



Department of Physics
Lewis Laboratory
16 Memorial Drive East
Bethlehem, PA 18015-3182
(610)758-3930 Fax (610)758-5730
<http://www.physics.lehigh.edu>

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the way we work in the physics department. In March, the university went to remote instruction and all our courses went online with very short notice. Nevertheless, our faculty worked very hard to make this transition and provided a good experience to our students. All summer courses were also held in an online format. Our faculty, postdocs, and students have been doing research remotely, and we held a smaller version of our regular REU summer undergraduate intern program remotely.

Keeping the safety and health of our students, staff, and faculty in mind, we are in the process of carefully bringing people back into Lewis Lab. Starting in June, our experimental research labs resumed varying levels of work, with selected faculty and graduate students involved in the experiments coming into the labs. Detailed safety protocols have been put in place for all in-person work, and personal protection equipment (PPE) supplies was provided to all. This was a learning experience on how to deal with the threat of infection while continuing critical research work. In preparation for the Fall semester, a broader safety plan will be developed to allow more people to come back to their offices, as needed. In accordance with the University's current teaching plan for the fall semester, the department is offering courses in multiple formats. Any students who return to campus in-person and those that will be attending classes from home will all be able to take classes. Many of the class and teaching details are still to be worked out and depend on many external factors such as infection rates and government regulations at the federal, state, and local levels. We will keep all department members informed as events develop further.

Despite all this there is also good news to be shared. We welcome Anders Knospe to our department as a new tenure track Assistant Professor. He is a nuclear experimentalist working at the ALICE experiment at CERN. Despite the difficult times our faculty has been successful in winning grants: (1) Rosi Reed received a NSF Career award, (2) Dimitri Vavylonis got a new NIH grant, and (3) Timm Wrase has received word that his NSF proposal will get funded.