



Office of the President
Dr. Antonio D. Tillis

Dear UHD Faculty & Staff,

As you know, the previously scheduled [Town Hall on Fall 2020](#) will now take place at 3 p.m., Aug. 18. I certainly apologize for the inconvenience as many of you had juggled commitments and meetings to participate in this important conversation.

Rescheduling this Town Hall was not an easy decision as many people have been working tirelessly to prepare for Fall 2020, including the COVID-19 Response Taskforce, UHD leadership and many faculty and staff who have consistently either remained on campus or returned to their offices to prepare for fall.



As discussed in previous communications, UHD is currently guided by its [COVID-19 Response Matrix](#) and guidance from state officials and University of Houston System Board of Regents. As a state institution, UHD follows the directives of the Governor's Office. [By executive order, the Governor has moved Texas into Phase 3 of his reopening plan](#) aimed at safely and strategically restarting and revitalizing all aspects of the state, including schools and universities. UHD is required to align with this order.

Based on the Response Matrix, UHD should open on August 24 in Step 2 – Orange. However, to allow for a gradual repopulation due to the condensed nature of our campus and reliance on elevators for our community, UHD will start the fall semester at Step 1-Red and will move to Step 2 - Orange on September 8.

After careful consideration and deliberation, the University has revised its Response Matrix. A very brief summary of our current status, Red, is as follows:

1. Some classes, currently scheduled with face-to-face components, will begin instruction starting August 24. Whereas, the remainder of classes with face-to-face components will commence no later than September 8. Deans and chairs are currently working with faculty to determine on-campus activities beginning August 24.
2. Faculty, staff and students can enter campus through [designated entry points](#).
3. Students may only enter campus for the purposes of attending class or to pick up class materials such as textbooks. Students should not study or gather in groups on campus
4. [Essential personnel](#) and those necessary for mission critical needs will continue to work on campus with distancing and safety protocols in place. Other staff members will continue to telecommute as their duties allow them to do so.

Complete details on Red status and other steps can be found on the revised [Response Matrix](#). The matrix and current campus status will be among the many topics discussed during the rescheduled Town Hall on Aug. 18.

I recognize that the revision of the Response Matrix and the changes to Fall 2020 are happening rapidly. Some of you will not be affected by these changes, but others will have to adjust current plans. In either case, let's stand together, support our students, exercise patience, flexibility and compassion.

Again, I realize that our best laid plans continue to change. Unfortunately, that's been the nature of COVID-19 since March. Be assured, however, that the University's leadership team, the Response Taskforce and many others are responding to these changes as quickly as they come.

Thank you for your flexibility and collegial support as we navigate these times together. I look forward to addressing you at next week's Town Hall.

Sincerely,

Dr. Antonio D. Tillis
Interim President
University of Houston-Downtown