



# COVID-19 AY 2021-2022 CAMPUS OPERATION PLAN

August 3, 2021

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Colleagues,

We are midway through summer, and after proceeding with caution, our plans for a full return to campus in the fall by faculty, staff, students and guests are on track. The outlook for COVID-19 continues to improve, and I am optimistic we will soon return to pre-pandemic modes of work and academic schedules. However, best practices that we learned last year may continue in this new normal post-pandemic. Also, our need for semester-by-semester plans has diminished, so we shifted to an Academic Year 2021-22 Campus Operation Plan, and I am hopeful that recent improved public health conditions will allow us to sustain full campus density in the upcoming semesters. As

we did throughout the pandemic, we will continue to monitor the situation, maintain our flexibility indefinitely and adjust our activities as appropriate.

Consistent with guidance on the use of face coverings by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the state of Texas, the wearing of masks or face coverings is optional, but encouraged, especially in crowded indoor spaces and if you have yet to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Additionally, social distancing will no longer be required in the fall. Our concern for the health and safety of our Maverick family endures, especially for those who are unvaccinated or have underlying health conditions or vulnerabilities. To help protect everyone, I encourage you to continue to use measures like vaccinations, testing, face coverings, hand washing, symptom monitoring and staying home when sick.

With the approaching full return to campus and an increasing number of in-person gatherings, I ask you to remain mindful of your health and consider vaccination if you haven't already done so. If you experience COVID-19 symptoms or are unvaccinated and have a known exposure, please do not come to campus. Every Maverick's support is crucial to ensure a safe environment for employees and students and to sustain our permanent return to UTA.

I have shared my immense appreciation to our dedicated faculty and staff many times throughout the pandemic, but I cannot thank you enough for the resilience you continuously demonstrated. You ensured UTA fulfilled its mission to educate, research and serve without falter. The journey is not over, but the destination is in sight. Thank you for your ongoing efforts in the final push to return to our beautiful campus and a safe, healthy environment. It has been a privilege to work with you during this unprecedented time, and I am so proud of how our University persevered through every challenge. Thank you once again and Go Mavs!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teik C. Lim".

Teik C. Lim, Ph.D.

Interim President

The University of Texas at Arlington





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## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

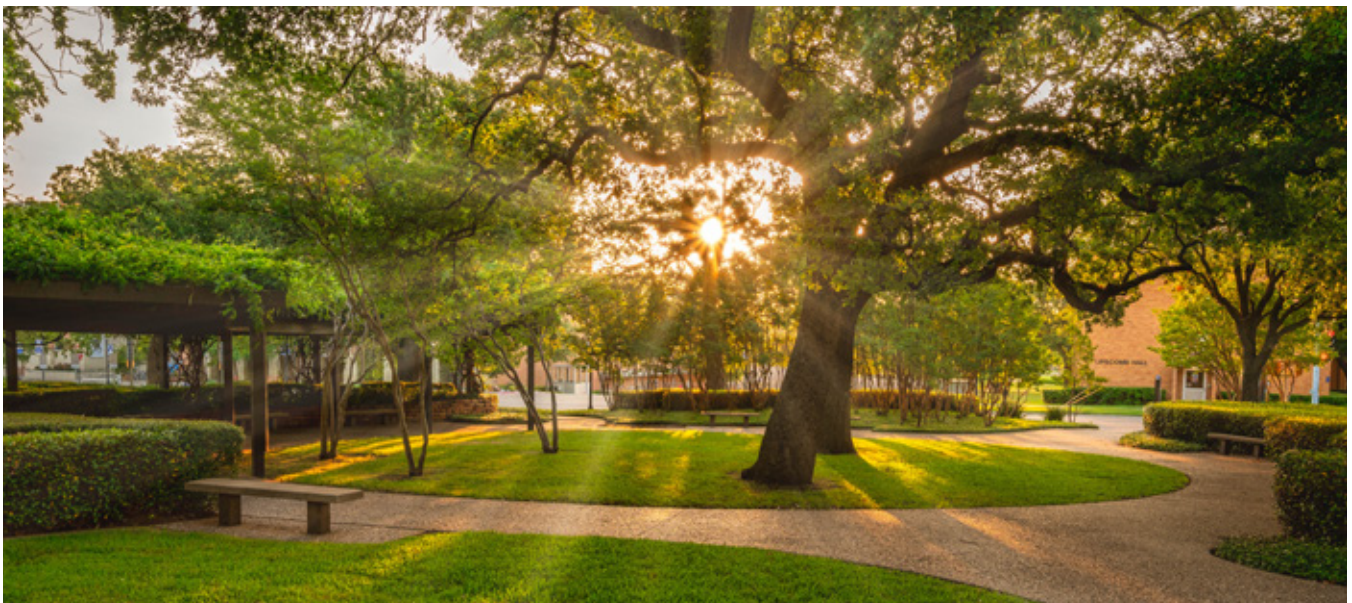
The University of Texas at Arlington COVID-19 Academic Year 2021-22 Campus Operation Plan is rooted in concern for the health, safety, and well-being of all members of our University community and the public with whom we interact. The primary goal of the plan is to continue the institution's vital mission of education, research, and service while safely returning to on-campus operations, including more in-person courses, labs, and campus activities across the campus.

This Plan's objectives are to protect the health of employees, students, and guests; help ensure the well-being of the community; and carefully and deliberately prepare for the fall semester. The Plan will align with the state of Texas Governor's Executive Orders and follow recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and The University of Texas System and its Board of Regents.

This Plan is effective at the commencement of the 2021-22 academic year on **Aug. 19, 2021**, and will be continually updated as necessary as we learn more about the COVID-19 virus and vaccine efficacy and their impact on higher education.

## CORE CONCEPTS

- Proceed thoughtfully, carefully, and deliberately.
- Be ready to adjust based on guidance from the CDC and from state and local health officials.
- Emphasize symptom monitoring, handwashing, staying home when sick, encouraging vaccinations, and the wearing of face coverings or masks when indoors if not fully vaccinated.



## SAFE RETURN TO WORK

### OVERARCHING EXPECTATIONS

All faculty, students, and staff are expected to comply fully with existing policies and procedures, including those outlined in this document and available on the [University's COVID-19 website](#). We emphasize the need for each person's help to ensure we are doing things as safely and as carefully as we can.

### SYMPTOMS MONITORING REQUIREMENT

Employees are asked to conduct symptom monitoring before reporting to work each day. They must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 and other infectious diseases to be eligible to report to work.

If you experience any of the following symptoms that are new, worsening, or occurring in a way that is not normal for any chronic conditions, you should not come to campus.

#### Symptom Checklist

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If an employee, **regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status**, experiences any symptoms, they should take immediate precautions to avoid possible virus transmission to others and contact their immediate supervisor. Employees who have self-quarantined after experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should follow [CDC guidelines](#) on how and when to discontinue home self-quarantine. If test results are positive for COVID-19, the employee should complete the [Personal Diagnosis Form](#) and follow similar instructions and self-isolate. Employees may not return to campus until they have met the CDC criteria and been cleared by a health care provider.



According to the CDC, individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk to become severely ill with COVID-19 infection. Those conditions may include:

- Being age 65 and older
- HIV
- Asthma (moderate to severe)
- Chronic lung disease
- Diabetes
- Serious heart conditions
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Severe obesity
- Being immunocompromised

A complete list of medical conditions can be found at [CDC Medical Conditions](#).

Employees who have been instructed to return to work on site and have concerns about doing so due to a medical condition that potentially places them in a higher risk group should contact their supervisors.

## A NOTE ABOUT COVID-19 VARIANTS

UTA is carefully monitoring COVID-19 variants and the impact these may have on campus operations. The status and impact of variants will continue to be part of the University's planning.

## RETURN TO CAMPUS

UTA is optimistic and planning for regular operations this academic year (2021-22), which will include a majority of the courses being offered in person. During the ensuing weeks and months, as we have done throughout the pandemic, we will evaluate all the available information and recommendations of experts from the CDC, the state of Texas, and the University of Texas System to adjust the University's plans and protocols as needed as we go through the academic year.



For the 2021-22 academic year, staffing levels in all offices will increase and staff should follow the policies and protocols detailed herein for safely returning to work on campus. It is important that departments assess their business needs and what work can be performed in person versus online. Managers/supervisors should be discussing working arrangements with employees in advance of the 2021-22 academic year.

There should be adequate on-campus staffing to fulfill the need for campus engagement and cross-collaboration among units. It is anticipated that on-campus work will return to pre-pandemic status. Employees should make plans to be on campus in the fall. A remote work policy for staff has been approved by the University president. The remote work policy for faculty is being developed and should be finalized before the fall semester.

The Office of Human Resources has developed a Managers Toolkit to aid managers in assessing remote work and workers. Not all jobs or employees may be amenable to working remotely. The decision to work remotely should be made by the manager after considering the job task and the overall needs of the department.

### **ADA/ADAAA Accommodations and Medical Leave**

If you are at high risk for COVID-19 because you have an underlying condition that qualifies as a disability under the ADA/ADAAA, you will need to provide a note from a licensed medical practitioner. A recertification of medical documents will be required for any extension of remote work past the original date and/or each semester. Staff, faculty, and student employees needing reasonable accommodations should contact the ADA/ADAAA coordinator. Staff and faculty whose work can only be performed on site and who are unable to do so due to medical conditions should work with Leave Management in the Office of Human Resources to explore FMLA options.

If you have any questions, contact your [Human Resources Business Partner](#) or call 817-272-5554 for questions.

## **RETRENCHING CAMPUS OPERATIONS**

The decision to move back to a previous phase, make modifications to this Plan, or scale down campus operations may occur if any of the following circumstances take place:

- Local, state, or federal public health authorities declare another public health emergency.
- Vaccine rollout is stalled, a majority of the population remains unvaccinated, and cases continue to increase.
- Vaccine-resistant variants of the virus emerge in the U.S. and CDC public health officials require that health and safety measures, including social distancing, remain in place.
- The University's COVID-19-positive cases are at a level that threatens the public health and safety of the University and the community. This decision will be made in collaboration with local public health officials and the UT System.

For full details on campus retrenching plans, reference Addendum 1 on page 14.

## PERSONAL SAFETY PRACTICES

### SOCIAL DISTANCING

On July 12, 2021, the University will return to full capacity, relaxing social distancing protocol in preparation for the fall semester.

### FACE MASKS/CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

On May 21, 2021, the University canceled the on-campus mask-wearing mandate. This decision was made following Governor Greg Abbott's Executive Order (GA-36) prohibiting government entities from mandating face coverings. Even though the mandate has been removed, individuals who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask, particularly when inside campus buildings (see CDC Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education, June 4, 2021). It is also fine for individuals who are fully vaccinated to wear a mask or face covering if they choose to do so.

The University will continue to monitor recommendations and adjust as needed.

### OTHER SAFETY PRACTICES

#### Handwashing

Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

#### Personal Disinfection

While custodial crews will continue to clean office and workspaces based on CDC guidelines, additional care should be taken to wipe down commonly used surfaces. Before starting work and before you leave any room in which you have been working, you **must** wipe down all work areas with products that meet the [EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19](#) and are appropriate for the surface. This includes any shared-space location or equipment (e.g., copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, doorknobs, etc.).

Sanitization supplies will be made available for departments, but departments are also encouraged to purchase their own cleaning supplies to supplement what is provided by Facilities Management.

#### Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene

If you are in a private setting and are not wearing your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Then throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



## UPON ARRIVING TO CAMPUS

### DAILY SELF-MONITORING AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR ILLNESS

All students, faculty, and staff, regardless of whether they have been vaccinated, are advised to perform a health self-screening each day prior to coming to campus or before leaving their on-campus residences. If you experience any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 (listed on page 5 of this plan) that are new, worsening, or occurring in a way that is not normal for any chronic conditions, you should not come to campus or leave your campus residence hall or apartment.

### CLOSE CONTACT GUIDANCE

Close contact is defined as being within six feet of an individual that is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

Faculty, staff, and students who **have not been vaccinated** and have had known close contact should self-quarantine off campus for 10 days from the date of last known exposure or after day seven after receiving a negative test result. (The test must occur on day five or later.)

Faculty, staff, and students who **have been vaccinated** and have had known close contact do not need to self-quarantine but should get tested three to five days after exposure.

Regardless of vaccination status, UTA faculty, staff, and students who have had known close contact or tested positive for COVID-19 should fill out the [Close Contact or Personal Diagnosis form](#).

### STUDENTS IN CLINICAL PROGRAMS, PRACTICUM, STUDENT TEACHING, AND FIELD WORKS-RELATED EXPERIENCES

The University is committed to ensuring the safety of faculty, students, staff, patients, families, and communities throughout all clinical and/or applied educational experiences. Special arrangements and precautions are likely to be required for students and faculty engaged in educational experiences that take place in clinical facilities, other agencies, or in the community (e.g., nursing, social work, allied health, athletic training, communication disorders/speech language pathology, student teaching, etc.). Arrangements and precautions are unique to the specific program, setting, and activity and may be influenced by local conditions. Program directors and internship advisors are best suited to provide guidance for students. Faculty will be guided by information from regulatory accreditation agencies, requirements and protocols of the agency or community hosting the student, and medical and public health officials.

## RESEARCH

A webpage has been established to serve as a centralized location for updates specific to research activities on campus. Individuals who are engaged in research projects, including those that involve human subjects, should consult this [webpage](#) for current guidance from the Institutional Review Board.

## TRAVEL

Official University information on personal and University-sponsored travel, including international travel, is available on the [UTA Coronavirus Travel Information](#) webpage.

## COVID-19 TESTING

Anyone seeking a COVID-19 test should refer to [uta.edu/coronavirus](https://uta.edu/coronavirus) for UTA on-campus testing resources. Individuals may also contact their health care provider or local health department. Those testing positive by diagnostic testing for COVID-19 should receive appropriate treatment and will be required to place themselves in self-isolation consistent with [CDC guidance](#).

Where possible, on-campus residents who test positive for COVID-19 will complete their self-isolation at their permanent residence. Where self-isolation at a student's permanent residence is not feasible or poses risk of transmission to others, the University will coordinate with the student, University Housing, and local health authorities to locate an appropriate location for self-isolation. Students requiring more extensive medical care should contact UTA Health Services or their personal physicians. Students who test positive for COVID-19 may return to engagement in the University community once cleared by UTA Health Services.

Faculty, staff, and students who test positive for COVID-19 or come into contact (i.e., within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone who has tested positive should file a report using the [Close Contact or Personal Diagnosis form](#), found on the UTA website at [uta.edu/coronavirus](https://uta.edu/coronavirus). This excludes people who have had COVID-19 within the past three months or *who have been fully vaccinated*.

## CONTACT TRACING

UTA Health Services will coordinate contact tracing. Contact tracing for those who test positive for COVID-19 will be led as instructed by local public health officials. In the event state and local public health officials are unable to provide timely contact tracing, the University will work to identify and facilitate the quarantine of campus contacts of infected campus community members.

## COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

UTA students and employees are strongly encouraged to participate in COVID-19 vaccinations. Details regarding vaccination locations and/or vaccination availability in the community will be posted at [uta.edu/coronavirus](https://uta.edu/coronavirus).

## GUIDANCE FOR SPECIFIC WORKPLACE SCENARIOS

### UTA CAMPUS SHUTTLE TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Transportation will return to normal operations. Mask mandates and social distancing will not be required, but masks or face coverings are encouraged if you are not fully vaccinated.

Parking regulations will return to normal operations. All employees, students, and visitors can select from a number of parking permit and duration options to fit their desired schedule, budget, and convenience. Parking options include hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, semester, and academic year permits.

### OFFICE WORKSPACES

Office workspaces will return to normal operations. Mask/face coverings and social distancing will not be required in the workspace; however, individuals who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask or face covering.

### RESTROOMS

Use of restrooms will return to normal operations. It is strongly recommended that individuals continue to wash their hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of any virus, including COVID-19.

### ELEVATORS

Elevator capacity will return to normal and stairs remain as another option.

### MEETINGS

In-person meetings will resume. However, when appropriate, meetings can still be held using collaboration tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, telephone, etc.).

### MEALS

Before and after eating, you should wash your hands. If dining on campus, you do not have to wear your mask or face covering. You are also not required to social distance.





## CAMPUS FACILITIES

### CLEANING

The Office of Facilities Management will continue to implement new measures and modify its cleaning protocols to minimize the spread of the virus. Cleaning frequencies will increase, and schedules will be modified to meet the needs of the campus community.

Campus departments are encouraged to clean common touch points within their offices/work areas throughout each day. Sanitization supplies will be made available for departments, but departments are also encouraged to purchase their own cleaning supplies to supplement what is provided by Facilities Management.

Cleaning supplies should include hand soap and/or hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, and disinfectant.

### SIGNAGE

The Office of Facilities Management is responsible for placing signage at building entrances and in restrooms, dining areas, classrooms, elevators, common spaces, stairs, and student engagement spaces to mitigate the spread of the virus. These signs encourage washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick, wearing masks or face coverings if not fully vaccinated, and getting vaccinated.

Campus departments can request additional signage from Facilities Management. Additionally, approved signage is available for departments to print and install on their own.

### CLASSROOMS

The Office of Facilities Management will ensure there are adequate cleaning supplies in all classrooms scheduled for use during the fall/spring semesters, and students will be encouraged to use the disinfectant cleaning supplies to wipe down shared desks, surfaces, and equipment before use.

### VENTILATION

The Office of Facilities Management will ensure ventilation and filtering systems are operating properly, control relative humidity, and increase circulation of outdoor air to further mitigate risks associated with the potential spread of the virus. In addition, air filters are being replaced with greater frequency.

### WATER DRINKING FOUNTAINS/WATER BOTTLE FILL STATIONS

All drinking fountains have been restored.

## UNIVERSITY HOUSING

The University of Texas at Arlington will determine appropriate safety precautions for UTA residence halls and apartments using evidence-based public health protocols and guidance for the control of infectious disease. Facility conditions related to resident density, restroom/shower facilities, cleaning protocols, ventilation, etc., have received careful review. Resident density in UTA residence halls will be as follows:

1. Students in three-bedroom, private-occupancy suites will have a maximum of three residents per bath.
2. Students in double-occupancy suites will have a maximum of two residents per bath.

Common area spaces in the residence halls and apartments—such as community kitchens, laundry rooms, computer labs, social lounges, and elevators—may have reduced occupancy limits, scheduled limitations on resident use, and signage restrictions. High-touch common area surfaces will be disinfected with increased frequency. Disinfectant supplies for public spaces will be readily available for residents to sanitize surfaces as desired.

In general, University Housing anticipates a return to normal operations for the 2021-22 academic year. However, if public health conditions warrant, residential students may be required to comply with specific contract provisions related to “Special Circumstances in the Event of a Public Health Crisis” as described in the [Terms and Conditions](#) of their Residence Hall Contract or Apartment Lease Agreement.

## VISITORS

Campus departments are free to have campus visitors. All visitors are expected to observe safety requirements and recommendations established by local health authorities and University/agency policies in effect at the time of the visit.

## MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to offer emotional support during this stressful period. Telephonic or video counseling is available, and you can access this service using most smartphones, tablets, and computers with a camera. You may contact EAP by calling 1-800-343-3822.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) remains available to students. For more information or to schedule a time to connect with a counselor regarding your concerns, please call 817-272-3671. If this is an emergency, please call 911 or the MavsTalk 24-Hour Crisis Line at 817-272-8255. We also encourage the UTA community to use CAPS online resources for accessing information related to emotional well-being and mental health support. These resources are available at [uta.edu/caps](https://uta.edu/caps).





Addendum 1

A photograph of a modern, multi-story glass building at sunset. The building features a large blue 'A' logo with a red star in the center, which is the University of Texas at Arlington logo. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds, and the building's interior lights are visible through the glass windows. The title 'Campus Retrenching Guide' is overlaid in a large, white, serif font on the left side of the image.

# Campus Retrenching Guide

## INTRODUCTION

The University of Texas at Arlington continues to monitor COVID-19 information to determine the level of operation for classes, housing, research, and other events and activities. Levels of operations range from a closed campus to fully open. Levels within this range may include various combinations of online and in-person classes, class size densities, on-campus housing availability, and expanded or reduced research activities.

A retrenching guide is a tool that may be used to prepare for changing levels of operations campus-wide as well as within each unit. This guide is only a tool to assist with determining retrenching and may be used with other community and campus considerations.

## COVID-19 INDICATORS

COVID-19 indicators are gauges that have a significant impact on the campus and unit environment. UTA executive leadership may use these indicators, along with others, to support its planning and decision-making processes. No one indicator will cause a change in operations. The University's leaders understand there are a range of possible outcomes for each indicator. While they hope each indicator will progress toward a best-case outcome in the long-term, they are preparing for sudden deterioration. Leadership will instead review and consider all the indicators collectively, along with other sources as needed to make decisions. COVID-19 indicators include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Significant, applicable actions by public officials
- Number and trends of COVID-19-related cases
- Testing, contact tracing, and quarantine capacity
- Availability of isolation facilities and hospital beds
- Availability of personal protective equipment
- Protocols and trends among similar institutions
- Percent of positive tests and cases linked to other cases
- Capacity and degree of adoption of various prevention methods
- Vaccine rollout is stalled, a majority of the population remains unvaccinated, and cases continue to increase
- Vaccine resistant variants of the virus emerge in the U.S. and CDC public health officials that require health and safety measures, including social distancing, remain in place

## RETRENCHING DECISION-MAKING

Units should follow appropriate decision-making protocols and business continuity plans to determine if retrenching is necessary and, if so, at what level. University leadership will also follow established decision-making protocols, which include consultation with UT System administrative officials.