TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
COVID-19 Experts Guide

Compiled by the Division of Marketing & Communications
Expert Areas

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Online Resources and Contacts

TEXAS A&M EXPERTS SITE
A wide range of faculty and staff are available to be interviewed by local, state and national media as leading experts in their fields. experts.tamu.edu

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 40 faculty and staff experts available to discuss every aspect of the disease caused by the novel 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 ccbblackburn@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

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

Browning is an expert on logistical and medical countermeasures used in response to pandemics and acts of terrorism. He has an extensive background in public health and can speak to the necessity of the involvement of public health agencies in COVID-19 response.

Contact: 979-458-5628
ray.browning@teex.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 can discuss how American foreign aid programs can be used in response to COVID-19.

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

VEE ANN CARTER
Associate Training Specialist, Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX)

Carter is an expert on public health and nursing protocols in response to pandemics and acts of terrorism. She is an RN who can speak to the needs of the first receiver and other hospital personnel in regards to the response and management of COVID-19 in that setting.

Contact: 979-845-2409
vee.fitzgerald-carter@teex.tamu.edu
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Pandemic Preparedness and Government Response (cont.)

KATHY WALL
Training Coordinator, Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX)
Kathy Wall is an expert on first responder personnel needs, protective gear and protocols used in response to pandemics and acts of terrorism.
Contact: 979-845-2409 kathy.wall@teex.tamu.edu

ANGELA CLENDENIN
Instructional Assistant Professor in Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Texas A&M University School of Public Health
Clendenin is an expert on risk communication, decision analysis, cultural and social influences on communications and decision-making and emergency management. She can discuss preparedness and response to COVID-19, including lessons learned and messaging approaches.
Contact: 979-739-5718 clendenin@tamu.edu

MARCIA ORY
Regents and Distinguished Professor, Texas A&M University School of Public Health
Ory is the Founding Director of the Center for Population Health and Aging. She is coordinating with a university-wide COVID-19 task force on public health research and outreach. Her expertise includes social and behavioral determinants of health with implications for the implementation, dissemination and evaluation of public health interventions in vulnerable populations.
Contact: mory@tamu.edu
Infectious Diseases and Mitigation

TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

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

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

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

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

JONATHAN SCZEPANSKI
Assistant Professor of Chemistry, Texas A&M University College of Science
One of Sczepanski’s research areas is the development of new technologies for the treatment of diseases, including viral infections and cancer. He is available to discuss new antiviral therapies to possibly treat COVID-19.
Contact: 979-862-3731
jon.sczepanski@chem.tamu.edu
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Infectious Diseases and Mitigation (cont.)

RICHARD GOMER

Professor of Biology, Texas A&M University College of Science

Gomer’s primary research focuses on tissue size regulation, tissue cell composition and fibrosing (scarring) diseases. He can speak to lung inflammation and related damage caused by COVID-19 as well as potential therapeutics to treat the virus.

Contact: 979-458-5745
rgomer@bio.tamu.edu

DEBORAH BELL-PEDERSEN

Professor of Biology, Texas A&M University College of Science

Bell-Pedersen is an expert on virology. She is available to discuss general virology and the spread of pathogens, as well as the basic biology of COVID-19.

Contact: 979-847-9237
dpedersen@bio.tamu.edu

WENSHE LIU

Professor of Chemistry, Texas A&M University College of Science

Liu and his research team were the first to point out that the drug remdesivir can be used to fight COVID-19 and are actively working on the development of a treatment for the virus. He is available to discuss his team’s current efforts.

Contact: 979-845-1746
wliu@chem.tamu.edu

KURT ZUELKE

Director of the Global Health Research Complex (GHRC), Texas A&M University Division of Research

Zuelke directs GHRC efforts as a biocontainment facility and core laboratory serving as a resource to combat existing and emerging diseases. He is available to comment on hospital surge capacity, biosecurity and infectious disease biocontainment.

Contact: k_zuelke_2019@tamu.edu
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON Infectious Diseases and Mitigation (cont.)

MATTHEW SACHS
Professor of Biology, Texas A&M University College of Science
Sachs’ research focuses on control mechanisms important in regulating gene expression. He can speak to the genetic mechanisms involved in coronaviruses.
Contact: 979-845-5930 msachs@bio.tamu.edu

ROBIN MURPHY
Raytheon Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, Texas A&M University 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

ARUM HAN
Professor of Electrical & 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
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

KRYS TAL 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 & 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
TEXAS 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

LISA T. ALEXANDER
Professor of Law, Texas A&M University School of Law
Alexander is the co-director of the School of Law’s Program in Real Estate and Community Development Law. She specializes in housing and urban community development law, business law, and local government and property law. Alexander can speak to housing law-related provisions in the federal government’s CARES Act, such as foreclosure forbearance and eviction freezes.
Contact: 817-212-3858
ltalexander@law.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: krkirsch@tamu.edu

WILLIAM BYRNES
Executive Professor of Law, Texas A&M University School of Law
Byrnes is an expert on tax law, financial planning and wealth management, anti-money laundering and risk management. He has written about issues related to the federal government’s CARES Act, and can discuss responses to COVID-19 in the tax field.
Contact: 817-212-3969
williambyrnes@law.tamu.edu
TEXAS A&M EXPERTS ON

Economic and Retail Impacts (cont.)

RAYMOND ROBERTSON
Professor of Economics and Director of the Mosbacher Institute for Trade, Economics, and Public Policy, Texas A&M University Bush School of Government & Public Service

Robertson is an expert in the fields of labor economics and international economics. He is available to comment on market reactions to the pandemic.

Contact: robertson.tamu.edu

ELEFtherios IakOvou
Professor of Industrial Distribution and Director of Manufacturing and Logistics Innovation Initiatives, Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station

Iakovou's areas of expertise include supply chain and inventory management, maritime logistics, emergency response management and innovation, and policy-making, among others. He is available to comment on supply chain management during the pandemic.

Contact: eiakovou@tamu.edu

CHasLe HAll
Professor of Horticultural Sciences, Texas A&M University College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

Hall is an economics expert who specializes in the green industry, including innovative management and marketing strategies, financial analysis, and the situation/outlook for nursery and greenhouse crops. He is available to discuss strategies green-industry companies can use to protect their businesses during the pandemic.

Contact: charliehall@tamu.edu

DAVID EASTES
Program Manager for Center for Global Health and Innovation, Texas A&M AgriLife Research

Eastes is a public health expert who has developed state, national and international health programs. He is available to comment on issues related to supply chain during the pandemic.

Contact: david.eastes@ag.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

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

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