



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

July 1, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I write to share with you the fall 2020 academic calendar and the framework for scheduling fall 2020 classes. These two key aspects of the fall semester were informed by the responses to the faculty and student surveys that were administered in June.

Fall 2020 Academic Calendar

Classes will begin on Monday, August 17, 2020 as originally scheduled. The last day of classes will be Wednesday, November 25, the day before Thanksgiving. Reading days will be scheduled on November 30 and December 1, followed by take home or online final exams beginning December 2 and ending December 8. The goal of this adjusted calendar is to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 through students leaving campus for an extended period of time at Thanksgiving and then returning to campus afterward.

Framework for UT Dallas Fall 2020 Course Schedule

The details of the framework are provided in the document attached to this message. The framework for scheduling fall 2020 courses is designed to deliver UT Dallas's educational mission, provide maximum flexibility for faculty teaching and student learning preferences, follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considerations for Institutes of Higher Education to slow the spread of COVID-19, and enable the campus to transition completely to remote learning with short notice.

This week, University Registrar Jennifer McDowell will send a spreadsheet to unit leaders in charge of scheduling in the Schools to gather information that will inform revisions to the fall 2020 course schedule. Specifically, instructors of record will be asked to choose their top two preferred modalities from among five options for each course they are scheduled to teach. Three of the modalities include face-to-face instruction in the classroom, and two of the modalities require that instruction be exclusively delivered remotely. *An important aspect of the framework is that all courses, regardless of modality, will have asynchronous (i.e., not in real time) access so that students who cannot or choose not to return to campus can take their courses online.*

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request as we work to finalize the fall schedule.

Sincerely,

Inga Musselman
Provost

Attachment: UT Dallas Fall 2020 Framework

Framework for UT Dallas Fall 2020 Course Schedule

Introduction

The framework for fall 2020 courses is designed to:

- deliver UT Dallas's educational mission;
- provide maximum flexibility for faculty teaching and student learning preferences;
- follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considerations for Institutes of Higher Education to slow the spread of COVID-19; and
- enable the campus to transition completely to remote learning with short notice.

Fall 2020 Academic Calendar

- Classes begin Monday, August 17, 2020.
- Faculty should not give exams the week of November 23, 2020.
- The last day of classes is Wednesday, November 25, 2020.
- Reading days are November 30 and December 1.
- Take home and online final exams will be scheduled from December 2 to 8, 2020.

Expectations in Classrooms and Instructional Laboratories

All occupants of rooms used for classroom and laboratory instruction must wear face coverings and maintain 6-foot social distancing at all times. Other university requirements may be found at the Academic Continuity page of the UT Dallas COVID-19 web page.

Faculty Teaching Preference (statement endorsed by Academic Senate, June 17, 2020)

"The mode of instruction for individual classes will be determined per consultations between the class instructor and appropriate administrators at the program and school levels, considering pedagogical concerns, student enrollment, space requirements and classroom configurations, space availability, and instructor needs and preferences. Instructors at every rank and status will have the option to teach in a fully online/remote fashion without UT Dallas administration requiring that the instructor disclose personal details that might include health, caregiving responsibilities, or childcare needs. As already announced by the University, all classes must include an option for students to take the class remotely and to do so asynchronously. Retaliation against a faculty member on the basis of their teaching preference is prohibited."

Academic Advising and Notification to Students

- Students will register for courses according to the published fall 2020 course schedule.
- The course schedule will be updated to list the modality of each course section.
- The Registrar will notify each student by email in July of any changes in modality of their scheduled courses.
- Students may elect to make changes once the course schedule is updated. For Flexible Mode (i.e., HyFlex) courses, students will be required to select their day of attendance.

Faculty Choice of Teaching Modality

Five course modalities and their definitions are provided below. Faculty will choose their preferred modality, among these options, for each course they are teaching. In the first three modalities (i.e., 1, 2, 3), the instructor is in the classroom to deliver face-to-face instruction. In the last two modalities (i.e., 4, 5), the instructor delivers the instruction remotely.

Student Choice of Classes

Students will choose among courses available in the following modalities, and may elect to have their course load include more than one modality.

Course Modalities

1. **Traditional Classroom/Laboratory Course** (i.e., face-to-face) – The instructor and students are present in the classroom/laboratory each class meeting according to the class schedule. The availability of courses in this modality will be limited due to classroom availability.
2. **Blended (Hybrid) Classroom Course** – Online activity is mixed with face-to-face meetings in the classrooms. The instructor and students meet all together face-to-face one or two days per week. The face-to-face meetings are accompanied by online instruction.
3. **Flexible Mode Course** (i.e., HyFlex blended learning) – Online activity is mixed with classroom face-to-face meetings. UT Dallas is implementing a student group rotation model, wherein faculty deliver instruction face-to-face in the classroom during each class meeting, and students attend class face-to-face one day per week. Students will attend class online with synchronous (i.e., in real time) transmission when they are not in the classroom face-to-face.
4. **Remote/Virtual Course** – Instruction is delivered online in real time according to the day and time in the class schedule (i.e., synchronously). The instructor delivers the instruction from home or the office. Students complete the course at a distance.
[Note: These courses are traditional classroom courses that faculty are offering virtually in fall 2020.]
5. **Fully Online Course** – These courses are designed with the truly distant student in mind. Students complete the course at a distance.

Asynchronous Access

- All courses, regardless of modality, will have asynchronous (i.e., not in real time) access so that students who cannot or choose not to return to campus can take their courses online.
- Syllabi, course assignments, class recordings, etc. will be posted in eLearning so that they can be accessed by students outside of scheduled class time. Syllabi must also be posted in CourseBook in compliance with state law.
- By incorporating asynchronous access into every course, faculty and students will be prepared to transition off campus if required by COVID-19.

Synchronous Access

- Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Stream, in combination with web cameras, will be used in classroom instruction to allow students to attend class sessions synchronously and remotely. Classes will be recorded for asynchronous access and in compliance with ADA regulations.

Guidelines for Scheduling Courses

- *All courses, regardless of modality, will have asynchronous (i.e., not in real time) access so that students who cannot or choose not to return to campus can take their courses online.*
- Classroom scheduling will be prioritized for courses. Although most university meetings will continue to take place using Microsoft Teams, they may be scheduled in available classrooms after the first day of classes, August 17, 2020.
- Deans and unit heads will consult their faculty to learn their preferred teaching modality (modalities) and report this information to the Registrar.
- Consideration will be given to the Schools' priorities for courses offered in the various modalities and, in consultation with Educational Technology Services, to priorities for the development of new Fully Online Courses.
 - It may be desirable to prioritize instructional laboratory spaces for courses that have smaller enrollments and/or that provide capstone experiences.
- When updating the fall 2020 course schedule, the Registrar will take into consideration student enrollment, space requirements, classroom and instructional laboratory configurations, space availability, and instructor needs and preferences.
- The Registrar will notify each student by email of any changes in modality of their scheduled courses.
- Course sections with more than 120 enrolled students will be scheduled in the **Remote/Virtual Course** or **Fully Online Course** modality. Instructors may consider adding small face-to-face or remote/virtual breakout sessions.

Note: The maximum occupancies of UT Dallas's 100-seat and larger classrooms, based on 6-foot social distancing, are such that they cannot be used for course modalities that incorporate face-to-face instruction, e.g., Traditional Classroom Course, Blended (Hybrid) Classroom Course, or Flexible Mode Course. The occupancies of some spaces not currently used for instruction are being determined to see if they can accommodate a limited number of larger enrollment courses, e.g., ATC Lecture Hall, Davidson Auditorium, Davidson Gundy Alumni Center Ball Rooms, Galaxy Rooms, JSOM Executive Dining Room, Testing Center, TI Auditorium, etc.

Guidelines for Undergraduate Research

- The participation of undergraduate students in laboratory research will follow the guidelines on the Research Continuity page of the UT Dallas COVID-19 web page. Beginning on May 26, *research faculty, staff and graduate students* resumed limited, up to 25%, on-site research activity throughout the University.
- When undergraduate students are authorized to return to the research laboratory, priority will be given to students in their final year at UT Dallas who need to complete the research requirement of their academic program.