



## OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

UHD President, Loren J. Blanchard

Dear UHD Faculty and Staff,

As we embark on a gradual return to campus this summer, I look forward to soon seeing each of you back in our classrooms, offices and public areas. This transition will allow UHD to resume critical on-campus operations, ensuring that our students will have rich, immersive academic and student life experiences this summer and fall. These opportunities for in-person classes, support services and events reinforce the academic success, persistence and graduation of our students – particularly those who are in the early stages of their university experience.



During the [UHD Campus Transition Town Hall on May 12](#), a team of campus leaders and I discussed the actions taken to ensure a safe campus for all. Included in those actions are the installation of additional hand sanitization devices, touchless doors, a cap on elevator capacity, and more. Since that Town Hall, Gov. Abbott has issued [Executive Order 36](#), prohibiting governmental entities from requiring the wearing of face coverings. While UHD will not require individuals to wear face coverings or masks, the decision some may make to continue with mask wearing will certainly be respected.

I want to reiterate that these protocols and enhancements serve one overarching goal - to keep our campus community protected. The well-being of Gators has always been, and shall remain, the top priority. Over this past year, this community has responded to the changes necessitated by COVID-19 with diligence and flexibility, and I am confident we will retain that same level of commitment as we return this week.

Remember, we all share in the responsibility to maintain safety. Thanks to a partnership with Curative, UHD now offers [COVID-19 testing](#) on campus. If you have not received the coronavirus vaccine, I encourage you to take advantage of this free service.

I'm very pleased to report that [UHD and H-E-B are partnering to host vaccination events](#) on campus June 9 and throughout the summer. Further, the vaccine is available to UHD students, faculty and staff through the University's partner, [UTHealth](#). Additionally, UHD Community members may receive the vaccine through their primary healthcare providers or sign up for an appointment at one of the Houston area's [vaccine hubs](#). Please continue demonstrating personal and communal responsibility by self-monitoring for symptoms daily, washing hands frequently, and remaining socially distant as situations dictate.

As a reminder, UHD will host another town hall later this summer, with the date to be announced soon. If you have any further questions, please refer to the University's [COVID-19 website](#).

I will close this message by again thanking you, the UHD community, for the commitment and diligence demonstrated to-date in this battle against the pandemic. Like all of you I'm sure, I am grateful to see our nation finally turning the corner on COVID-19, and eagerly await the day when all the world can say the same.

Sincerely,

Loren J. Blanchard, Ph.D.  
President, University of Houston-Downtown