

A Joint Resolution on Staff Returning To Campus

UHD Faculty Senate & UHD Staff Council, June 12, 2020

Whereas the ASA COVID working group has noted that any return to campus must be dependent, first and foremost, on the ability to maintain the health and safety of faculty, staff, and students;

Whereas the UHD Faculty Senate and UHD Staff Council are alarmed that UHD administration has not clearly addressed serious concerns expressed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Staff Council Executive Committee, which were communicated in detail in an email to senior administration on June 5, 2020, about staff being forced to return to campus on June 15 at risk of loss of employment;

Whereas the UHD Faculty Senate and UHD Staff Council assert that the staff has been competently and effectively performing their official duties remotely, and we trust them to continue to do so and to be treated equitably;

Whereas the pandemic is far from over in Texas, continues to become more severe and remains highly unpredictable, the state is consistently missing its own benchmarks for reopening, and the number of coronavirus cases in Texas rose by 2,504 on June 10, 2020, the highest daily total recorded by the Texas Department of State Health Services;

Whereas on June 10, 2020, as cases continued to rise, UHD administration delivered a vague response to the safety and employment concerns raised by FSEC and SCEC;

Now, therefore, let it be resolved that we request the following actions from UHD administration:

- That the current plan to open on June 15 be suspended until further notice;
- That all staff currently scheduled to return to campus on June 15 and July 6 be allowed to work offsite, if they choose, save for staff whose work is simply impossible to perform from a distance, until August 17 (one week before the fall semester begins) without preconditions;
- That UHD administration publicly commit to not furloughing or laying off any staff for the rest of the summer as an act of good faith and support of the university community;
- That UHD administration develop a safer plan for staff, faculty, and students to return to campus, in close consultation with those groups, that adheres to the recommendations of the ASA COVID committee's report on May 26, 2020;
- That UHD administration respond to this resolution no later than noon on Sunday, June 14, 2020.

Furthermore, we note the vague response to the Faculty Senate's and Staff Council's clearly stated concerns by administration has shaken the confidence of those two bodies in both the state of shared governance and administrative leadership at UHD. These actions may help restore that confidence.