

Office of the Provost

COVID-19 Response

Dear UHD Colleagues,

This morning, [a message](#) went out to the UHD community from the president indicating that our instructional efforts will be moving into online/remote formats for a two week period (specifically, from March 23-April 4), and perhaps longer, as we continue to assess the impact of the COVID-19 virus on our educational activities here at UHD. In advance of that two-week period of online instruction, classes will be suspended for the week of March 16-22. The intent of this one-week suspension of classes is to provide all instructional faculty across campus the opportunity to build the online learning environments needed to maintain high-quality, effective teaching and learning during this time.

Simultaneously, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs will be preparing to deliver their services and maintain continuity of operations during this transitional instructional period and, going forward, until the resumption of normal educational operations at some point in the future.

Although this initial period of universal online/remote instruction will last until April 4, 2020, we intend to make a decision by March 31st (if not sooner) about what will happen starting April 5th. Our hope is that we will be able to return to normal educational operations starting April 5th, but all instructional faculty should be prepared, just in case, for online/remote activities to continue through the end of the semester.

These are exceptional circumstances, but our collective commitment to providing quality educational experiences for our students remains. Deans and chairs will work closely with all faculty and staff to make sure that instruction continues in online environments and that the educational experiences that the students receive is significant and in-line with the learning objectives of each course. We understand that the online environment poses different challenges for different disciplines, so please bring questions and concerns as they arise to your department chairs and deans. The Office of the Provost is fully committed to

supporting these efforts across campus, and CTLE and IT are ready to assist whenever and however they can. In this regard, several items are worth highlighting at this time:

The university has a [COVID-19 resource and information page](#), which contains valuable information and updates.

The Office of the Provost has just launched a [webpage](#) dedicated to our collective efforts to move instructional activities online. This webpage will also serve as a means to communicate updates, strategies, tips, and related information about our instructional response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

[CTLE](#) will be hosting a variety of workshops and training sessions next week on “Bringing Your Course Online” and/or similar topics. Faculty who have never taught online before are encouraged to attend one of these workshops (information about these training sessions will be forthcoming from CTLE). In addition, faculty who have limited—or no—experience setting up an online class in Blackboard are encouraged to work on campus next week in order to allow easy access to one-on-one help from IT support personnel.

As noted in the message from the president this morning, all events scheduled through April 4th should be either cancelled, postponed, or moved online. Please consult with your chairs, deans, and/or unit managers on specific details related to event planning for the next few weeks.

Despite the suspension of class activities next week, the campus—including distance locations—remains open and operational.

In order to provide access to computers/WIFI for students during the coming weeks of fully online/remote instruction, the [Academic Computing Lab](#) (S800) and the [W. I. Dykes Library](#) Lab (N401) will remain open, staffed, and accessible to students. Hours of operation are listed on their respective webpages.

All questions regarding this transition to online instruction should be directed by faculty to their chairs and to their deans, as appropriate. In order to provide faculty more time to focus on the building of their online course environments, chairs and deans should consider limiting the number of non-essential meetings and service commitments for the week of March 16-22. Essential meetings and service commitments should continue as scheduled.

All faculty should contact their students as soon as possible with clear communication about how the course will be conducted in online/remote

environments. Please be responsive to student concerns and questions, and please be understanding of the challenges that may be faced by your students during this time.

In addition, please remember to [self-report international travel](#), and please take all necessary precautions and preventative health measures. Please check your email regularly for updates, and expect additional guidance in the coming hours and days from chairs, deans, and unit managers across Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

Let me end this email with a sincere thank you to the entire UHD community. These are exceptional times, and they require exceptional responses. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to providing high-quality teaching and service to our students as we navigate the challenges associated with COVID-19.

Go Gators!

Eric Carl Link

