

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT

RETURN TO WORK PLAN

DATE: JUNE 15, 2021

In response to the directive from NMSU Administration for unit-level Return to Work Plans for the 2021-22 academic year, the Department of Government will follow the steps described below:

General Expectations for Staff, Faculty and Graduate Assistants

The Department of Government is a public-facing unit that serves faculty, students, staff, and members of the community. We plan to resume normal operations (pre-COVID) following CDC and NMDOH guidelines. We will continually monitor the [NMSU Now website](#) for directives and updates.

We will follow the guidelines provided by NMSU and operate under [COVID-safe practices](#) and state health directives. Our main office has installed a plexiglass screen to protect our outward-facing Administrative Assistant, Patricia Vargas, from office visitors. We will continue to emphasize social distancing and mask wearing in line with CDC, NMDOH and university guidelines.

The Department of Government has received supplies of PPE, including hand sanitizer, masks, gloves, and sanitizing spray/cleaner to be used in its staff and faculty offices, grad assistant offices, copy/printer room, and the classrooms Breland 358, 175 and 179.

Staff, faculty and graduate students will observe current stated social distancing rules with colleagues and guests as well as others required by the university, [NMDOH website](#) and the [CDC COVID Guidance website](#).

Staff, faculty, and graduate students will continue to observe reporting requirements should someone test positive. The Main Office will follow all required stated protocols at that time, should that happen.

Should a member of staff, faculty or graduate students need an accommodation related to returning to work, they will be directed to OIE for assistance.

Any Alternative Work Arrangement request requires an AWA form and the approval of the Department Head and the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences.

List of On-Campus Functions

The Department of Government engages in the following work: (i) teaching and advising, (ii) research, (iii) service; and, (iv) outreach. Staff, faculty, and graduate students are expected to be present on campus and using their office space in order to carry out their work unless an AWA form has been submitted and approved by the Department Head and the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences.

Staffing Overview

Patricia Vargas (Administrative Assistant) – regular fully in-person presence, starting on July 6, 2021, operating the Main Office (Breland 337), 8.00 am-5.00 pm, Monday-Friday. (contact information:

pvargas@nmsu.edu , tel: 575-646-4935. Exceptions may arise due to annual leave or sick leave, in which cases coverage will be arranged in advance with administrative assistants in other departments in Breland Hall and a notice of such arrangements will be placed on the door of the Main Office (Breland 337).

Dr. Neil Harvey (Academic Department Head, Breland 349) will be available by appointment, 8.00 am – 5.00 pm, Monday-Friday. Contact information: nharvey@nmsu.edu , tel: 575-646-4935, and will be regularly present starting August 2, 2021.

Government Department faculty and graduate assistants will return to work on August 16, 2021. They will post office hours nearer the start of semester and will be available to meet with students in their offices during those hours or by appointment.

Continuity of Operations

The Administrative Assistant, Patricia Vargas, and Department Head, Neil Harvey, have backup staff and faculty to cover for them in case of absence.

Safety, Risk Points and Mitigation Plans

Our main office has been prepared for COVID-safe practices since the early stages of the pandemic. A plexiglass screen has been installed on the outward-facing desk of our Administrative Assistant, Patricia Vargas. Signage and social distancing markers indicate COVID-safe protocols in our unit. Our copy/printer room and equipment have cleansing wipes and hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer stations and PPE supplies are located near to or inside our faculty, staff, and graduate assistant offices, as well as at the classrooms we use: Breland 358, 175 and 179.

All faculty, staff and graduate assistants will continue to follow guidelines for reporting positive cases and pivoting to remote operation if necessary.