government Relations (CoGR)**
  - Listserves and regular video conferences
- **CARES Act working groups (UM)**
  - Federally focused – Government relations, ORSP, UMMC, BGR
  - CARES student funding – Financial aid, VCAF, ORSP, Provost

# Core Components of UM Response



- Key working groups
  - Keep Teaching – resources for educators
  - Keep Learning – resources for students
  - **Keep Discovering – resources for researchers**
- Key decisions (related to research)
  - VCRSP Memos
    - ✦ COVID-19 Guidance, March 13 – maintain progress on grants and contracts by teleworking wherever possible, implement and execute social distancing where not.
    - ✦ COVID-19 Personnel Guidance, April 17 – continue to pay personnel off grants, document productivity loss.
  - [Keepdiscovering.olemiss.edu](https://keepdiscovering.olemiss.edu) launched March 27
    - ✦ Primary method of distributing rapid flow of information

# Research Enterprise



## Definitions

- **Mission Critical Activities:** University activities which must continue to accomplish the fundamental mission of the university. Examples include teaching and research. These activities may be completed via teleworking or by coming to campus and observing physical distancing.
  - ✦ This is where we are now!
- **Essential Activities:** University activities which must continue to protect university assets (UPD, aspects of facilities, animal care). Most basic support services would stop (custodial, purchasing, mail, invoicing), unless necessary for an essential activity.

# Research Enterprise



- Current guidance to researchers to maintain mission critical activity.
  - Telework as much as possible
  - Work can be performed on-campus if absolutely necessary – physical distance, face masks, stagger shifts, minimize time on-campus,...
- A small number of programs are unavoidably impacted
  - Field work
  - Studies involving groups of students
- Research administration is 100% teleworking and operational – and very busy!



# Other guidelines



- Grant related travel
  - UM on a general travel ban, a waiver procedure is in place
  - Approval through normal chain + VCRSP + Chancellor
  - Key elements
    - ✦ Why is it crucial for this travel to happen now?
    - ✦ How will risk be mitigated? One person / car, hotels, food, gas, minimize contact with public, limit student involvement, ..
- Be in contact with your program officers and POCs!
  - Impacts on your timelines, latest guidance, opportunities for supplements / expanded SOWs
- Keep paying personnel as planned
  - Priority is to stay productive. State/IHL has OK'd administrative leave, so OMB says we can charge grants.

# CARES Act



- Massive \$2.5T congressional act to stabilize economy
- Higher Education Stabilization Fund
  - Each university allocated funds through a formula
    - ✦ 50% for financial aid to students in need
    - ✦ 50% for stabilizing the institution: lost revenue & added costs
- Coming as a large grant
- Supplements to agencies for rapid response grants
  - Topics extend way beyond virology and epidemiology.
  - Regularly updated on keepdiscovering website
- Economic Development and Recovery
  - Community partnerships

# Looking Forward



- Mostly more questions than answers!
- Broad university plans are in development now under various scenarios. Decisions will be data driven.
- Collaborative “living” ramp-up document hosted by UC-Berkley
  - Lays out guiding principles and phased approach to ramp-up.
  - UM is using this as a guide
- ORSP can rapidly get back to normal.

# Looking Forward



- Federal Landscape

- Document added expenses and lost productivity – possible funds to supplement awards, at-cost and no-cost extensions
- Funding for new programs – societal and educational impacts, health care infrastructure, rapid / flexible manufacturing, rural connectivity, community partnerships, ...
- Some other programs may suffer due to shifting priorities.
- Most “regular” programs and due dates are on track!