



Dear Faculty & Staff,

This week marks four months since the University of Houston-Downtown moved its campus operations and classes online. As UHD prepares for the start of a new academic year, our university and community continue to address the many challenges posed by COVID-19.

Today's message provides more details on the University's plans for fall 2020 and a breakdown of scenarios.

Fall 2020 - All decisions for fall 2020 will be based on [Harris County Threat Levels](#) (which inform [UHD's Threat Level Matrix](#)) and guidance from city, county and state officials, as well as public health agencies. As a state institution, UHD ultimately follows the directives of the Office of the Texas Governor.

Presently, UHD and Harris County are at Level 1 - RED. For now, UHD will continue to prepare its campus to provide employees and students with a safe and healthy environment for learning and working. Regardless of the state of campus or threat level, UHD is not planning layoffs, furloughs or other employment-related cost-saving measures at this time.

On August 7, it is the intention to communicate to the campus community the threat level that will be in effect for campus when the semester begins on August 24.

- **UHD Threat Level Assessment** - [Last week's note to the community outlined the University's Threat Level Assessment](#) - Levels 1 - 4.

If UHD remains at Level 1 - RED, faculty and staff should expect the following during the start of the semester:

- Only [essential personnel](#) (as well as those necessary to fulfill specific unit-level needs) will continue to work on campus. All other staff will continue to work remotely.
- Emergency Leave will be available until the end of the fiscal year (Aug. 31, 2020).
- Employees unable to telecommute may be assigned temporary projects.
- Classes scheduled for online will remain online. A majority of online interactive, face-to-face and hybrid course will be moved online with the possibility for a limited number of exceptions based on consultation with faculty. Classes that do not move online—should there be any—will be reviewed to ensure appropriate distancing, and classrooms will be modified to ensure appropriate spacing between students and faculty.
- Faculty campus access will be limited to critical research and instructional needs and office access. While faculty may pick up material from other campus departments (such as the library), it will be on an appointment basis. Faculty service obligations will be rendered virtually, and office hours scheduled online.
- Employees needing to access campus may do so with prior notice to supervisors and must enter through the UHD Police Department.
- All meetings will be held virtually.

If conditions improve and campus opens in Level 2 - ORANGE status, UHD faculty and staff should expect the following:

- UHD will open its campus to a limited number of offices with reduced staffing. Other offices may operate by appointment with safety protocols in place.
- Employees unable to telecommute may be assigned temporary projects.
- Face-to-face, hybrid or online interactive classes will occur on campus as currently scheduled.
- Faculty will have access to campus for research and instructional needs and access to their offices, and will access items from other departments (such as the library) according to the operating schedules and staffing restrictions of those units.
- All meetings, to include office hours, will be held virtually.
- Building access will be limited to pre-determined entrances.

It goes without saying that these are unprecedented times, and UHD Leadership is evaluating local and state conditions, including area school districts, to make decisions that support the University's academic mission ... and most importantly, the safety of all UHD personnel. [A message was also sent to UHD students today.](#)

For more details on the University's responses to this pandemic, visit the [UHD Coronavirus Website](#) and please continue to direct questions to coronavirus@uhd.edu. For a complete list of all UHD communications related to COVID-19, please see the [COVID-19 Updates page](#) in UHD News.