

UHD Syllabus Language and Class Management Information

Fall 2020

This document contains the following sections. Please review carefully and implement the required elements, asking any questions that arise: send questions to Michelle Moosally (moosallym@uhd.edu) or provost@uhd.edu. We will make every effort to address your questions and send additional information more broadly as needed.

This document and other helpful resources can be found at the Keep on Teaching and Learning website: <https://www.uhd.edu/keeponteachinguhd/Pages/default.aspx>.

- A. Required content for all syllabi**
- B. Optional syllabus language (related to Zoom, etc.)**
- C. Information for class management (including face mask strategies)**
- D. Access protocols for UHDNW and LSC Kingwood**
- E. Faculty resources for course development and online best practices**

A. Required Syllabus Language and Planning Considerations

Please include the following three statements somewhere on your syllabus, in addition to other elements required by [PS 03.A.29](#) and your departments or programs.

**Please note that the ADA statement has been updated from previous versions.

**Also note the 10th class day engagement piece has been included in the university-wide set.

1. University Requirements: Disruptions, COVID Reporting, and Safety

To address issues related to disruption of university functions, COVID reporting, and safety protocols, as well as mandatory engagement with classes by the 10th class day, UHD has prepared a general set of requirements that can be found [HERE](#).

These requirements are part of the expectations for this course. Any updates to the website will be communicated to students via their Gatormail accounts.

2. UHD Student Support Services

UHD has developed many resources to support your learning. We have developed a website that will offer a “one stop shop” for access to many of the resources you might need this semester to support your educational goals. Please access this website to get started: <https://tinyurl.com/SSR2020>. If you do not find the resource you need on this website, please contact your instructor, who will make every effort to connect you with the help you need.

3. Accessibility and Statement of Reasonable Accommodations

The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD), is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student population. Accordingly, UHD

strives to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and are eligible, as specified by Section 504 and ADA guidelines. Students with disabilities may work with the Office of Disability Services to discuss a range of options to removing barriers in this course, including official accommodations. If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services, to begin this conversation or request an official accommodation. Office of Disability Services, One Main St., Suite GSB 314, Houston, TX 77002. (Office Phone) 713-221-5078 (Website) www.uhd.edu/disability/ (Email) disabilityservices@uhd.edu

Other Requirements for Faculty to Address in Fall Planning

- *Synchronous Office Hour:* All faculty should identify at least one synchronous office hour per week as part of the set of office hours required within the college or department. [You can create a “[drop-in](#)” [Zoom room](#) for virtual office hours:]
- *Response Times:* To maximize best practice, faculty are generally expected to respond to student questions or issues within 48 hours (excluding weekends), if only to acknowledge the question/issue. Please address communication strategies and expectations on your syllabus where relevant. [NOTE: this expectation does not apply to grading processes, though certainly timely feedback is best practice.]
- *Required Class Meetings:* Faculty should not require students to attend class meetings during times that have not been advertised to students on the schedule. E.g., if you have an asynchronous online class, you should not require students to attend any specific time-bound events, though such events can be optional; you can schedule synchronous meetings and encourage participation, allowing some flexibility, but there should not be a specific penalty for non-participation.
- *Post-Thanksgiving Plans:* All classes will move online after Thanksgiving (and continue with the academic schedule—classes should not end prior to Thanksgiving). Please ensure the syllabus is clear about any class engagement that might change. Faculty are expected to have activities, deadlines, and/or exams during the final exam period. We do not post a time-bound finals schedule for online courses, but in this semester with all courses in a virtual format for finals, **we must minimize potential for students to be overwhelmed by finals in a single 24-period.** Therefore, we ask that you do the following: 1) consider scheduling exams throughout the finals period (not all during first available window) and 2) provide a 48-hour or more window for completion of the exam (e.g., it may be a 2-hour exam once they start, but they have 48 hours to do it). In lieu of these time frame options, please be willing to work with students who seek alternative times due to multiple exam overlaps.
- *Zoom Video Presence:* We cannot require students to participate via live video in any class meeting that does not fulfill specific assignments or requirements related to a course learning outcome. Students cannot be penalized for not participating in live video under other circumstances—for example, video presence cannot be a general “participation” requirement. Faculty may use video for identity verification and/or maintaining test or assignment integrity. Students with concerns regarding any requirement to participate in

live video for specific course learning outcomes and/or assignments should request other options from their instructor. Please see section B below for suggestions on Zoom presence guidelines.

- *Online Structure for Classes with In-Person Components:* In the event that we move to a situation in which most courses may need to be taught online, and you are teaching one of those courses that has in-person scheduled class meetings (FTF, Hybrid), please set up a *synchronous* online structure that meets during the currently scheduled in-person time slots. This will best match our commitment to the students in terms of time allocated to the course, and it will make the transition back into an in-person course much smoother (if threat level changes). **Also, we ask that you contact students in your classes during the week of August 17 to confirm the plans for how the class will be offered when we start on August 24**
- *Open Blackboard by First Class Day:* All faculty must open their BB shell for every scheduled class (even independent study or practicum) on or before August 24. We strongly encourage all faculty to open the shell during the week before classes start, with some information to support students in setting up required technology, getting textbooks, etc.

B. Optional Syllabus Language

Content here may help you address issues particular to the online environment. Use or edit as is more helpful for your classes.

1. Recommended Syllabus Template

The Online Task Force recommends [this syllabus template](#) for online classes. The required language from section A of this document has been included in that document.

2. Use of Blackboard and Gatormail

Your success in this course is dependent on regular engagement in the course via Blackboard, Gatormail, and Zoom/Teams/OTHER. Therefore, you must check the class BB site for announcements and materials several times per week. I will post reminders regularly, but minimally every _____, setting up plans for the next week.

Click here for [BB resources](#). If you lose access to the BB site or have other technology issues, please contact IT at bb@uhd.edu to try to resolve and leave me a phone message at XXX.

[NOTE: you can set up a free Google Phone number that can forward to your personal phone: <https://youtu.be/c8fS-RB7FYw>. You can also [forward your office phone](#) to another phone number.

3. Guidelines for Virtual Class Meetings (Zoom, MS Teams, Other)

Note to faculty: We cannot require students to use live video during virtual class meetings that do not involve students satisfying assignment requirements and/or meet specific course

learning outcomes (though this does not extend to identity verification and integrity for online testing). We offer language below that may offer strategies for ensuring participation.

This class will include required and optional virtual meetings. Whether meeting with classmates or the instructor, we will follow the guidelines below to maximize opportunities for all to engage and to provide a supportive environment:

- While camera presence is not required for general class meetings, please consider using the camera whenever possible. You can use a virtual background following these instructions: [virtual background for Zoom](#)
- Regardless of camera presence, everyone must include a photo and name visual when participating in live sessions. Look here for how to do this: [customize Zoom](#)
- Full attention must be given during live sessions to the virtual meeting—be prepared to respond to chat, surveys, audio discussion, or other requested engagement during the entire session.
- If we are using breakout rooms, be sure to accept the room assignment and participate actively in the task.
- If you need to step away to handle a critical issue in your environment, send a private chat note to the instructor and indicate when you return. Do not disconnect from the session during this time unless you have indicated that you cannot return.
- Respect the group by being on time and managing your volume, chat, and visual presence (use mute when not talking, do not use distracting or inappropriate background images, etc.)
- If the instructor drops off or the virtual meeting ends unexpectedly, wait 5 minutes and try to reenter the meeting. If that is not successful, check your Gatormail and class BB shell for information and instructions.
- If your own connection drops during a class meeting or session, as soon as possible try to reengage and send a private chat note to your instructor. If you cannot reengage, email your instructor as soon as possible to explain what happened and ask what you missed. You may be required to carry out specific tasks to make up the absence.
- Make a note of the meeting ID and passcode before you join via computer; if your connection fails, try to rejoin using a cell phone.
- Specific course assignments and/or exams may require live video. I, as the instructor, will provide this information to you in advance of the assignment due date. If you have a concern regarding any requirement to participate in live video for specific course learning outcomes please contact me as soon as possible to determine whether alternatives are available.

4. Student Online Self-Assessment

Info: Faculty are encouraged to require students to complete the “Student Online Self-Assessment” for their classes in Fall, 2020. This tool allows both students and faculty to identify areas of strength in online learning, but also areas in which the student might need extra support and guidance to additional resources from faculty members. Ways this assessment can be incorporated into your course can include:

- As a regular assessment, perhaps embedded within a larger assignment related to succeeding in online learning.
- As a “low-stakes” assessment, worth a small percentage or a few points.

- For extra credit.
- As a voluntary activity.

The most important aspect is for faculty to evaluate the results for each student so as to guide the student to the resources they need to succeed in the online environment. To download a digital postcard and see some activity suggestions, visit the [UHD Online Learning Student Readiness Self-Assessment](#) resource page at the CTLE's website.

Sample syllabus language: In this course, students are strongly encouraged (*or required--explain how*) to take the "Student Self-Assessment" for online learning. This assessment will help you and your professor to pinpoint any assistance you might need as you pursue online learning. The "Student Self-Assessment" can be accessed at www.tinyurl.com/UHDOnlinereadiness.

5. Sample Course Diversity and Inclusion Statement

As this is a university level course, the material is intended to encourage critical thinking and discussion as we examine new ideas and concepts from varying frameworks. To do this effectively I, as the instructor, will do my best to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. In turn, it is vital that each class member show respect for all worldviews and diverse experiences expressed in class.

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity in gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture.

Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the delivery or content of this course for you personally or for other students or student groups.

C. Information and Resources for Class Management (including face mask strategies)

1. Face Mask Violations Protocol

Every individual must wear a face covering while in university buildings or facilities.

If a student doesn't have a face covering in the class, we recommend the following protocols:

- Determine whether a student is exempt (should have evidence from ODS).
- If none, ask student to put on a mask or get one (these will be available in vending machines and may be available around campus, if not at entrance points in early part of semester)
- If student is not willing to put on or get a mask, ask student to leave class; then report to Dean of Students using the [Student Conduct Incident Report Form](#).
- If student does not leave, you may cancel class and then report to Dean of Students using the [Student Conduct Incident Report Form](#).

Please see our [FAQs on face masks](#) for more information.

2. ADA/COVID Accommodations for the Virtual World

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) will contact faculty as usual (via email) for any accommodations needed by students. Faculty should work with ODS and department chairs to identify any issues in meeting ADA requirements. For testing in cases in which in-person testing is not viable, the ODS may identify options for proctored online testing.

Also, we maintain our commitment to accessibility in general—please use the BB Ally tool to guide updates and changes to make materials more accessible. For information on how to use the tool, see [this BB Ally resource](#). Direct any questions or concerns about challenges to our Provost Office Ally hotline: Elizabeth Wade at wadee@uhd.edu or 713-221-8288.

3. Cleaning Procedures for Classrooms

Rooms will be cleaned daily after the last class is completed in that room. During the day, cleaning supplies (e.g., wipes) will be available for students and faculty to use in classrooms.

UHD plans to clean department offices two times per week. Each department may choose to engage other cleaning processes (e.g., wiping surfaces).

4. Creating a Phone Number

You can set up a free Google number that can forward to your personal phone. <https://youtu.be/c8fS-RB7FYw>. You can also forward your office phone to another phone number: <https://www.uhd.edu/computing/Pages/OPS/Cisco-VoIP.aspx>.

5. Challenges Using Respondus

While Respondus Lockdown and Respondus Monitor are generally effective tools to maximize online test integrity, there are a number of issues in using Respondus on tablets, Chromebooks, and workplace computers. In normal circumstances, we can offer access to the alternative equipment and tech support to deal with these issues, but we encourage faculty to consider these challenges in light of the variable technologies that students may have access to. [Here are tips](#) if you are thinking about using Respondus, and we also recommend requiring some kind of trial run with the software for all students before the official exam period.

D. Access Protocols for UHDNW and LSC Kingwood

We understand that Lone Star College will offer most of its usual NW classes online, so student and faculty presence, as well as LSC services (cafeteria, etc.) may be limited. At Kingwood, up to 50% of their classes may be in person.

For UHD student, staff and faculty access at each location, access points may be restricted and **all** individuals (students and faculty and staff) entering the campus or a building must do the following, *each day that they enter the campus*:

1. Get temperature-checked

2. Submit a signed release form (will be sent to all distance ed faculty and students as semester start nears)
3. Wear a face covering
4. Observe social distancing

Also, parking availability may be affected. We will notify all UHD community members as we have additional and more specific information on all of these issues.

E. Faculty Resources and Selected Tips for Online Teaching

1. Starter Tips to Moving Online

See this great [CTLE starter sheet](#).

And some quick [best practices for a range of technologies](#).

2. Realistic Preview of Online Learning (Video): In this brief video recommended by the Online Task Force, hear from UHD students on what to expect in an online class and how to overcome common challenges.

3. A Few Zoom Features

- **Zoom Passcode Requirement**

Starting in mid-August, Zoom will require a passcode for all meetings and uses. IT has shared a set of resources on how to set passcodes on existing meetings and how to address this.

Applying a passcode to a new meeting

Video: <https://youtu.be/NFuc1yHVeWg>

Document:

<https://www.uhd.edu/computing/blackboard/Pages/training/ZoomPasscode.aspx>

Applying a passcode to an existing meeting

Video: <https://youtu.be/MOnnlAFvGdc>

Document:

<https://www.uhd.edu/computing/blackboard/Pages/training/ZoomPasscode.aspx#Exist>

Zoom Waiting Rooms:

<https://www.uhd.edu/computing/blackboard/Pages/training/ZoomWaitingRooms.aspx>

- **Using Zoom for Office Hours**

Zoom allows you to use a room for a type of “drop-in” office hours. Here is information to set up the waiting room:

<https://www.uhd.edu/computing/blackboard/Pages/training/ZoomWaitingRooms.aspx>

- **Managing Chat in Zoom**

- You can save the chat from a Zoom session: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115004792763-Saving-in-meeting-chat>
- You can manage who can chat with whom during a Zoom session; for example, you can disable private chat and allow only public chat or with the host: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115004809306-Controlling-and-disabling-in-meeting-chat>

- **Running a Poll in Zoom**

This can be a good tool for engagement during a synchronous session—polling participants and seeing the data in real time.

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-meetings>

- **Tracking Attendance in Zoom**

You can pull participation lists from any Zoom meeting that is still in your cloud (30 day max for most UHD accounts):

<https://www.uhd.edu/computing/blackboard/Pages/training/Attendance-in-Zoom.aspx>

4. **BB Gradebook**

If you have not used the gradebook feature in BB, please be sure to carefully review the default columns and calculations—turn off columns that are not relevant for your grading system (e.g., weighted total). Here is some information on the gradebook function:

<https://www.uhd.edu/computing/blackboard/Pages/training/gradecenterenteringgrades.aspx>.

5. **Many more excellent resources can be found at these sites:**

- Keep on Teaching and Learning: <https://www.uhd.edu/keeponteachinguhd/Pages/default.aspx>
- Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence: <https://www.uhd.edu/academics/university-college/centers-offices/teaching-learning-excellence/Pages/ctle-index.aspx>
- Technology Teaching and Learning Center: <https://www.uhd.edu/computing/Pages/computing-index.aspx>