Expert Areas

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3-4 Infectious Diseases and Mitigation  
5 Personal and Societal Impacts  
6 Economic and Retail Impacts  
7 Animals and Agriculture

Online Resources and Contacts

TEXAS A&M CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

The university regularly updates its guidelines for students, faculty and staff regarding COVID-19 and provides answers to frequently-asked questions. 
tamu.edu/coronavirus

TEXAS A&M DIVISION OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the news team can assist in contacting experts and fielding questions from the media. today.tamu.edu/press-room

Texas A&M University has more than 20 faculty experts available to discuss every aspect of the new coronavirus, COVID-19, from how the virus spread and its societal impacts to policy implications and preventative measures.

In this guide, media will find important information for experts and a central point of contact for Texas A&M University inquiries regarding the school’s response to COVID-19.
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Pandemic Preparedness and Government Response

GERALD PARKER
Associate Dean for Global One Health, Director of the Pandemic and Biosecurity Policy Program, Institute for Infectious Animal Diseases strategic advisor, Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences/Bush School of Government and Public Service

Parker is a former commander and deputy commander of the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, and held senior positions at the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Defense. He is an expert in pandemic preparedness, public health preparedness and response, biodefense and global health security.

Contact: 240-405-8703 | gparker@cvm.tamu.edu

CHRISTINE CRUDO BLACKBURN
Pandemic and Biosecurity Policy Program Deputy Director, Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service

Blackburn researches pandemic disease policy and control, and can discuss preparedness, response and basic information about COVID-19.

Contact: 979-862-1324 ccblackburn@tamu.edu

DENNIS CARROLL
Senior Fellow, Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service

Carroll recently retired as director of the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Emerging Threats Division, where he led the agency’s responses to the spread of avian influenza and the West Africa Ebola epidemic. Before that, he served as senior infectious diseases advisor for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Contact: 202-999-6144 dcarroll008@gmail.com
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Pandemic Preparedness and Government Response (cont.)

TIMOTHY CALLAGHAN
Assistant Professor in Health Policy and Management, Texas A&M University School of Public Health

Callaghan researches health politics and anti-vaccine thinking. He can discuss government decision-making related to disease response and issues of vaccination.

Contact: 979-436-0960
callaghan@tamu.edu

ANDREW NATSIOS
Executive Professor and Director of the Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs, Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service

Natsios is a former administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and is an expert on foreign aid and policy, global famine and refugee crises. Natsios can discuss how American foreign aid programs can be used in response to COVID-19.

Contact: 979-862-1154
anatsios@tamu.edu

RAY BROWNING
Associate Training Specialist, Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service’s (TEEX) Emergency Services Training Institute (ESTI)

Browning is available to explain how TEEX is working to train first responders to manage calls regarding COVID-19.

Contact: 979-458-5628
ray.browning@teex.tamu.edu
TENAS A&M EXPERTS ON
Infectious Diseases and Mitigation

CYNTHIA WESTON
Assistant Professor and Associate Dean for Clinical and Outreach Affairs, Texas A&M University College of Nursing
Weston is a family nurse practitioner and primary care provider. She can discuss hygiene tips, how COVID-19 spreads and ways to mitigate infection.
Contact: 979-436-0178
cweston@tamu.edu

REBECCA FISCHER
Assistant Professor in Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Texas A&M University School of Public Health
Fischer is an epidemiologist who can discuss infectious diseases, particularly outbreaks and epidemics. Her research has focused on global health, epidemic investigations, risk factors for infectious diseases and more.
Contact: 512-567-7048 | rfischer@tamu.edu

ROBIN MURPHY
Raytheon Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, College of Engineering
Murphy’s primary research is in artificial intelligence for mobile robots as applied to disaster robotics. She is available to discuss how robots could be used to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic.
Contact: 979-845-8737
robin.r.murphy@tamu.edu
Infectious Diseases and Mitigation (cont.)

**JASON MCKNIGHT**
Clinical Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University College of Medicine

McKnight is a physician for Texas A&M’s Family Medicine Residency. He can discuss the virus as it relates to symptoms, populations at risk and preventative measures to stay healthy.

Contact: 936-635-5125
jmcknight@tamu.edu

**ARUM HAN**
Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Texas A&M University College of Engineering

An expert in biomedical engineering, Han can discuss his research in technology to rapidly develop new therapeutics against emerging viral threats, including for COVID-19.

Contact: 979-845-9686
arum.han@tamu.edu

**ALISON PITTMAN**
Clinical Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University College of Nursing

Pittman is a pediatric nurse who can discuss how children are affected by COVID-19, as well as the response of parents and schools to the virus.

Contact: 979-436-0140
pittman@tamu.edu
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Personal and Societal Impacts

ANNMARIE MACNAMARA
Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences
MacNamara can discuss anxiety surrounding COVID-19. She specializes in the emotional response to health and disease.
Contact: 917-770-0942
amacnamara@tamu.edu

LU TANG
Associate Professor, Texas A&M University Department of Communication
Tang is an expert on health communication and social media. She can discuss the online reaction to infectious diseases and how officials should use social media to inform the public.
Contact: ltang@tamu.edu

KRYSZAL SIMMONS
Clinical Associate Professor, Texas A&M University Department of Educational Psychology
Simmons can discuss how parents can talk to their children about the coronavirus in a developmentally-appropriate way. She can also provide recommendations for monitoring and minimizing concerning behavior (such as anxiety) that have resulted from the pandemic.
Contact: ktcook@tamu.edu

MIQUELA SMITH
Healthy Texas Specialist, Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Service
Smith can speak to how people can prepare themselves and their homes for potential quarantine.
Contact: 806-862-4601
miquela.smith@ag.tamu.edu

JESSICA BERNARD
Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences
Bernard can discuss the impact of social distancing on seniors and older adults, as well as how less mental and physical activity can result from isolation, quarantine or social distancing.
Contact: 412-298-9773
jessica.bernard@tamu.edu

CEYHUN EKSIN
Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Eksin researches how the interactions of individuals can affect system evolution and operation in complex systems. In the case of epidemics, he looks to answer how behavior, society’s connectivity and disease factors come together to determine the spread of infection.
Contact: 979-458-2363
eksinc@tamu.edu
TECHAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Economic and Retail Impacts

VENKATESH SHANKAR
Center for Retailing Studies Director of Research,
Texas A&M University Mays Business School

Shankar can speak to the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and businesses, retailing, energy and the healthcare industries.

Contact: 979-777-7436
vshankar@mays.tamu.edu

SCOTT BENEDICT
Executive Professor, Center for Retailing Studies Director,
Texas A&M University Mays Business School

Benedict can discuss the virus’ impacts on retailing, including supply chain management, safe shopping, employee safety and placing limits on cleaning supplies.

Contact: 479-366-1316
sbenedict@mays.tamu.edu

KATIE KIRSCH
Research Associate, Texas A&M University Department of Environmental & Occupational Health; Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics; School of Public Health

Kirsch can speak about precautions hotel managers and staff can take to improve guest and employee health and safety.

Contact: kirkirsch@tamu.edu
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Animals and Agriculture

HEATHER SIMMONS
Associate Director, Texas A&M University Institute for Infectious Animal Diseases
Simmons is also department head and extension program leader for Veterinary Medical Extension. She can speak about how the virus impacts livestock and animals.
Contact: 979-862-3202
hlsimmons@ag.tamu.edu

DAVID ANDERSON
Economist, Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Service
Anderson’s research activities are in livestock and food products marketing and policy. He can discuss how COVID-19 impacts the economics of agricultural products.
Contact: 979-845-4351
danderson@tamu.edu

DEBRA ZORAN
Professor, Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
Zoran specializes in emergency preparedness and response, and the use of simulations in the teaching of disaster.
Contact: 979-845-2351
dzoran@cvm.tamu.edu

KATE CREEVY
Associate Professor of Small Animal Clinical Sciences, Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
Creevy is a board-certified small animal internal medical specialist with research interests including small animal infectious diseases.
Contact: 706-224-0398
kcreevy@cvm.tamu.edu