Answers to Questions posed in the 'Chat' &
Submitted in advance of the Town Hall

Questions related to: Teaching

- ***What happens when a faculty member gets sick?***

The deans are working with faculty members to determine who would be available to cover their classes should they get sick. This could be other faculty members or it could be adjuncts. Faculty members should notify the dean and the department chair when they become sick. They should also complete the exposure form at https://www.uhcl.edu/health-alert/. It is important that course materials, planning, resources, etc. be available in Blackboard for someone to step in and assist if a faculty member cannot teach assigned classes. Additionally, it is important to have materials in Blackboard as all classes must have a plan to pivot to online instruction at any moment. Notify Jenni Willis-Opalenik (willisopalenik@uhcl.edu) to request BB access for the new instructor.

- ***If we choose bimodal can we have office hours fully virtual?***

Yes, faculty can offer fully virtual office hours. A portion of office hours will be required to be offered virtually for students who cannot come to campus. As promised, guidance is forthcoming for faculty on this issue.

- ***How can faculty do office hours online where students can drop in?***

This is possible in BB Collaborate by using the open room for the course (listed on the top of the "collaborate ultra" page within each course); this would allow any student from one course to drop in during your office hours. Additionally, faculty can set up a Zoom meeting time and share the link with all of their students across all of their courses. It is possible within Zoom to use the waiting room to let in one student at a time, if this is preferred for private conversations and questions. It would be important to let students know about the waiting room and for them to not worry if they are 'waiting' while you are working with another student. Posting the link to the repeating Zoom Office Hours Session in a discussion board on BB for students will ensure they can always access it. Alternatively, faculty can send the Zoom link via a repeating meeting calendar request through Outlook and this might be one way to ensure students have the link in their calendars. Whatever option that faculty decide, it should be noted in the course syllabus and posted in BB. Students will need clear instructions on how to contact the professor during office hours. To familiarize students with how to use office hours, and to help get to know the students, faculty could require students attend an office hour during the first part of their class.

- ***How can I get the students to use the materials I create and post in Blackboard?***

There is no single guaranteed way to do this. Many faculty struggle with this. You can require students to use the materials in order to complete assignments or assessments. You might consider using 'polls'

inside Zoom (if you are doing live lectures) to assess and encourage use of the additional materials you've put up for them. There are some resources on the instructional continuity website (https://www.uhcl.edu/computing/course-development/instructional-continuity) and you can always ask your Instructional Designers as they have experience and training in some of these pedagogical issues as well as the technology. Additionally, all faculty can access the Center for Faculty Development BB shell for additional resources. This shell should be on your BB course list. In addition, they have also started a Google Groups site to ask questions and engage in conversation with other faculty and their great ideas (please email facultydevelopment@uhcl.edu to join). Please do consider engaging on one or both platforms to learn more tips and tricks for getting students to fully participate in your classes and to utilize the materials you create for them.

Additional solutions include:

- providing quick, low-stakes quizzes, assignments, or discussions asking about the material
- creating a short video showing students what the items are and why they are helpful
- making sure that students can easily locate the information you want them to use. Remember that students will not be as familiar with your course shell as you and they have to remember how to navigate a different course shell for each class
- telling students your specific expectations on using the materials and asking them to make a study plan for when they will work on them
- posting materials that are meaningful to their lives

- ***How do we support faculty and students who cannot or do not feel comfortable coming to class?***

We have supported faculty who cannot or do not feel comfortable coming to class by asking them to identify their preferred mode of teaching for the fall (Bimodal, Online Synchronous, Online Asynchronous, or Online Syn/Asyn). All faculty will need to have options in any given week for students who are unable to come to class. As we saw in the spring, there will be students who are ill or vulnerable to illness, who are engaging in caregiving, who are front line workers, and more. Attendance policies will need to be flexible to account for the reality that students might not be able to attend every class session (face to face or in synchronous times). Planning for this in advance and putting it on your syllabus will help alleviate concerns and increase awareness for students.

Echo360 is one option for faculty to teach without being in a classroom. This same software will enable students to participate in class without being physically present in the classroom. The Center for Engagement, Teaching, and Learning has sessions scheduled for faculty to understand the software. (https://www.uhcl.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-development/calendar) College instructional designers can also provide support for using the software.

- ***What happens if the Pandemic shifts and we need to change to all online before the semester even begins?***

As has been mentioned in several communications, it is important to have materials in Blackboard as all classes must have a plan and be able to pivot to online instruction at any moment.

- ***How can we get funds to make "kits" for students to pick up or do projects at home?***

If you need take home kits for students to complete work in your course, contact your department chair with a list of the items and their costs. If the course has a course fee associated with it; that revenue should be utilized for the kits. Contact your department chair with a list of the items and their costs. If not, the Covid-19 cost center would be requested for use of funds or if there is not enough in course fees the difference would be requested as Covid-19 costs.   If the faculty member needs assistance with course fees or the balance available in their course fees they should reach out to their college business administrator. Continue to reach out to the department chair but also keep their college business administrator in the loop.

- ***Can we host a group meeting for faculty to talk about what they are doing for practicums and internships?***

We believe there are already several ongoing conversations about this issue. To avoid duplicating efforts, the Center for Faculty Development plans to talk to different faculty in this area to see if there is an overall need for this meeting. If you are interested in having this meeting, please contact the CFD directly at facultydevelopment@uhcl.edu so we can help plug you in with people who are already discussing it or make sure you are part of the session.

- ***Is there a way that students can automatically get a letter from me that explains how the class will work as they sign up? I don't want to have to figure out who is new each week.***

Faculty can do this through UHCL E-Services Faculty Center by checking their course roster and sending an email as soon as students sign up. Perhaps checking once per week would be an easy way to implement this. Additionally, faculty can post, using the HB2504 syllabus link, a short syllabus with notes about structure and functioning of the course with a note that a full syllabus will be posted in August. This might be another mechanism to use to try to reach students early and explain the format, structure, and functioning of the course.

- ***Will it be possible to have my courses synchronous online with the exception of the exam days? Exams would be given F2F on campus.***

The Academic Affairs Workgroup is exploring options for F2F on campus exams. Let your department chair know the dates and times of your exams, as well as how many students will be taking the exam. Remember that if we have to pivot to fully online at any point in the semester, then in person exams will no longer be allowed. Additionally, some students with medical issues or those living with or caring for someone in the vulnerable population will not be able to come to campus for F2F exams. Faculty planning for F2F exams are encouraged to have a 'plan B' for their assessment of student learning. Consult with the instructional designers for alternate ways to assess student learning that is less susceptible to academic dishonesty.

- ***How will the options appear in the schedule for students? How much information will students receive regarding the mode of instruction?***

The class schedule currently in E-Services includes the new instruction modes: Bi-Modal; Online Synchronous; Online Asynchronous; Online Synchronous/Asynchronous. The 'class notes' seen on the

main page of E-Services will include the details of the percentages for Bi-Modal and Online Synchronous/Asynchronous by mid-July.

- ***What about sessions that are optional? It might be synchronous sessions that are optional or even F2F sessions that are optional? How will these appear on schedule? We want to be sure that students know if the sessions are optional or required.***

Faculty are encouraged to email the students who have registered for the course to let them know. As of right now, there is no mechanism to let students know this information before they register for the course.

- ***For those courses that will be taught online synchronously, will students who are already on campus still be able to go to the scheduled classroom as a quiet space to participate in the class?***

The Academic Affairs Fall Planning Workgroup is working to identify some classrooms that can be used for this purpose. There will be specific classrooms identified to be used as 'workspaces' and students will need to have their own headphones/microphone. It will not necessarily be the classroom that was originally assigned to the now online course, but there will be classrooms in each building for this use. It will be imperative that students engage in the cleaning required before and after using the room and faculty are encouraged to remind students of this routinely.

Questions related to: Students

- ***What kinds of documentation is needed from students who cannot attend classes in person? What office can help with this?***

The Accessibility Support Center can provide information to students who cannot attend classes in person.

- ***What resources are available to help students become effective online learners?***

The Blackboard Student Support has a variety of resources for students including Tips for Successful Online Learning.

- ***What mental health resources are available for students? What can faculty do to provide students with this information?***

UHCL Counseling Services is offering online and virtual individual sessions and drop-in group sessions this summer and this fall. Psychiatry services are also available. There are resources on the main page of the Counseling Services website for self-care, self-guided work, and some helpful tips for mental health and well-being. Additionally, there are phone crisis services available 24/7 to students. These services are free to students and faculty are encouraged to share the link with the counseling services in their BB shell.

- ***What do we do with students who do not want to use Zoom because of privacy issues?***

A document regarding students' privacy concerns is being reviewed by the legal department.

- ***Did faculty/the institution collect data from our Spring 2020 students on the adjustment to online? Is that student data driving faculty resources and support for the Fall Semester & beyond?***

There have been multiple surveys and some small focus groups with students completed in the late spring and the faculty survey is still open (collecting feedback all summer). All of these sources are being considered as some of many valuable variables while making decisions for the fall 2020 adjustments. Faculty are encouraged to continue to share their thoughts or concerns with the members of the Academic Affairs Fall Planning Workgroup (Members include: Kathy Matthew (Chair), Provost Berberich, Dean Pedro, Dean Gonzalez, Dean Short, and Dean Waller, John Decman COE, Nick Kelling HSH, Brian Stephens CSE, Heather Kanenberg, HSH, Troy Voelker BUS, Jason Makepeace HSH, & Isabelle Kusters HSH) or the Provost office via email. Please email the faculty directly or to the Provost office at: Provostoffice@uhcl.edu.

- ***Are you going to have students in the residence hall this fall?***

Yes, there will be students in the residence hall this fall.

- ***Was the survey of students done in the spring pandemic-specific or was it in general?***

The survey most frequently cited and with the largest number of responses (1058) was conducted by the Dean of Students Office and focused on student needs and student supports. It asked many questions about a variety of topics. One of the questions was: "I prefer to learn and am most comfortable learning in the following format(s) (please select all that apply):" Answer choices included: "Fully in-person (in the classroom) learning environment; Blended learning model consisting of in-person and online instruction; Watching pre-recorded lectures; and Attending all online live virtual sessions (with faculty interaction)." This is the question and responses that are most frequently discussed when talking about 'surveying the students'.

Questions related to: Technology

- ***Can faculty request specific software installed on those remotely-accessible machines?***

Yes. Requests for the remotely accessible machines go through the same process as the standard academic lab stations. Contact the Support Center to put in a request or contact Sana Zeidan if there are any questions.

Questions related to: Facilities

- ***Where can we get the information of number of seats in our room?***

There is a link on the UCT webpage that provides a current estimate of the number of seats available; this can help faculty to think about the number of students able to attend classes at any given time.

- ***Will each room be assigned the maximum number of students allowed? That will help to plan tremendously. If so, who and when will be asked (or able to provide input) to assign the limit?***

Assigning the maximum number of students to a classroom depends on the actual classroom configuration. The actual number of seats available in the room is a starting place. The University is

investigating ways to determine the actual number of students that can be in a room while maintaining social distance. This information will be shared with faculty and staff as soon as it is available.

- ***Is structured classroom exiting, social distancing, etc. a faculty requirement or suggestion?***

Social distancing is a requirement as is wearing of face coverings and students cleaning their sitting area before and after class. Structured classroom exiting and social distancing are required to maintain the campus as a safe environment conducive to learning.

- ***What do faculty do if students don't want to wear facemasks? This will be very disruptive.***

This will certainly be disruptive. It is required that all people will have to wear a mask/face covering on campus this fall. If a student is being disruptive in refusing to wear a mask, the faculty can offer a mask to them, if one is available. Additionally, a faculty member has the right to remove the student from the classroom: you can require them to leave and engage in the online content if they refuse to follow policy. You can also stop class and cancel class because of the single student who refuses to wear a mask. You are also encouraged to report the student to the Dean of Students for a conduct violation.

- ***What are the carrots and sticks you propose for PPE enforcement?***

Carrots:
- Free UHCL cloth mask – students, staff, faculty
- Student accommodations: plenty, low threshold through Accessibility Support Center to get alternative protective masks, shields, screens
- Faculty/Staff accommodations: making low threshold (ask) through A&F to get alternative protective masks, shields, screens
- "Hawk Safety kit": Masks, sanitizer, etc to students during week of welcome
- Positive modeling from all leadership
- Clear and positive communication
- Student Affairs is designing a reward program for positive compliance
- Campus Monitors – offering free disposable masks, modeling, encouraging
- A&F & Student Affairs Staff during week of welcome – encouraging, modeling.
- Making compliance easy: hand sanitizer spray, gel, wipes and upbeat reminders as frequent and numerous as possible

Sticks:
- Employee conduct process if it gets that far
- Student conduct process if it gets that far

- ***So will the class be disinfected before we go in or will the room only be used once by a class?***

The classrooms will be cleaned each evening. Each classroom/laboratory will have a classroom cleaning kit consisting of hand sanitizer and cleaning wipes. Upon entering a classroom using social distancing practices, students will be expected to clean their hands and obtain sufficient cleaning wipes to clean their desk area/chair before they are seated. They are expected to engage in this same protocol, of cleaning the area where they were seated, at the end of class and before they exit. Classroom cleaning kits will be replenished by social monitors throughout the day.

- *So are the shields individual? I have seen individual face shields. These may have been individually made but may be an option to look into.*

Faculty and staff PPE needs including face shields have been collected. If you have not seen this request, please reach out to your department chair immediately.

- *Will student-facing staff offices also have plexiglass shields and masks provided by the university?*

Complete a work order to have plexiglass shields installed. The expectation is that faculty, staff, and students will provide their own cloth masks outside of the one that will be provided by the university. Paper masks will be available.

- *Can you include information in the FAQ about cleaning door handles/staircases and elevators? Perhaps having additional wipes/sanitizing stations at building entrances, staircases, and elevators?*

We will be cleaning all common areas and all office suites each night. Hand sanitizers have been placed strategically throughout the buildings. There are signs in the elevators and near the elevators with instructions for elevator hygiene.   Custodial staff is required to wipe highly touched surfaces, including handrails, push/pull door handles, drinking fountains, tables and other furniture continually touched during the course of the day. We have additional wipe/sanitizing stations on order and will have them in place before Fall Semester begins.

- *Do we know if individual offices and high trafficked waiting areas be cleaned each night?*

We will be cleaning all common areas and all office suites each night. For this is the reason we may need to contract external custodial services - to ensure we can keep up with the increased cleaning and sanitization demand. Individual private offices will be cleaned less - but remember, meetings are still to be virtual, and people are encouraged to not have multiple people in private office spaces. Faculty and staff are responsible for cleaning their work spaces.

- *Are any improvements being made to the HVAC system in terms of filtration? Also, there is concern that AC will circulate droplets in an enclosed classroom. And what about classroom air flow?*

Eric Herrera, AVP for Facilities Maintenance and Construction is currently searching if we can get MERV rated filters for our air handling systems with a rating of 13, which is the rating recommended by the CDC.

- *Are the PPEs installed in UHCL Pearland as well? Thanks!*

PPEs will be available in Pearland.

- *I am a staff at the TMC campus where facilities goes thru the TMC. How will we make sure that the TMC location is staying clean? and who will be enforcing sanitation?*

We are taking steps, though not yet confirmed, that the same level of sanitization we achieve and find acceptable at Clear Lake and Pearland, also occurs at TMC. Once VP Denney has this confirmed, he will report out what we have designed and committed to. Additional information is forthcoming.

Questions related to: International Students

- ***This is regarding international students. OIAP has been great in answering our individual questions via e-mail. But it would be very useful if the faculty (whose programs have a big percentage of int'l students) could be provided with updates/guidelines/etc. on how to manage int'l students. Our decisions on mode of instruction is directly tied to their visas, and we are having to balance their and our safety with immigration rules. Thank you.***

This is one of many areas where we are seeing changes in policy and procedures; this is a continually evolving situation. Please, check this web site for the most current information for international students:
https://www.uhcl.edu/admissions/apply/international/international-students-coronavirus-info Faculty and staff can also encourage any international student with specific questions to reach out directly to their adviser within the OIAP or to the OIAP Office directly. OIAP will continue to disseminate faculty and staff communication, along with hosting information sessions to educate the campus community to meet the needs of the growing international community.

Questions related to: Miscellaneous or Policies

- ***When will the campus announcement of faculty/staff/student mask requirement be sent out?***

This announcement is on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Health Alert web page accessible from the UHCL home page. Also, there are signs on entrance doors to all buildings on campus.

- ***What happens if students do not comply with safety instructions? E.g. they don't wear their masks or don't social distance? What if there is noncompliance with masks is large open areas on campus (atrium, hallways, etc)?***

If a student does not have a mask, the faculty can offer a mask to them, if one is available. Campus Monitors will be in the buildings replenishing the classroom supplies and offering free disposable masks. The monitors will also be modeling and encouraging wearing masks and using social distancing. Also see previous answer about 'Carrots and Sticks'.

- ***What is the thinking about if a student in the class declares that he/she is COVID positive? How does that work in informing students about going online and for how long, etc. Will all their instructors be notified?***

When students in classes state they are COVID-19 positive, please tell them to go to this web site https://www.uhcl.edu/health-alert/, click on the Exposure Form link, and complete the form. Health Services will encourage students to inform their professors. All student COVID-19 positive reports are HIPAA protected and so Health Services cannot disclose this information. A release form is under development for students to give written permission to inform the Dean of Students and their professors.