

Undergraduate & Masters Education Tactical Team Final Report

Version 7 July 2020 (Final)

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REFERENCE DOCUMENTS (RD)

1. President's Message, 11 May 2020
<https://www.utsa.edu/today/2020/05/story/eighmy-20200511-fall-campus-reopening.html>
2. Fall 2020 Planning Tactical Teams
<https://www.utsa.edu/strategicplan/initiatives/campus-reopening/index.html>
3. UTSA Public Health Task Force
<https://www.utsa.edu/strategicplan/documents/Public-Health-Task-Force-Report.pdf>

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report answers the key questions around planning for the Fall 2020 semester in terms of the academic experience of UTSA students. This work is framed in terms of what provides the highest quality experience for students and faculty in an environment that is overshadowed by an evolving public health pandemic. For context, the kickoff meeting of this Tactical Team was held on June 11 and that day set a record for one day Coronavirus cases---nearly 1,900; on June 24 there were 6,584 new cases and on June 25, Governor Abbott paused the reopening of Texas. There are multiple areas to track the growth of Coronavirus in Texas, however, the importance of these data points is to illustrate how volatile the pandemic is. At this time a number of institutions that had initially planned to be open with significant Face to Face (F2F) delivery are now retrenching and moving toward a greater proportion of online course delivery. All of this report is guided by the Public Health Task Force both in terms of specific recommendations and the values of shared responsibility for a safe, health learning environment.

This report is responding to a current crisis and yet, this Team was driven by recommendations that both respond to this crisis and that have the potential to move UTSA forward in the areas of academic distinction, innovation, and unique and impactful student experiences. While focusing on fall 2020, we kept our eye on the future---what experience do we want our faculty and students to have in 2023? Driven by the values of UTSA and the diverse population of this HSI, the recommendations both respond to the crisis and position UTSA for the future.

Key recommendations include the following:

- All courses will be developed for online delivery, with the addition in specific courses of a F2F aspect or experience.
- While courses should be generally be delivered asynchronously, they should include synchronous activities that promote greater meaningful faculty student interaction.
- This is a remarkably unique time and we should use this opportunity to develop a specific Freshman Year Experience/New Student Experience.
- Priorities are established for the students who will benefit most from (if possible) F2F instruction. (acknowledging that the F2F experience will be significantly different than in the past)
- Examples of creative experiential learning are included.
- Resources are set aside for development of signature UTSA online courses ---while a few have been identified, there is opportunity to identify several additional courses.
- Student support will be strengthened.
- Faculty support will be enhanced base on feedback from the Remote Teaching Survey.

There have been multiple surveys conducted assessing the experiences of both faculty and staff in the Spring and seeking feedback from faculty and students about comfort levels of returning to campus. The results informed this Team's work and in many instances students and faculty reflected similar concerns around returning to campus and in use of technology.

Between 50 -60% of faculty want to teach fully online in the fall and significant numbers (over half) of faculty and students are worried about being back on campus.

2 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The following planning framework was established by Dr. Kimberly Andrews Espy, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

2.1 Charge

As UTSA looks to the future, a rich instruction delivery mix is envisioned, where the full pedagogical modality range from completely face-to-face to completely on-line is embraced. We aspire to be recognized for instructional excellence and leadership on the state and national level, especially in reinforcing our HSI identity and our unparalleled role in preparing a broad, inclusive mix of learners for the 21st-century workforce in Texas through a UTSA learning environment driven by innovation and personalized, engaged, future-focused learning experiences. Our collective experience with remote instruction during the spring term and our decision to remain in that mode for the summer term has accelerated UTSA's progress towards that future and created an intensified sense of momentum and enthusiasm amongst our students and faculty.

This Tactical Team for Undergraduate and Masters Education (UME) will embrace our institutional momentum and enthusiasm to build recommendations for Fall 2020 as a stepping stone towards our three-year horizon and beyond. The highest priority recommendations will focus on pedagogical and technical approaches from the full modality range for instruction delivery for courses that range in size from a few tens to approximately 2000. Recommendations will cover courses with highly experiential components (e.g. science labs, creative arts instruction, studios, engineering practicums, in-situ educator and clinician training, etc.). By necessity, these recommendations will be shaped by the realities of public health operations necessitated by the current pandemic following the recommendations and guidelines of the recently formed UTSA Public Health Task. Discussion and recommendations will also be presented about how to personalize the student learning experience to solidify students' identities as Roadrunners with a strong affinity for UTSA during this pandemic. All delivered recommendations should be provided as first steps in a roadmap to Fall 2023 and beyond.

Planning requirement: for any academic instruction and/or activity identified to occur on-campus or in a face-to-face experiential modality, "Flexible Alternatives" (i.e. accessible across time and place) must be planned and included in advance in order to be inclusive of those who cannot fully participate in the selected modality and to be prepared for any needed rapid remote, online transition.

2.2 Framing questions

Overarching considerations

1. How do we do something distinctive with the potential for greater future value and that contributes to UTSA's position as a leading HSI Research University known for innovation and excellence?
2. How do we leverage this challenge as an opportunity for more equity, particularly to address the digital divide?

Questions to address in recommendations

1. What academic course types/activities must be done on campus, face-to-face (F2F)?
2. What academic course types/activities are better done on campus F2F?

3. What academic course types/activities can/should not be conducted on campus F2F?
4. What academic course types/activities are best conducted online/remote?
5. What academic course types/activities can be conducted suitably off campus remote/online?
6. Who benefits most from on-campus academic experience?
7. For courses that will be delivered entirely online, how might we identify a suitable academic activity to occur on campus to promote campus affiliation, identity and belongingness?

Implementation needs

1. What are the attendant training, support, skill development plans needed for successful implementation?
2. What are the attendant facility modifications necessary to support successful implementation?
3. What are the additional technology investments needed to support successful implementation?

2.3 Guiding principles from public health task force

The UTSA Public Health Task Force (PHTF) report [RD-3] presented a list of five guiding principles for planning during the current pandemic. These principles were in turn were incorporated as high-level guidance for the work of the UME-TT.

- 1. We will fulfill the UTSA mission in the face of adverse events associated with COVID-19.**
As an institution of access and excellence, UTSA embraces multicultural traditions and serves as a center for intellectual and creative resources, as well as a catalyst for socioeconomic development and the commercialization of intellectual property – for Texas, the nation, and the world. Even though many activities may need to be virtual or hybrid, we remain committed to superior research, teaching, and community engagement. We will focus not only on academics, but also on providing a safe and healthy environment for campus life, athletics, research, and broader support services.
- 2. We will engage in an approach of shared responsibility (see PHTF Report, Appendix B) as a campus community, which is necessary to succeed in safely meeting our UTSA mission.**
We will launch an aggressive COVID-19 public health awareness campaign, rooted in the philosophy of shared responsibility. We expect all UTSA community members – students, staff and faculty - to work together to ensure each other's health and safety. Everyone should expect to participate in disinfection protocols regularly, to be tested when appropriate, and to facilitate contact tracing as needed.
- 3. We will conduct all business in a manner that supports the health and safety of everyone in our community, while always being mindful of our institutional mission.** The pandemic's trajectory must be considered along with the public health measures that can be undertaken to mitigate its effects: hygiene, distancing, and isolation as appropriate (see PHTF Report, Appendix C). Specific guidelines concerning testing, contact tracing, and quarantining are included herein.
- 4. We will follow pertinent guidance from relevant public health and higher education authorities (e.g. CDC, UT System, THECB) while remaining flexible to adapt our plans as new information becomes available and as new guidance is released.** Our decision-making will be rooted in the most recent scientific research with a data-driven approach. Within these parameters, we will be as creative as needed to meet the UTSA mission (Guiding Principle #1),

while working to further safeguard the health and safety of the university community (Guiding Principle #3).

5. **We will respect and consider the diversity of our campus populations and present inclusive and equitable solutions.** The UME-TT itself represents diverse groups and our recommendations must consider all of these constituencies and more.

2.4 Team organization

In consultation with the UME leads and other members of the UTSA community, Provost Espy appointed a multi-disciplinary tactical team with representatives from all academic colleagues and specific academic support units. All team members are listed in the appendix.

The tactical team was then loosely organized into the following working groups:

- Lower Division Undergraduate Courses, Non-Experiential (co-leads: Shipley, Ramirez)
- Experiential Undergraduate Courses (co-leads: Fleuriet, Arcolin)
- Upper Division Undergraduate and Masters Courses¹ (co-leads: Yeager, Gutierrez)
- Infrastructure (lead: Gerken)
- Student Success (lead: Wyatt)
- Technology Support (lead: Bramlage)
- Student Groups (lead: Rendell)

¹ Pragmatically, this working group also covered course work needed for doctoral candidates

3 KEY ASSUMPTIONS

The section presents assumptions that influenced the recommendations found later in this report.

3.1 Open campus

At the time this report is written, UTSA plans for an open campus during Fall 2020, following all PHTF recommendations, unless specifically forbidden by local public authorities.

By implication, the current report assumes:

- Faculty will have access their offices from which to work and provide instruction
- Face-to-face instruction will be possible and significantly limited, subject to guidelines listed below
- In-person experiential activities will be possible and significantly limited, subject to guidelines listed below
- Staff will be able to work and provide support/programming from their offices/units when physical distancing is possible

3.2 Physical infrastructure

All UTSA physical instructional space has been surveyed to determine effective capacity once the PHTF Report recommendations are taken into consideration. Generally speaking, UTSA instructional spaces with fixed seating or tables can only accommodate 20% - 25% of their normal capacity under the assumption that everyone must maintain six (6) feet of separation at all times. Smaller spaces with mobile tables and chairs or labs and studios can accommodate 40-45% of the standard occupancy.

About 80% of our classrooms would only be able to handle course sections of 29 or fewer students. Using this data, about 85% of our course sections would need to move to an online format.

Complete details will be made available in a separate report.

3.3 Managing health risks in the classroom

All UTSA students, staff, and faculty are required to follow the protocols approved by the UTSA President. As noted in the PHTF report, such protocols are subject to change depending on actual pandemic status when the academic year begins.

At the time of this writing, all faculty and students will be expected to wear masks or face coverings in all indoor settings while also maintaining social distancing.

There are plans for physical barriers in rooms where physical distancing is challenging. The PHTF Report recommends meetings be held virtually where possible. This report addresses cleaning and disinfecting, along with how different spaces will be addressed ranging from elevators to libraries.

A mandatory training module is being developed for all faculty, staff and students addressing the UTSA Public Health protocols. In addition, there will be a public health campaign focused on all members of the UTSA community in the fall.

4 COURSE-INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The intent of these general recommendations is to provide a framework for detailed planning and implementation by the various UTSA academic units in concert with UTSA academic and (as needed) administrative support units. It is assumed that planning will be coordinated and overseen by Academic Affairs under the leadership of Senior Vice President and Provost Espy.

4.1 Preparation for on-line instruction

Recommendation 1 – For Fall 2020, all courses **must** be prepared for on-line instruction, except specific courses or sections that have been specifically approved for physical instructional modality only.

Given known physical limitations to accommodate physical distancing requirements for safe F2F instructional delivery, a commitment to mitigate risk and advance public health, and the uncertainty with how the current pandemic will evolve over the next six months, it is prudent to prepare all courses for on-line instruction. This approach also allows faculty from groups defined by CDC as vulnerable to provide instruction to students in the same groups, and students with personal and familial pandemic risk to participate equitably in all course activities. Finally, this approach also creates an opportunity to enhance quality of on-line instruction through expanded faculty training by and in collaboration with Academic Innovation.

Recommendation 2 – Face-to-face (F2F) instruction in the same physical space should only be offered on a clear basis related to pedagogy and/or accreditation, and then only in a manner consistent with the PHTF recommendations.

As discussed above, physical space for physical infrastructure will be highly constrained while the pandemic remains active (see Section 3.2). Allocation of physical space should be based on prioritized needs, as discussed further in Section 5.2.

For more detailed discussion about course modality and preparation, see *Non-Experiential Courses* (Section 5) and *Experiential Courses* (Section 6).

4.2 Academic calendar

Recommendation 3 – All **face-to-face** instructional activity should end before the Thanksgiving holiday. All end-of-term instructional activity will be done through a combination on-line and remote instruction.

If a pandemic second wave occurs, it is likely to begin during the cooler weather of October and November. Therefore, out of an abundance of concern for the health and well-being of students, faculty, and academic support staff, all F2F instruction should be completed no later than the Thanksgiving holiday. Instructional activity after Thanksgiving should be done on-line except in extraordinary cases approved by Academic Affairs.

The Fall 2020 term should otherwise follow the published schedule.

4.3 Student-faculty connection

Recommendation 4 – All courses should be required to provide opportunities for regular, interactive (“synchronous”) faculty-student dialogue in one-on-one or small group sessions, including office hours on-line or on-campus and small group discussion sections or recitation sections.

Providing opportunities for regular, interactive student-faculty is critical to the Roadrunner experience, no matter what modality of instruction is used. Student surveys revealed that many students found that moving to on-line instruction during Spring 2020 reduced their engagement with instructors and with other students, which they viewed negatively.

To the greatest extent possible, office hours should be offered in an on-line mode. When scheduling office hours, consider creating sessions or chats at different times of day, including into the early evening hours (6 – 8 pm, M – F) to accommodate the schedules of our students who may also be working or caring for family members.

Looking beyond traditional office hours and their analogues, faculty should be encouraged to seek innovative ways to create informal, one-on-one dialogues with students. It is often chance encounters before or after class, walking across campus, or in common spaces (e.g., food services) that create a sense of support in the short-term and inspiration in the long-term, that are missed by students. Where office hours are passive, creating these kinds of encounters in a virtual world may require more active approaches.

Faculty are encouraged to consider group experiences once or twice in the semester. Illustrative examples of include:

- Walking tours on campus or off-campus where you can talk about your scholarly interest in a group setting (e.g., public art or culture along the San Pedro creek)
- Host competitions (e.g., on kahoot) between sections or between classes on course-related content
- Increase use of discussion (“chat”) boards with student and faculty participation asynchronously.

For upper division undergraduates, regular, synchronous, one-on-one interactions allow for the building of relationships between the faculty member and students that are important for mentoring. Such synchronous interactions allow professors to get to know their students better, provide career advice, write stronger letters of recommendation, and identify strong candidates for UTSA graduate programs. If public health conditions allow, such interactions should be face-to-face in areas where social distancing is possible.

In graduate programs, synchronous interactions in courses and in extra-curricular departmental activities will be particularly important for fostering each program's intellectual community and a sense of belonging amongst the students. While this is also true of undergraduates, graduate students feel a much stronger affiliation with their home program, rather than the university as a whole.

4.4 The First Year Experience

Recommendation 5 – Academic Innovation should convene a **small action team to develop an innovative First Year Experience**. Members of this team should be drawn from the divisions of Student Success, Undergraduate Studies, and Student Affairs. Other members may be drawn from the faculty and staff at large as needed.

Fall 2020 First-Time Incoming (FTIC) students arriving having experienced one of the most extraordinary years in US history. They bring unique experiences and will have unique needs. They will have finished high school online and will have used technology to learn, enhance social experiences and more than ever stay connected. UTSA must meet our new Roadrunners where they are, listen to them, support them, and launch them towards degree completion no matter what the next 12 – 24 months brings. We are also seeing incredible creativity emerge through this time from both high and college students.

Simultaneously, Fall 2020 is an extraordinary moment for Texas and the U.S. Racial injustice, especially faced by Black Americans, is being illuminated once again. The local, state, and federal economy will be struggling while the pandemic will more likely than not still be raging. In the midst of this, one of the most contentious federal elections in the last 50 years will be held. All of this is in the context of a disrupted high school year for these students and a freshman year that will be unlike that of any other college freshmen.

How do we embrace this moment – to support, bolster, and enrich the college experience of our new Roadrunners? How do we create avenues for students to take on what they are experiencing and address it directly, either through working on specific issues, using technology in new ways or otherwise engaging directly in their UTSA experiences? We know that students are already creating apps, using Augmented Reality and otherwise engaging in addressing issues they face. More than any other time, with so many students in a virtual learning environment, we must initiate these opportunities.

Expanding the use of Open Pedagogy where students become creators of information, rather than simply learners creates an interesting opportunity moving into this year. Pressbook is a program that allows anyone, including students, to publish their work with the potential to have it become part of the inventory of Open Education Resources (OER).

Some of these ideas or others could emerge through AIS, CORE courses, WRC or others. This summer is the time to plan for some of these ideas and with some students available and interested and faculty, we should consider looking at a handful of ideas to implement in August.

Is this the class that develops a new tradition—virtual in nature, yet equally meaningful? How do we make sure that our students see this potential and have the opportunities to engage? Adobe Ambassadors which will be seeking new members creates an opportunity. Working with Student Government and Student Activities is another process.

Do we look at a theme for the year for all students or our freshmen only and that theme follows our freshmen through their experience as a Roadrunner? There will be two solar eclipses in 2023-24—does this become an end point of a bookend to an experience or theme for this freshman class?

This list of ideas is illustrative, not exhaustive. The recommended action team can use or discard in favor of more exciting ideas that emerge from their discussions.

4.5 Supporting student success

UTSA must learn from its own Spring 2020 experience to adapt and enhance the tools and services it provides outside the classroom to **support student success**. Further adaptation and development must also take into account student feedback gleaned from various surveys conducted in the last four months as well as observations about what worked and did not work at our peer institutions at the state and national level. The feedback received from the Remote Learning Survey should help guide the work toward supporting students.

Recommendation 6 – UTSA should create a **Student Learning Hotline** with evening and weekend hours so that students can reach out for help on finding or accessing information on any and all services

Recommendation 7 – UTSA should create a **Student Learning Hub**, a one-stop on-line destination with links to all tools and services. The primary focus of this hub should be on-line learning, given that will be our primary modality for Fall 2020.

Recommendation 8 – A **weekly electronic newsletter** should be pushed to all students with reminders about the Student Learning Hotline and Hub as well as links to new or highlighted services topical to semester progress.

The Student Learning Hub (led by AI) should provide easily navigable links to brief training and how-to videos, technology help, time management strategies, tutoring services, just-in-time resources, etc. It should also provide information on etiquette and basic technology skills (i.e. how to download an app, convert to a pdf, etc.) videos as well as who, how, and when student support services are provided should be available on this centralized site for students, faculty, and staff. The Student Learning Hotline supplements that by providing a person-to-person connection and gateway to other resources. Information for students should also be searchable by topic or word, much the way that retail and other areas operate—it should be very easy for a student to find an answer to a question.

Many of these ideas could be part of a virtual One Stop for Students and initial discussions have occurred among AI, Student Success and Enrollment Management.

Recommendation 9 – All student-facing resources and services (including tutoring) should be offered primarily on-line with an option for in-person / face-to-face meetings by appointment and following PHTF recommendations.

Recommendation 10 – Student support services should only use UTSA site-licensed platforms and interfaces, i.e., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Zoom, and WebEx.

Providing on-line support services using technology platforms that are internally consistent as well as consistent with the preferred instructional platforms responds to student concerns that they were required to install and/or use too many different platforms during Spring 2020. Interestingly, in the Spring when most support services went online usage increased about 25%.

As discussed earlier in the document, UTSA should continue to offer technology/laptop loan program through University Technology Services and in partnership with other support areas for students with limited technology access.

One of the significant issues that students identified in the Remote Learning Survey was inconsistency in faculty communication with them. Teaching and Learning Services will lead adding more specific training with faculty, including strategies for communication and tools should be developed.

Finally, we need to regularly assess how our students are feeling and doing in a mostly virtual academic environment. Real time feedback with a clear loop to the specific areas to address issues is critical to continuing to provide a quality experience to our students and to address concerns in real time. The virtual environment creates the potential for quick addressing of student issues. We recommend using existing student groups, including PSAC and Student Government and other groups that represent the full diversity of UTSA to provide input regularly.

Student organizations play an important role in students developing a sense of affiliation with UTSA and where possible we should work to provide support and these groups can also provide feedback on the student experience.

4.6 Supporting faculty success

In the same spirit as the last section, UTSA must learn from its own Spring 2020 experience to adapt and enhance the tools and services it provides outside the classroom to **support faculty success**. Further adaptation and development must also take into account faculty feedback gleaned from various surveys conducted in the last four months as well as observations about what worked and did not work at our peer institutions at the state and national level.

Recommendation 11 – Academic Innovation should create a **Faculty Teaching Hub**, a one-stop on-line destination with links to all tools and services. The primary focus of this hub should be on-line instruction, given that will be our primary modality for Fall 2020.

Recommendation 12 –The **Faculty Teaching Hub** should be showcased in the existing weekly **Faculty News** with links to new or highlighted services topical to semester progress.

The Faculty Teaching Hub is envisioned to be a collaborative project between Faculty Success and Academic Innovation, perhaps in the form of a relaunched faculty.utsa.edu.

Much like the Student Learning Hub, Faculty Learning Hub should provide easily navigable links to brief training and how-to videos, technology help, just-in-time resources, etc. It should also provide information on etiquette and basic technology skills (i.e. how to download an app, convert to a pdf, etc.) Encourage faculty (through work with Academic Innovation staff) to make all of our communications and course work mobile friendly as that represents the primary way that many of our students communicate and engage with course assignments.

Information for faculty should be maintained in a data base that is searchable by topic or word, rather than maintained chronologically or by more extensive titles of webinars.

In support of this effort, regular town halls or webinars should be offered on both general and specific topics.

Recommendation 13 – The highly successful **Faculty Champion** program should continue. However, a plan should be developed and implemented to help expand its capacity.

Recommendation 14 – Academic Innovation should develop and implement an **Instructional Design Innovation Hub**, comprised of Instructional Designers, Learning Technologists, etc., to support faculty success more effectively.

4.7 Student and faculty risk management

Recommendation 15 – In the spirit of inclusion and supportiveness, UTSA should make every effort to provide for the needs of students, staff, and faculty who are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Individuals have different risk profiles for COVID-19; hence, the pandemic impacts people's commitments and responsibilities at home and at work in diverse ways. With the least amount of additional process, and to the greatest extent possible, UTSA should:

1. Create alternatives and adjustments for students who cannot be physically present for F2F meetings, and for those cannot be present during on-line or F2F synchronous meetings.
2. Provide university-wide guidelines regarding the circumstances under which adjustments can be provided and some recommendations about what kinds of adjustments can be provided, based on guidance from relevant offices. Many other institutions are dealing with this and we can learn from them. Most institutions are attempting to offer alternatives, without forcing students and faculty into multiple processes.
3. Encourage flexibility on course attendance policies
4. Encourage active faculty engagement with students experiencing COVID-related challenges (with resources and guidance from an ongoing Public Health Team or other appropriate UTSA group).
5. Take a broad, open approach to medical and mental health withdrawals for students.
6. Create more spaces (outdoor spaces with socially distanced seating; unused classrooms) for students to access the internet on campus; depending on need, consider using buses or other vehicles that can provide mobile hotspots.
7. Reserve some seats in F2F sections / classes for students who have internet connectivity issues
8. Consider some way of taking attendance to help inform whether or not a student may not be participating and may be experiencing a health issue (or one of their family).

Student Disability Services recommendations

- For deaf or hearing-impaired students in F2F classes where masks are required, or online courses accommodations are needed to provide a recording with captioning
- SDS work closely with Academic Innovations to support faculty with other student accommodation needs.

Note. Under the recommended hybrid instruction model for Fall, UTSA's Global Initiatives will work with individually with nonimmigrant students to certify eligibility to DHS to continue their studies at UTSA.

4.8 Academic contingency plans

Recommendation 16 – All academic departments should review and update their academic and department operations contingency plans for Fall 2020, no later than 15 August 2020.

Recommendation 17 – Each course **must** have a supporting faculty assigned to assist with unanticipated issues (absences or other course emergencies).

During the pandemic era, every course should have a fallback plan for an instructor who becomes unable to teach due to illness themselves, family members, etc.

Plans should acknowledge the potential for one student in a F2F class to be diagnosed with COVID, which would trigger quarantining of all others in the class, including the faculty member. Moving the course immediately to remote learning would be best solution.

4.9 Academic Innovation investment

Recommendation 18 – Academic Innovation services are valuable and finite. Given limited time to Fall 2020, their differential allocation must be prioritized.

In anticipation of a significant proportion of course work being online in Fall 2020, staff have already inventoried courses on the books for fall and how many will need specific additional work. In moving forward, the team is guided by the following principles:

1. Classes that impact the most students
2. Classes in which the new will become a permanent element in the course as it is taught in the future
3. Classes in which the development of a few on-line components could result in moving the entire course to fully on-line delivery (e.g., lab exercises)
4. Classes in which accreditation concerns could be resolved
5. Classes populated by students whose engagement is most important for recruitment and retention (those listed in Deliverable 2)
6. Classes critical to student success, such as gateway classes in majors and classes that are required of large numbers of students (e.g., Texas politics, intro math)

In addition, Academic Innovation will work with a selected number of courses that create the opportunity for UTSA and the individual academic area to build a course that becomes a true point of pride and will develop and implement five courses this fall.

As an example, Academic Innovations is identifying an Instructional Designer to work specifically with the College of Sciences. One example could be using a tool like Microsoft HoloLens 2 to develop Biology 1404 courses that would have actual virtual labs with students in cohorts. There are other areas that are not commonly viewed as potential online courses including music, art, architecture and these are opportunities for UTSA to distinguish itself as leading nationally in course design.

In every case, we should avoid an experience where a faculty member simply puts a course on Zoom as has happened at campuses around the country. UTSA must embrace the opportunity that exists in this

moment to move ahead of the pack and be defined by quality and innovation. Though resources are not unlimited, Academic Innovations has identified modest resources to inspire these types of course developments and staff have already been in conversation with faculty that are interested.

4.10 IT infrastructure

Student surveys suggest that access to IT equipment and Internet services was limiting factor for less than 5% of all students during the Spring 2019 term.

Comprehensive information addressing all resources relating to technology and technology-related support should be a part of the Student Learning Hub and Virtual Student One Stop including being linked to the University's main COVID resource page.

Various resources will be needed by students, faculty and staff to accommodate needs related to IT technology hardware, software, support and services.

IT hardware and software needs:

1. Expand the laptop loaner program supported by the UTSA Libraries and University Technology Services (UTS)
2. Assess need to expand Wi-Fi coverage on the main and downtown campuses assuming the library, Student Union and classrooms will be open. Depending on need consider providing Wi-Fi access points in student parking areas and other common areas.
3. Promote available links for purchasing technology from vendors at discounted rates
4. Rearrange computer lab space and printer areas in order to provide safe social distancing
5. Market VDI to students and faculty to allow software on campus systems to be accessed remotely
6. Purchase adequate numbers of webcams to provide to faculty who need to utilize the technology for online learning
7. Consider upgrades to classrooms to allow for cameras and audio-visual upgrades in the classrooms to provide easier and higher quality use of the classrooms should faculty want to live stream their courses or record them or to use for conferencing. Upgrades should be directly linked to improving curriculum delivery in Fall 2020.
8. Consider scheduling software for faculty to assist with scheduling individual meetings with students.

IT support and service needs:

1. Provide additional areas for in-person technology support with the Tech Café due to the limited size of the current area, as well as maintaining telephone and email support from 7:00am-7:00pm
2. Provide support to office areas needing technology for appointment setting and student check-in (intake) in order to reduce contact with UTSA office staff
3. Expand charging stations for IT hardware

IT classroom needs:

1. Improve internet access for students, i.e. hotspots on campus, empty classrooms, converted computer labs, and parking lots (There may be staffing requirements to maintain social distancing and sanitize regularly.)

2. Prioritize which classrooms should be outfitted with cameras and similar equipment for hyflex and interactive learning
3. Provide microphones for lecturers wearing masks and/or plexiglass shields on lecterns
4. Investigate and present opportunities for F2F student collaboration outside of the classroom

It is important to note that acquiring technology at this moment requires a more extended lead time so that quicker prioritization of needs and equipment will ensure that we have what we need for opening of school.

5 NON-EXPERIENTIAL COURSES

Co-leads: Shipley, Ramirez (Lower Division); Yeager, Gutierrez (Upper Division, Masters)

5.1 General considerations

Recommendation 19 – For Fall 2020 and beyond, UTSA should support implementation of four modes of instructional delivery for courses without significant experiential components. On-line instructional techniques will be central to each mode.

As expressed in Recommendation 1, all Fall 2020 courses must be prepared developed for fully on-line instruction, even classes planned for face-to-face delivery (see Sections 5.2).

The four supported modes will be:

Fully Online – Asynchronous Not occurring at a set time, however synchronous meetings can occur if not required for a grade (e.g. office hours, tutorial session, etc.).

Fully Online – Hybrid Course content is available asynchronously, but synchronous meetings are a part of the course pedagogy and a part of the grade.

Fully Online – Synchronous Occurs online at a set time, all synchronous content must be posted online, and class time must be posted. **Use of this mode requires approval by the Dean in coordination with appropriate offices (Registrar and committees) and is only available for classes/sections with strong pedagogical need.**

Face-to-Face (F2F) Occurs in person with a set class capacity, no splitting of students based on course day, all course content (lecture, materials, etc.,) must be posted and available to students. Students must be able to attend online and not be negatively impacted in their grade or experience. F2F courses **must** have a parallel online component of what occurs in the classroom (Hyflex) **for students who will not be able to attend in person.** Classrooms must be configured consistent with guidelines provided the PHTF report. **It must be possible to transition to one of the fully on-line modes on short notice. Use of this mode requires approval of the Dean and is primarily available for classes/sections with enrollment less than 40 and strong pedagogical need.**

Course Enrollment	Fully Online – Asynchronous	Fully Online – Hybrid (Asynchronous content , synchronous meetings)	Fully Online – Synchronous	Face-to-Face*
Small < 20	x	X	By Dean approval	By Dean approval
Medium 20-40	x	X	By Dean approval	By Dean approval
Medium 41-70	x	X	By Dean approval	
Medium 71-100	x	X	By Dean approval	

Course Enrollment	Fully Online – Asynchronous	Fully Online – Hybrid (Asynchronous content , synchronous meetings)	Fully Online – Synchronous	Face-to-Face*
Large >100	x	X		
Recitations	x	X	By Dean approval	

* Please note that all dissertation, thesis, research, and independent study courses will be listed as Face-to-Face.

5.2 Face-to-face instruction, priorities

As discussed in Section 3.2, UTSA capacity for face-to-face instruction will be severely constrained as long as the pandemic continues unabated. Hence, allocation of instructional space for face-to-face instruction must be well-justified.

Suggested priorities are:

1. Courses/sections with significant experiential activities that must be delivered face-to-face for pedagogical or accreditation reasons, as discussed further in Section 6.3.
2. Freshman Academic Inquiry and Scholarship (AIS)
3. Courses that require specialized equipment or software packages (usually upper division or master’s courses)
4. Upper division, senior seminars or similar, that foster robust dialogue and discussion needed for developing critical learning and synthesizing skills and that are typically smaller in enrollment
5. Graduate courses, especially for first-year graduate students

These priorities are meant to be guidelines and do not guarantee that all (or some) of these courses will be delivered F2F.

Other courses may be added with approval of the Dean and Registrar.

5.3 On-line course preparation

Recommendation 20 – On-line instruction should use UTSA site-licensed platforms and interfaces, i.e., Blackboard Collaborate, Zoom, and WebEx, unless a specific on-line tool is required for pedagogical reasons.

Recommendation 21 – UTSA should develop and release a standard Blackboard shell for Fall 2020, following the analogous shell for Summer 2020

When preparing course, faculty should keep in mind the *High Five for On-line Learning*:

1. Blackboard Learn is the UTSA Learning Management System (LMS) for delivering online instruction. Use Blackboard Learn for content, assignments and assessments. It is recommended to use one platform for students to interact. This will give students a consistent learning experience across courses and will enhance online learning skills. A Blackboard Fall Template will be released for use in the Fall.

2. Blackboard Collaborate Ultra is the preferred tool for virtual office hours.
[How to create a Collaborate Ultra Session \(for Faculty\)](#)
[How to start your Collaborate Ultra session \(for Faculty\)](#)
[How to use Collaborate Ultra \(for Students\)](#)
3. To the greatest extent possible, prepare your lessons for asynchronously delivery
[Strategies for a Successful Summer Online](#)
4. Create opportunities for students to interact with you and their classmates.
[Breakout Groups in Collaborate Ultra](#)
More resources are under development
5. Follow the accessibility guidelines to make your course accessible to all students.
[Course Design Accessibility Resources](#)

These points will provide faculty and students with a more consistent teaching and learning experience. Blackboard Learn and the tools approved and procured by UTSA are compliant with FERPA and UTSA policies, and support is provided. An asynchronous modality helps faculty to better manage their online courses, reduces technology issues, and allows students to access content at their time and pace as key element of a flexible online learning experience. Keep in mind that an asynchronous modality does not exclude synchronous activities designed to strengthen learning, along with faculty student connections.

Recommendation 22 – UTSA should develop a **boilerplate syllabus** that can be used as a foundation for every course, with Fall 2020 specific information.

In addition, all course specific syllabi should contain:

- A weekly plan for the course
- Alternative plans if course needs to move fully online
- Process students can use if they have issues with an instructor (e.g., contact department chair or Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies)
- Plans for synchronous meetings with individuals or groups (faculty member can decide if these meetings are part of the course grade or not)

There have been other efforts that have recommended changes to the syllabus, including the Team on 21st Century Learning Task Force and others that have focused on inclusion and consistency with Code of Conduct. Those changes will be incorporated as they are formally adopted by UTSA.

For assessment, faculty are encouraged to:

- Provide many low-stake assessments (e.g. homework, presentations, test, projects, etc.) instead of a few high-stake assessments (e.g., mid-term and final) throughout the semester
- Add assignment/assessment choices when possible. Incorporate more authentic assessments with connection opportunities or small group experiences
- Enhanced work with faculty will focus on developing authentic assessments, use of Open Pedagogy to encourage students to become creators and other ways to measure student learning other than multiple high stakes exams.

6 EXPERIENTIAL COURSES

Co-leads: Fleuriet, Arcolin

6.1 General considerations

“Experiential learning is any learning experience that is active, hands-on and engaging. Experiential learning can take place in or outside of the classroom and can include anything from internships, lab research, service-learning projects, studying abroad and more.” [UTSA Future Roadrunner: Experiential Learning](#)

In considering experiential learning experiences during Fall 2020 and beyond, three goals were established:

1. Identify experiential learning activities that **can** be effectively accomplished online and provide recommendations on how to operationalize online experiential learning.
2. Identify experiential learning activities that **cannot** be effectively accomplished online and provide recommendations on how to operationalize given the recommendations by the [UTSA Public Health Taskforce](#).
3. Develop a campus-wide experiential learning opportunity novel to our current moment of COVID-19.

The total scope of experiential learning at UTSA is massive, in that any learning that consists of content acquisition, application, and reflection is experiential. In addition to the examples provided in UTSA's [definition](#), experiential learning can also include the following:

1. *Short-term activities and assessments.* Examples: a week long environmental sciences lab; a literature circle with UTSA students and incarcerated students; student-led panel on social justice; attendance and disciplinary critique of an exhibit at a local museum.
2. *Semester or year-long activities and assessments.* Examples: first year engineering experience of designing a solution for a community-based organization; an iterative research project of data collection and analysis culminating a journal style article; structured teaching observations in local primary school; music and dance instruction, practice, and performance; internship with a local business or non-profit organization.

General conclusions:

1. The majority of experiential learning can be accomplished online with sufficient training and support.
2. The experiential learning that cannot transition to online are limited by materials, e.g., studios in Art, software, e.g., Architecture, or other variables, e.g., dance or small ensemble in Music.
3. An innovative experiential learning opportunity across the colleges is to use disciplinary approaches and questions to document life in the time of COVID-19.

6.2 On-line experiential learning

Recommendation 23 – Based on a review of online pedagogy, most experiential learning can be transitioned to an effective online modality.

For example, an Honors College course in cultural exploration around mourning and rituals typically produces an interactive museum exhibit for the Day of the Dead at the Institute of Texan Cultures. For Fall 2020, students in the course can produce a virtual museum exhibit.

There are best practices for online pedagogies in experiential learning. Office of Digital Learning (ODL) is the university resource. There are numerous other resources that ODL can also identify and integrate.

Faculty need enough lead time, training, and instructional design to execute.

These courses will need to be synchronous at least some of the time because of interactive nature of effective experiential learning.

Operationalization guidelines for on-line experiential learning implementation

Access and Logistics	<p>For any F2F experiential learning, include mandatory social protocols for safety into syllabi. Department chairs should have the power to identify strategies based on their department's needs.</p> <p>Hybrid format for labs with alternating access.</p> <p>Require the completion of mandatory modules for safety prior F2F experiential learning.</p> <p>Dedicate classrooms to projects with F2F experiential learning.</p> <p>Allow students to access cyber/stats classrooms and other spaces with unique resources required for experiential learning.</p>
Access and Equity	<p>For required F2F experiential learning, avoid course designs that increase workload or build additional work into workload.</p> <p>For required F2F experiential learning, have university guidelines on student make-ups if student or dependent falls ill (per medical leave policy).</p>
Excellence in Teaching and Learning	<p>Utilize Office of Digital Learning to train faculty on online experiential learning best practices.</p> <p>Incentivize faculty in above training (\$500) and/or micro-credentials/certifications for faculty who complete training to enhance digital teaching skills that can be considered for merit increase or tenure track path.</p> <p>Leverage student expertise (consider a partnership with the Instructional Technology graduate program) to help faculty champions fill the digital divide gap.</p>

6.3 Face-to-face experiential learning

There are some experiential learning modalities that cannot be accomplished except F2F. An illustrative, but incomplete, list is provided in the table below. A complete inventory is needed. When conducting such a survey, the availability of appropriate college/department owned spaces should also be noted. From this inventory, colleges/departments should identify what activities can be on-line and what cannot. In both cases, technology, training, and support needs should be summarized.

Recommendation 24 – As soon as possible, colleges and departments should do a complete inventory of all experiential activities to determine which activities must be accomplished F2F and/or require significant investment in technology to accomplish on-line.

Recommendation 25 – Programs with accreditation needs in experiential learning should be given priority for learning technology investment and F2F scheduling in classrooms, labs, studios, and nontraditional learning spaces on campus.

Degree programs with significant, required F2F experiential learning components, illustrative

Course/Program	Experiential Learning Type	Requirements/Needs
Architecture and Interior Design	Architecture/interior design studios; hands-on experience	Scheduled for 12 hours/week in studio LED Monitors, hue document cameras, XP pen and Revit server
Art and Art History	Studio art classes; hands-on experience.	The need for equipment in on-campus studios makes most of these classes crucial as face-to-face; must meet NASAD accreditation standards. Nitrile gloves
Clinical Experiences (student teaching)	3 models as we are transitioning to yearlong clinical teaching.	As per TEA, Clinical Teaching requires clinical teachers to complete 70 Full days during a semester or 140 part/full over the year in a school.
Engineering	Senior Design	Physical lab space is needed to work in teams of four.
Cyber security	Security labs	3XXX and upwards classes require isolated virtual machines with vulnerabilities to practice cyber defense and offense.
Dance	Group dance classes; hands-on experience.	Enough physical space and appropriate flooring for dance requirements.
Education		Design physical mock classroom (controlled setting for observation)

Course/Program	Experiential Learning Type	Requirements/Needs
Music (Individual lessons, ensembles, other lab classes)	Individual instrumental or voice lessons, ensemble performance classes, labs (class piano, aural skills, etc.).	Must meet NASM accreditation standards. Possible use of plexiglass barriers; Clear masks for voice students in lessons and choral ensembles; Supplemental LMS specific to performance-oriented instruction (Collabra for Music, Dance, possibly also Modern Languages)
Music Education	Student observations in public schools; student teaching experience.	State regulates the # of hours; COEHD manages the student teaching.
Pre-Clinical Field	Candidates do observations, tutoring and/or small group instruction.	Normally this requires a minimum of 8–10 hours a week in the schools.
Social Work	Mandatory community-based experiential learning.	Two 450-hour practicums hosted by a community agency.
Reserve Officer Training Corps	Various	Must meet requirements of Air Force and Army
Statistics	Statistics labs	Remote access may need to be provided to some specific specialized software.

Faculty and students in some disciplines will need access to the appropriate software for their courses. Costs for the software must be assessed and fit into departmental budgets. Some financial support may be available through Academic Innovation.

Additionally, as an Adobe Creative Campus, Adobe software is free for all faculty and students to use. Faculty should investigate the possibility of using Adobe products to replace software that they are currently using in their course to save themselves, their department and their student’s money.

Finally, for some of the majors noted above, we should consider establishing a UTSA Advisory board to help faculty brainstorm and identify options for F2F activities. In some cases, national associations are providing guidance for virtual alternatives, but this is not always the case and UTSA could build some internal expertise to assist.

6.4 Opportunities for Experiential Learning that Will Distinguish UTSA

Recommendation 26 – UTSA should develop an interdisciplinary experiential learning initiative whereby different disciplines identify courses that can use disciplinary approaches to capture life in the time of COVID-19, especially as they relate to the UTSA community.

UTSA’s distinctive value is the sense of community faculty and students experience when they become part of the UTSA community. This sense of community goes beyond the possibility to physically be on campus. The working group discussed how to build a sense of community through shared experience of being at UTSA during COVID-19.

We provide a few examples below. These are not prescriptive but rather starting points for further discussion and development.

Collaborative Disciplinary Approaches Using Experiential Learning to Capture Life in the Time of Covid19, Illustrative Examples

History	Digital journals to depict and reflect on the current historical moment
Music	Based on the journals created by History students, work on an “opera” focused on COVID-19, the historical moment we live, and how UTSA reacted
Architecture / Interior Design	Stage design for the opera created by Music students

7 NEXT STEPS

1. Share with other key constituent groups for feedback.
2. Share this report with College Deans and Chairs to inform planning and for feedback.
3. Review Recommendations of Tactical Team 3 for potential synergies or overlap in next steps and adjust follow up as appropriate.
Staff from Academic Innovations begin immediately working with Faculty Champions to initiate work with faculty. Detailed analysis is included in the Working Group that examined lower division courses as to how many courses are already online and which ones need additional support. This work needs to begin as soon as possible to improve the course design.
4. Establish a small team that will oversee follow up (include members from this Tactical Team) including the development of a prioritized Action Plan with a plan to track and assess the activities.
5. Convene First Year Experience action team (see Recommendation 5)
6. Finalize the five (or more) courses that will be UTSA's Points of Pride for development and identify technology, faculty and other resources necessary to develop.
Implement improved student support as noted in the recommendations.
7. Establish the plan for student feedback and begin working with students.
8. Prioritize and identify technology investments necessary for Fall and begin process of acquisition.
9. Consider establishing an advisory group comprised of representatives of faculty, deans and key support areas, along with risk management and public health experts to provide guidance around safety relative to some of the activities described in this report—as an example, experiential learning on and off campus.
10. There are several areas that may require additional levels of detail – some small, some larger. This Tactical Team did not delve into all levels of detail connected to the recommendations and with additional review, guidelines should be developed to add more clarity.