



Dear DGSOM Research Community,

The purpose of this email is to provide guidance as to how UCLA Health and the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA will systematically direct our research and scientific enterprise to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our city, state, country and world face an unprecedented challenge requiring all of us to work together. The strengths of UCLA Health in basic, translational and clinical research position us to make a transformative and enduring impact on the COVID-19 pandemic. To do this, we must take a targeted and prioritized approach to developing and scaling our COVID-19 research programs. While safeguarding the principles of academic freedom and recognizing the importance of preserving individual research programs, now is the time for us to come together as a community to prioritize specific research questions and activities with the potential to have a profound impact on the COVID-19 pandemic.

New DGSOM COVID-19 Research Governance Structure

The limited availability of resources and research materials makes it essential for us to think and act strategically. As such, DGSOM leadership, through Vice Dean for Research Steve Smale, is implementing a new COVID-19 Research Governance Structure to facilitate strategic, prioritized allocation of financial resources, biospecimens, PPE, and research facilities.

This infrastructure will be led by a central Oversight COVID-19 Research Committee (OCRC) chaired by Dr. Owen Witte, Director of the Broad Stem Cell Research Center. Membership includes:

- Steve Smale, Vice Dean for Research, DGSOM;
 - Steve Dubinett, Associate Vice Chancellor, Sr. Associate Dean and Director of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute;
 - Sarah Dry, Interim Chair of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine;
 - Jeff F. Miller, Director of the California NanoSystem Institute;
 - Daniel Geschwind, Associate Vice Chancellor, Sr. Associate Dean and Director of the Institute for Precision Health;
 - Michael Teitell, Director of the Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center;
 - Emilie Marcus, Executive Strategy Officer for the DGSOM, and
 - Jamie Lynn, Executive Director, Health Science Development.
- The OCRC will be staffed by Steve Peckman, Dion Baybridge, and Rosely Encarnacion.

The OCRC will set a bold, collective vision and roadmap for COVID-19 research supported by the DGSOM.

There are five task forces with deep expertise in specific domains that will report up to the OCRC for research related to COVID-19, to accelerate problem-solving and decision-making:

- **The DGSOM-CTSI COVID-19 Clinical Research Task Force** is led by Chief Medical Officer for Clinical Research Arash Naeim and Infectious Diseases Division Chief Judith Currier. The scope of this task force includes clinical trials, clinical and population health research.
- **The Biospecimen Use Task Force** (chair TBD) will evaluate, prioritize and consolidate requests from UCLA faculty and their academic collaborators for patient samples and their corresponding de-identified patient data sets.
- **The COVID-19 Basic Science Research Task Force** is co-led by BSCRC Co-Director and Professor of Pediatrics and Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Gay Crooks and DGSOM



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Executive Strategy Officer Emilie Marcus. The scope of this task force, which will report to the OCRC, includes basic through translational biomedical research on COVID-19.

- **The High-Containment Use Committee**, recently appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Research, Roger Wakimoto, is led by Jerry Zack. This task force, which reports to Vice Chancellor Wakimoto, is charged with determining priorities and evaluating requests for use of high-containment research space, where live COVID-19 virus can be studied. This committee will communicate closely with the OCRC to ensure that the high-containment facility does not become over-booked and is able to carry out COVID-19 research with high impact potential.
- **The Health Data Oversight Committee** is chaired by Mike Pfeffer. This committee, which reports to Vice Chancellor for Health John Mazziotta, will evaluate and approve requests for COVID-19-related patient data from third party sources.

We have created a dedicated email inbox, COVID19Research@mednet.ucla.edu, for all queries related to COVID-19 research at DGSOM, which will be managed and monitored by the OCRC. Please direct all emails and requests concerning COVID-19 research to that inbox. You are also encouraged to cc the chair of the most relevant Task Force and/or Steve Smale, the Vice Dean for Research. We recognize the urgency of all COVID-related activities and the frequent need to respond to competitive opportunities sometimes within 24 hours so we are committed to same-day response to all emails coming to this address.

Over the past several weeks, much progress has already been made by our incredible DGSOM research community to pivot our research enterprise to address the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, Vice Dean Steve Smale has worked closely with Sr. Associate Dean Steve Dubinett and the leadership of the UCLA CTSI to identify opportunities to facilitate COVID-19 translational and clinical research. This work has already resulted in remarkable achievements, including rapid approval and opening of a Remdesivir trial for COVID-19 patients in UCLA Health and moving several clinical research projects forward in record time. These achievements highlight what DGSOM faculty and leaders can do when they come together to address a challenge.

Thank you all for rising to this unprecedented challenge together.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Martin
Dean

Steve Smale
Vice Dean, Research

Emilie Marcus
Executive Strategy Officer