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How students are affected by "S/U" option

By Aansa Usmani

Nearly a month ago, the University of Houston-Downtown announced the "Interim Grading Option," a different method of calculating a student's grades, opting for "satisfactory/unsatisfactory," over letter marks.

This decision comes in light of transitioning to an online mode of learning, assisting students who are facing difficulty adjusting to online learning or for those students who are facing financial difficulties or other hardships due to COVID-19.

Alternate grading differs between graduate and undergraduate stu-

dents, differently impacting their GPAs and graduation requirements.

For undergraduates, a "Satisfactory" (S) is equivalent to a "C" letter grade. It will have no impact on your overall GPA and will count towards graduation. Similarly, an "Unsatisfactory" (U) does not affect your GPA, but those courses will not be counted towards graduation requirements; these courses will likely have to be re-taken in order to fulfill graduation requirements.

For graduate students, the system is almost identical; however, to qualify for an "S,"

the university requires at least a "B" letter grade. Like undergraduates, these credit hours will count towards graduation. A grade of "C" or below will merit a "U" and cannot be applied toward graduation requirements; however, it will not affect the student's GPA.

Between May 13 and 18, students can review their final grades on Blackboard, opting for alternative grading if desired. Students must notify the professors via GatorMail by May 18 if they wish to opt into the "S/U" opportunity. Grades will be finalized by May 19 and announced on May

24 at noon.

The "S/U" system may not be for all students, as it could affect credit hours necessary to graduation requirements, but it could help a student sustain their current GPA if that be in their best interest. Students are advised to think strategically about the "S/U" grading option and are further encouraged to consult with advisors and mentors, as alternative grading could affect graduate school requirements or financial aid assistance.

For more information, visit the Registrar's Office at the UHD homepage.

eSports could bring competitive sports culture to UHD

By Sheila Ortega-Calvillo

UHD's eSports League of Legends (LOL) team has finished with a record of 5-1 in its first season. They have qualified for the playoffs of the North American Challenge League (NACL) League of Legends Tournament.

LOL is one the many video games that constitute the grounds for eSports competitions, however, LOL is among the largest and most successful in the world of these competitions.

Just two years ago, UHD brought the first eSports gaming center to

a Houston college campus.

UHD's eSports leagues have received media attention, appearing in the Houston Chronicle, KHOU11, Houston Public Media, and KUBE57V. At this rate, UHD eSports has the potential to create a new competitive sports culture on campus and could even redefine UHD as a competitive sports institution.

Since the creation of the gaming lounge, incoming many students have found eSports an appealing and easily accessible extracurricular activity. Video games and eSports do not face the same entry barriers that traditional

sports do - one does not need to be fast enough, tall enough, or strong enough. All one needs is an internet connection, and they can "get in the game" from anywhere.

The competitive world of eSports is not just about online gaming anymore, it is the next most popular and accessible sport in the world. The world of higher education could potentially increase its student retention and

recruitment by catering to the new generation of students interested in eSports, a sport more sustainable than traditional sports since it can happen anytime, anywhere and can connect an entire world of students.

UHD's eSports center is located in S204 Here are the players that will represent UHD in the NACL LOL Spring Tournament:

Players:	Alexis "Chárizárd" Vazquez
Jake "ScreamingHorror" Zhu	Ryan "Ryomas" Hamerly
Irving "IrvingTrejo" Trejo	Brandon "StreeTrugRaT" Munoz
Kimbland "StreetTrugCaT" Clemons	Mentors:
Ira "OBVS NOT NEEKO" Armstead	Solomon "Solodaboss"
Khang "VikingVN" Nguyen	Sheikh
	Brandon "Girolam" Chheav



THE DATELINE

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The Dateline has been the official student newspaper of the University of Houston-Downtown since 1982, and it has been "Student Run since Volume One". We strive to meet the needs of a growing university as well as the growing metropolitan city that surrounds us.

The newspaper is published bi-weekly, every other Monday, as well as over the Summer break.

Print circulation is 1,000 copies per issue and distributed to all college buildings throughout the University, as well as satellite campuses at UHD-Northwest.

Deadlines for contributions are one week before publication date.

Submission Policy

The Dateline staff consists of students from the University of Houston-Downtown who complete all tasks required to produce the newspaper, which serves the main UHD campus, and satellite campuses at UHD-Northwest. We want all students, regardless of major, to contribute. However, we must comply with our submission policy to operate under our limitations of time, energy, and staff.

The opinions and commentaries expressed within reflect the views of the contributing writers. No opinions expressed in The Dateline reflect the viewpoints of the University of Houston-Downtown, its administration, or students.

The Dateline reserves the right to edit or modify submissions for the sake of clarity, content, grammar, or space limitations. All submissions become property of The Dateline and may not be returned.

All staff and contributing writers must be currently enrolled students at the University of Houston-Downtown. The Dateline interacts with contributing writers via messaging, phone and/or email.

Press releases, story ideas, news tips and suggestions are always welcomed.

Any student interested in joining The Dateline staff may request more detailed information sending an email to the editors at

editordateline@downtown@gmail.com.

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Tell me how you really feel

By Sheila Ortega-Calvillo

Here are what some fellow Gators have to say about their experience with the "Stay Home, Work Safe" orders:

"I'm grateful for the safety of my family and myself but in all honesty, I feel guilty for feeling a sense of loss when it comes to my education. This year I was supposed to walk the stage and had been looking forward to celebrating. More than a degree, it would signify the work that we'd all put in to make it possible. Now it seems all mundane." – *Metzli*

"Faculty are missing eye contact, where students reveal questions, uncertainty, and fears through their faces. Now they have to put any concerns into writings—adding to the existing awkwardness of asking for help. We will get through this. Delayed graduations, birthdays, and other celebrations will occur. Today, still, it is rough." – *Dietrich von Biedenfeld*

"I actually enjoyed the time being at home learning new things and completing projects I started in the past. Everyone is feeling differently, yet I am enjoying being at home and doing the things I wasn't able to do before." – *Vanessa Bailey*

"This was my first year at a university and the excitement of it has certainly left me. I'm a bit anxious for how it'll be but as the great Yoda says, 'Do or do not. There is no try.'" – *Leslie Salmeron*

"What a hell of a year." – *Timoteo Alan Modrow*

"Although my initial thoughts were of frustration, I realize I am not the only one – I am not the target. We are all going through it, as one world. When I think of the bigger picture, I realize that having my semester, full of plans, goals and aspirations, taken from me is not so bad compared to what other people are going through." – *Anonymous*

"My semester being taken from me seems insignificant compared to the suffering currently happening all over the world. Yes, I feel sad and challenged and overwhelmed that the Spring semester has to end this way, but I believe divine timing decides for us, and we must healthily adapt and overcome the challenges in our path." – *Camila Sandoval S.*

"I've taken this time to reflect and enjoy the little things in life." – *Emerson Kovacevic*

"Constantly on the move, with a busy calendar, and always having to juggle multiple priorities. On the bright side, during this quarantine time, I get to PAUSE and breathe. I get a bit more time to connect with family, long distance friendships, nature, and enjoy the little things in life, which is always a pleasure. Prayers out to the world's health and safety." – *Leboriah Chavez*

"The world is changing, and traditions will be challenged. What is progress if challenges are not present?" – *Alejandro (Lex) Perez*

"Adapt, react, and overcome." – *Vannesa Requena*

"First off I want to say how I hope everyone and their families have been healthy and happy. To be honest, this quarantine is a blessing in disguise for me. It's given me a not so ideal way to distance and control myself from my usual social distractions I'd allow on campus. Sure I don't get to show up and see everyone, but now I only need to get ready from the waist up!" – *Anonymous*

"No words." – *Sophia Demetriou*

"We should not allow this pandemic to put our hard work and dedication to school in the shadows. Our graduation ceremony may have gotten postponed but when our time comes to walk that stage, this will be our moment and it'll all be worth it." – *Anonymous*

"It feels really difficult to comprehend that all the time I've been working in school may just end with just a piece of paper in my mailbox." – *Fatima Saleck*

"We should not allow this pandemic to put our hard work and dedication to school in the shadows. Our graduation ceremony may have gotten postponed but when our time comes to walk that stage, this will be our moment and it'll all be worth it." – *Anonymous*

"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now it's time to understand more, so that we may fear less." – *Ryan Z. Sharp*

Faculty prepared to “leave the house” with CTLE assistance

By Sheryl Sellers

Moving from face-to-face instruction to an online format does not happen overnight. Students do not just pick up their backpacks and unload them in an ordained room at home, plug in their personal computer and get to work. And neither do the faculty. And, just as there are resources available to students, resources are available to faculty as well.

Even before UHD made the decision to halt face-to-face classes, the wind of change was wafting in and the wheels of progress were turning on the seventh floor of the Academic Building.

Welcome to the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE), UHD’s faculty development office.

Dateline reached out to CTLE Associate Director, Georges Detiveaux, to learn about the resources they make available to faculty when face to face instruction “left the house” and a new modality was necessary. He stated that it was a little disorienting not to know when campus would close, but word finally wandered in and the four CTLE staff members knew that they must be prepared. Early on, they were creating faculty resources, aware that their clients

would possess various degrees of knowledge about teaching online.

Just as some students were initiated into online learning this spring, some faculty had little to no experience teaching online; however, some faculty members were accustomed to the virtual class setting.

The first item on the CTLE agenda was to prepare a tip sheet consisting of best practices and first steps. The staff worked with faculty on streamlining, emphasizing the most important topics and making sure that expected outcomes are addressed.

Some faculty

were beginners in this area and started from the ground up. For many, their knowledge of Blackboard did not extend past posting syllabi and gradebook features. CTLE staff were able to assist in the instructional best practices and direct faculty to technology support staff for additional training and resources. Faculty who were new to the virtual teaching method were instructed on how to streamline and add flexibility to their courses.

CTLE established webinars and discussed resources over Zoom meetings. They worked tirelessly with faculty keeping the best

interests of the student in mind.

What awaits faculty and student teaching and learning for the summer and possible fall terms? CTLE is already preparing to take faculty to the next level – to true online courses, not just the stop-gap remote instruction that were adopted during the pandemic.

CTLE will offer faculty a UHD Online Passport – an opportunity to do some virtual travel in online course design. The Passport feature provides faculty with further instruction to prepare them for any future fully online courses. There will be

45 opportunities for faculty to take the training trips which begin on May 8 and run through Aug. 7.

CTLE staff were happy to see new patrons stream through their doors. For some faculty it was their first contact with the center. And in order to assure faculty that their consultations and learning will be confidential, as Detiveaux commented – it is like Las Vegas: whoever comes to CTLE and whatever instruction is needed at CTLE, stays in the CTLE.



The 40th administration of SGA, President Shenaedra Tatum and Vice President Jason Lillie, would like to say farewell and extend their thanks to the student body. Serving this you this year has been an honor. As the academic year ends, we would like to congratulate our successors, the 41st Administration of SGA, Timeotheo “Alan” Mudrow and Leboriah Chavez. We wish them well!

Image courtesy of Shenaedra Tatum and Jason Lillie

Interview with upcoming SGA President and Vice President

By Aansa Usmani

Editors' Note: This interview has been condensed for clarity and conciseness. Interviews with each candidate occurred on separate occasions.

Alan Mudrow

(AM): My name is Timeoteo Alan Modrow. I normally go by Alan. So, if someone calls me Timotheo, I just think they're referring to my dad. I'll be a senior this upcoming year, and I am planning to graduate in May 2021 with a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and a Bachelor of Arts and Communications Study.

Leboriah

Chavez (LC): My name is Leboriah Chavez, and I'll also be a senior next semester. I am majoring in Accounting, with a minor in Spanish. I plan to graduate in May 2021.

Dateline (DL):

So, what do you plan to do after UHD like grad school, working?

AM: I don't tell a lot of people just because... there's repercussions. But I'm a DACA student and so being under DACA limits you in certain ways as to what you can do... I know that there's a case in the Supreme Court right now and we should hear [its ruling] by June. Hopefully, everything goes well, and if so, I'd like to start working and apply for grad school. For now, I'm still debating what I want to get my masters in, and I'd love to help people. At UHD, I've been able to realize that I want to go into higher education, whether it be on student affairs or overall helping students. I wouldn't rule

out being a professor, as well.

LC: At first, I wanted to be a math teacher, but after studying teaching for two years, I realized this is not what I want to do for the rest of my life. So, I switched to accounting and it is giving me more opportunities. I think I made the right choice.

DL: So why did you join Student Government Association (SGA); what attracted you to the program?

AM: Like many students at UHD, I had the idea of completing my basics and then transferring after a year. I have two older sisters who went to UH, and I hoped to join them there. Also, not a lot of people know this, but I wanted to go to aviation school, however they never got back to me. Since time was running out, I decided to submit my UHD application. During orientation, I overheard someone asking an advisor about the transfer process and how they could make their application more desirable, and that was the first time I heard of SGA. That same day, I went to the SGA office, and I saw that they were getting ready for Welcome Week, and the then-SGA administration officials were beginning the tradition of handing out like notebooks pencils and things like that. They had bought about five thousand notebooks, along with pencils, pens, and other supplies. I introduced myself as "Hi, I'm Alan Modrow, and I am interested in being a part of Student Government." They responded with "Hey, we're

pulling an all-nighter to label all of these school supplies. Would you like to assist us? I agreed to help them, and I ended spending the night at the SGA office, before I was even a student. That same year, I was able to help out with the SGA Marketing Department, leading to a Chief of Staff position the following year. Through SGA, I was able to experience and participate in a lot of student activities, and this experience has been super rewarding.

LC: What attracted me to SGA was its role of advocating for its students. We are the ones to speak on the behalf of students, and we get to see and hear their concerns. As a part of SGA, we have connections with higher-level officials and there, we can influence and persuade changes that our peers want to see. Last year, I got recruited for last year Health and Wellness director. Alongside being a personal trainer, I also became more into mental health awareness, keeping students fit, both physically and emotionally.

DL: Do you ever envision yourself in school politics or any type of politics?

AM: In high school... I played soccer and I was in orchestra. But you know, those were regular electives that someone could take. I didn't go out of my way to join organizations or things like that. At UHD, SGA opened so many doors for me not just personally but professionally, as well. I didn't have the slightest idea that I was going to go into higher education or that I wanted a career in

higher education until last year. My mentor mentioned how higher education is a career, and it had never occurred to me because most people don't see themselves as being advisors, whether it be in financial aid, student affairs, or other university administrative matters. Since then, I can see myself doing it because I enjoyed getting to know other students and help them out.

LC: I do. I want to be a well-rounded student and help others through SGA. Politics is everything at this point, and I want to use my different skills to promote policies that help the student body. That being said, I don't see myself in a position such as being a mayor or a Congresswoman.

DL: After joining SGA, what do you wish you had known before joining?

AM: As a freshman or a newcomer, they notice that there's a lot of changes they would like to implement, however, being very naive teaches you how things work and function, helping you become less complacent and more understanding of how the University functions. Also, it teaches you how to better engage with students and how to balance politics within SGA, organizations, and the overall UHD community. As a newcomer, I learned that everyone is doing their part and that the system is more complicated than one thinks. Making changes isn't as simple from "A to B;" it's more of point A to A.1 to A.2, etc. I recall being frustrated because I was wondering how there are other ways of getting things approved efficiently and quickly. However, politics and

people's egos do play a part in it. Ultimately, you have to do the best with what you have.

LC: I wish we had better communication with the students. I wish we had better collaboration and more transparency. I feel like students are now aware of certain things that go wrong campus. I feel like students are now realize we have a gym. Some students don't know where their tuition money is going to because they don't see events they don't see. They see the same repetitive stuff every year and it's kind of like what you eat if you eat the same things every day. Wouldn't you get tired? I feel like if SGA has a little bit of power to embrace more of student life, we should be able to do that.

DL: What quality do you think makes you stand out more than other people within SGA?

AM: I don't know. I feel like I've behind the camera a lot more than anyone else. I've been putting in the work, and it speaks louder than words. I may not be as outgoing as Leboriah or other people, but I've been doing the work. I've been here for a minute, so I've been able to see how different departments and different things work around campus, and so I've also put myself in different positions whether it be a part of freshman orientation or transfer orientation or starting an organization just so that I could see not only how to improve the system, but also how to best serve the students that are doing those things. I think that having knowledge of how the university works is very important. And that's why people come to me and ask me different questions, whether it be on Instagram or on

campus. Being in the background is definitely something not a lot of people know about.

LC: I am a realist and I like to plan things out. As an extrovert, I'm more naturally inclined to be vocal, and I like to communicate with others. Additionally, I am very open-minded and I want to hear other people's perspectives and be able to better communicate with them. When dealing with an issue, I like to see it from all viewpoints and understand the seriousness of any decision made.

DL: What made you decide to run for your position this year?

AM: I felt it was time. I think that with all of these higher-level changes within recent times, it sparked a movement for improvement, whether it be working to create community partnerships, or helping to collaborate better with organizations, giving them resources they would need. I know that President Muñoz and his administration have been working diligently to create community partnerships and has put us on the map, showcasing what UHD has done for Houston. However, I felt that these new developments should find ways to engage more of the student population, whether it be implementing new grading policies, or other changes due to the pandemic. These are all conversations that SGA has been involved in. As President, I will always advocate what is best for the student population and give them "a seat at the table," and amplify their concerns to the higher-level administration.

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Interview with upcoming SGA President and Vice President

Continued from Gator Life, Page 4

LC: I wanted to run for Vice President, because it's something out of my comfort zone, and I felt it was time to give back to the UHD community.

DL: Why did you choose each other as your running mates?

AM: In the fall 2016 semester, we both arrived as freshmen, transitioning from high school to college...

What I really liked was that both of us wanted to make the best of our college experiences, and become more involved in Student Life, whether it be through Sports and Fitness, LEGACI, or other student organizations. We felt like it was our time to run and showcase what UHD can offer to everyone, from its students to its alums and the overall community. By the way, Leboriah is the sweetest person ever. If you ever get to meet her, she's a ray of sunshine and is the most motivational person I know. At UHD, she's super engaged with Sports and Fitness (she's a personal trainer), and like me,

she likes to get to know people and assist them with any issues they may have.

LC: Alan and I have known each other since 2016. We were in the same orientation and we've seen each other's progress throughout the years. When he announced he was running, he asked me to be his partner, and I accepted whole-heartedly. I've seen him grow as a person, and I can't wait to work alongside him as his Vice President.

DL: What ideas do you have for incoming classes, besides expanding communication?

AM: While running for President, I believed in promoting "having a seat at the table" for students, allowing them to advocate for themselves and voice their concerns. Within student government, there are two components: student engagement and advocacy. Regarding student engagement, students should know that we're here to help them amplify their

voices and make them heard. UHD is a collaborative institution, and as more organizations and networks work together, it will assist more students, alumni, or other members of the community. Supporting student organizations is more than collaborating with them; it's giving them the resources they need to be successful, whether it be assisting with their fundraisers, gatherings, or other types of events, helping them gain more massive followings. Concerning advocacy, SGA plans to be more transparent with the different resolutions, proposals, communicating with the university, while simultaneously supporting the well-being of our students.

LC: I believe that every student has a story. We give students "a seat at the table." We want to be able to allow them to speak up. Our goal is to bring everyone together and be able to hear their concerns. Whether it be students or organizations, we want to hear their concerns and

actively collaborate with them, giving them the resources, they need to succeed at UHD.

DL: What issues do you plan to work on as President and Vice President?

AM: Since being elected, I have heard growing concerns about students being unhappy with the fees being charged for summer classes. I'll consult with administrative officials, and continue to advocate for the student community, as this pandemic has ensued financial hardships and other outside struggles that could affect their academics. Additionally, I am asking that we get more shuttles for the parking lot, (backing it up with data, statistics, and other tools higher-level administration officials would need) showing how this would be helpful for students when arriving at campus.

LC: Safety is one of the most important issues right now, especially when leaving campus after dark. Alan and I have proposed getting more call boxes in the parking lot that both work and function correctly. We also

want them to be checked weekly, so that our Campus Police can be more aware of what's going on. Regarding Alan's point, shuttle busses should be expanded, helping students arrive and leave campus in a timely manner. Additionally, shuttles should be added towards my College, the College of Business.

DL: How do you plan to execute these visions/ideals your campaign had?

AM: I think that the most important thing is being accountable to the student body and being transparent with them. We want to hear their concerns and their views, understanding how future changes may impact them. If more students understood what happens behind the scenes, they'd see that work is being done and that it takes time. Change does not happen within a finger snap; it's a long process and know that we will continuously advocate for you.

LC: My first plan of action would be to come up with a questionnaire and spread it across the student body via Social Media. That way, I can see what

feedback students have regarding new policies, rules, or other things our administration has implemented. Also, continuing to advocate for students within higher-level administrative meetings, knowing that our students' needs and wellbeing are on top of our agenda.

DL: What do you want to be remembered for at UHD?

AM: Everything I've done for students, and at the end of the day, it's not about me. I doubt that anyone will remember, beyond a simple "I recognize that name from somewhere." For me, it would be to come back and be proud of the university, like that's where I got my degree. I think that's the most rewarding thing of being a Gator.

LC: I would like to be remembered as an empowering person, motivating others to do good and to believe in themselves. As a first-generation college student, I want others to know that regardless of what you do, there's nothing that can stop you. Only you can stop yourself. Motivate yourself, and you will soon motivate others.

Did you Know...? Summer opportunities outside the Gator grind

By Sheryl Sellers

"School's out for the summer!" lyrics from a 1970's hit by Alyce Cooper which words will become a reality very soon. Yes, a break from studying, calculating and seeing talking heads in a one-dimensional world on Zoom. Well, at least for some.

For those summer leisure-ites,

there are volunteer activities available to give back to the community, and perhaps have fun along the way.

Volunteer Houston has many opportunities, and some are virtual. Highlights include making and donating cloth masks. Directions and additional information are located on the Volunteer

Houston website. This can be an individual or a team effort.

The Goldberg Towers has a request for craft supplies and games for their residents. Merely sending cards of encouragement to residents is most appreciated.

Dog and cat lovers can get their tails to the Mutts and Meows Rescue and

help to transport animals to adoption sites and vet appointments. There is also a need to help at adoption sites.

Babycakes and Brunch needs a warm, talented body to grow their social media, i.e. postings on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. The venue also is looking for a photographer and videographer

with their own equipment to assist in creating a documentary. There are several needs created by the COVID-19 virus. Yellowstone is looking for able bodies to ride buses and help deliver food to their families. The Texas French Alliance for the Arts is looking for creative individuals to create poems, songs, cards and such to support

healthcare providers and senior citizens.

The Food Bank is always in need of volunteers.

Visit the Volunteer Houston website. There is a plethora of opportunities to give back and stay busy and community minded this summer.

Stay Gator Strong, all summer long.

Faculty Senate Meetings - Creativity abounds in UHD campus culture

By Sheryl Sellers

To state that there was a plethora of information poured out at the April 21 Faculty Senate meeting would be an understatement. The global pandemic has created an unexpected opportunity to develop creative plans surrounding graduation commencement ceremonies, as well as decisions on learning platforms and even considerations of classroom size.

This was the third Faculty Senate meeting conducted via Zoom and the officers and senators continue to make it work, calmly and efficiently. Interested to learn how Faculty Senate officers feel about the online platform for the meetings, Dateline reached out to Mike Duncan, Ph.D. Associate Professor of English and president of the Faculty Senate.

He stated that a foreseeable problem with the Zoom platform presents itself with the need for a closed ballot. Currently, there have not been any sensitive issues that would create that need. As for general voting on Zoom, some senators use the chat feature while others vote verbally. But while keeping a close eye on chat and tuning into the verbal responses he is able to determine timing of “ayes” and “nays.” So far, so good.

During the April 21 meeting, Provost Eric Carl Link, Ph.D. was the first speaker with bittersweet news regarding a key member of his staff, Faiza Khoja, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs. She has accepted the position of Dean of the College of Business

Administration at Texas A&M Central Texas. Whereas Provost Link and colleagues are sad to see Khoja leave UHD, they applaud her new endeavor and wish her well. Khoja will begin her role at Texas A&M after July 4.

Provost Link had many updates and information to share. Among these included that summer enrollment is looking good so far, particularly under the pandemic circumstances of online instruction. As of the meeting, summer enrollment numbers were 75% increased as compared to the numbers at the same time in 2019. Fall enrollment is also off to a good start with enrollment at 31,611 credit hours vs. 39,204 at the same time last year. UHD has now seen 5 straight semesters of steady enrollment growth.

There was no answer yet to the question of spring commencement, but the administration is looking into alternatives. Two of the options of consideration include holding the commencement virtually or combining spring and fall 2020 ceremonies.

UHD has addressed many technology needs moving to virtual classes, for both students and faculty, to complete the spring semester. Three hundred ten computers were loaned to students and another one hundred seventy-four to faculty and staff. In case of an emergency, there are a few computers in stock.

Provost Link was pleased to report that half of the pandemic stimulus funds available to the university have been received.

This equates to \$4.7 million. There is no firm date as to when the remaining funds will be received. There is a vast amount of restrictions and regulations as to how the funds can be used. Provost Link is hopeful that a portion can go to student financial aid very quickly.

Next, Provost Link addressed the method of instruction for summer and fall semesters. At the time, summer sessions prior to July 1 will be online. Summer III courses may be able to return to face-to-face instruction. There is not a definitive decision on fall semester instruction.

Provost Link also attend a University of Houston System meeting recently to discuss a system-wide solution to return to campus. No definitive answer was forthcoming.

Johanna Schmertz, Ph.D., Professor of English, asked the Provost what method has been discussed to carefully bring people back to the campus. Would there be a phase in? Would managers be given flexibility, and would there be room for a conscientious objector to work from home? Would students registered for a face-to-face class be given the option to remain online?

Provost Link commented that that was a fair concern. Adoption of telecommuting guidelines are being discussed. An idea presented of limiting class enrollments has not been voiced at administration meetings; however, Provost Link will bring this up to university deans.

UHD would have to be very creative to either

limit enrollments or determine classroom facilities.

The Dateline asked Schmertz about her concern for the conscientious objector when classes return face-to-face. She answered that she does not believe students should have to put themselves at risk to complete their degree plan. She suggests online courses for core subjects and the option of face-to-face or online instruction for courses pertaining to students' majors. Furthermore, Schmertz is aware that many students are essential workers – working on the front lines while attending face-to-face at UHD could put others in danger. She continued to say that while there is no decision on when UHD campus will open, the online course designers who work one on one with faculty, and the faculty themselves would benefit greatly by having the answer sooner than later.

Another option voiced was having half a class participate face-to-face one day, and another half of the class participate another day, and include online instruction for both halves. However, not all classes would have the ability to instruct in this manner.

Katharine Jager, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English, joined the meeting to discuss the curricular and administrative support for English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Learners (ELL) students. She noted that 61% of Spring 2020 UHD students entered as first-generation college students. These

students are more comfortable communicating in their native tongue.

Jager suggested that general education requirements include that these students take two additional writing intensive courses, rather than the standard ENGL 1301 and 1302. These freshman and sophomore students could choose from not only English course, but courses in Philosophy, Humanities, Art, and other intense writing courses.

Several ideas were provided including instituting a faculty volunteer pilot program, and an upper level courses in the student's major. The discussion wrapped around moving the writing intensive out of common core and into general education. However, it was noted that students would avoid writing classes if they are not comfortable with English therefore the requisite must be in the area of common core. One senator commented that these students must learn to read and write proper English for their future career benefit.

Following the prolonged discussion, it was determined that a larger audience would need to weigh in on the subject and more time would be needed to make a decision.

Ronald Beebe, Professor of Educational Research, rounded out the meeting with the news that the election results for the next Faculty Senate officers and senators were certified and as of this writing, they should be available. Several seats are yet to be filled, including his senate seat from Urban Education, as Beebe is the president-elect for the coming senate.

A final question to Duncan concerned a return to face-to-face meetings for the

Faculty Senate. Duncan answered that it is hard for him to say and is yet to be determined.

For the time being the virtual meeting mode will continue for the Faculty Senate and the university, as a whole.

During the May 5 Faculty Senate Meeting, UHD President, Juan Sanchez Muñoz and Provost Link attended and offered their appreciation for the senate and the faculty's support through this spring semester transition.

President Muñoz noted that the administration has several working groups in place, regarding the campus moving forward. He is expecting white papers from the groups by May 26. He stated that all summer courses will be instructed virtually and the following are options for fall courses are being considered. These considerations include modified face-to-face instruction, hybrid fall courses, completely online fall courses, or completely face-to-face fall courses.

The decision will be based on the primary objective of staying healthy. Anticipating a return to campus in the fall the administration has already made plans for specific entry points, masks and face shields if necessary.

President Muñoz has a restrained optimism and hopes that one third of faculty can return to campus on June 1, one third on July 1, and the final third on August 1. As for some good news – this unprecedented time away from campus has allowed for additional school maintenance. Perhaps upon return, all the elevators will be operational.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Country lifts restrictions despite risks

By Lauren Anderson

In President Donald Trump's daily media briefing on April 14, he declared that it is now time to start opening the country, despite the continued impact of COVID-19.

"The next front in our war – opening up America again," President Trump said.

Because of COVID-19 and the lockdown, a third of the U.S. economy has shut down leaving the unemployment rate 25%, and millions are filing for relief every week. Billions of dollars in tax revenue is being lost as 98% of restaurant and hotel workers nationwide are out of work.

"America wants to be open and Americans want to be open. A national shutdown is not a long-term solution," Trump continued.

However, many people are still being affected by COVID-19 as many are ill, dying, and grieving. There have been at least 32,000 cases in Texas, alone.

There have been more than 1.23 million cases in America and about 72,000 deaths in America. There has been 3.66 million cases and 257,000 deaths so far globally.

Despite this current situation, President Trump has moved forward to create guidelines, in 3 phases, on how to reopen America successfully.

In phase 1, it is important for

vulnerable individuals to continue isolation and those who live with vulnerable individuals should be aware of the risk of bringing the virus to their homes. Individu-



People crowd at Florida beaches after Governor Ron DeSantis has decided to reopen them. Image courtesy of Sam Greenwood/Getty Images.

als should also practice social distancing when in public and avoid groups of 10 people or more. Unnecessary traveling is still prohibited.

For employers, it is important to continue to encourage telework and to return to work in phases. They should also continue social distancing and accommodate for those who are vulnerable to the virus. Most businesses should stay closed in this phase, but places that can open should have strict social distancing protocols.

In phase 2, vulnerable individuals should still stay isolated and those with vulnerable individuals should still be aware of the risks. Social distancing should still be practiced, crowds of 50 people or more should be avoided, and travel can resume. For employers, they should still encourage telework, close common areas, and accommodate

vulnerable individuals.

Businesses can reopen with certain protocols to protect health and well-being, but visits to senior care facili-

ties and hospitals will still be prohibited.

Finally, in phase 3, vulnerable individuals can cease isolation if they practice social distancing and minimize the time they spend in crowded areas. Businesses can open to full capacity and visits to care facilities and hospitals can resume.

More than half of the states have started lifting social distancing restrictions. Although some states are approaching reopening with caution, some states are taking a more aggressive approach.

Brian Kemp, governor of Georgia, has agreed to reopen tattoo parlors, hair and nail salons, gyms, and massage therapists.

Restrictions have relaxed in many other states, though not this aggressively. Other states

with plans to reopen include Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, and New York.

Texas Governor, Greg Abbott, stated that businesses can reopen, but only if they restrict their capacity to 25%.

Other states have been more cautious in their approach as they are concerned reopening too soon will cause a second wave of COVID-19.

In Alabama, Governor Kay Ivey outlined her "Safer at Home" order, which states that businesses and beaches will open, but people should still practice social distancing and utilize disinfectant

summer to make up for lost time, businesses can open in a few more weeks if the number of COVID-19 cases goes down. Businesses like hair salons and entertainment venues will not be able to open anytime soon.

Governor Ron DeSantis of Florida stated that businesses can begin operating at 25% capacity, but bars, gyms, and theaters will remain closed. Schools will also continue teleschooling. DeSantis urged people to continue social distancing.

In Hawaii, Governor David Ige prolonged the stay at home order until May 31 but allowed beaches to reopen if social distancing is practiced.

In Iowa, Governor Kim Reynolds allowed businesses to reopen at a 50% capacity and surgeries and farmers markets can

to increase testing to prevent further spread of the virus by allowing states to more easily recognize new cases and by contact tracing those new cases to minimize spread.

However, the Trump Administration health officials stated that even if the U.S. could test 8 million people throughout the month of May, it would still be too little. Health officials stated they recommend at least 5 million daily tests by June and 20 million daily tests by late July. So far, the U.S. has conducted 5.6 million tests in total.

Some states lacked testing procedures from the start, so it is impossible for them to determine the span of the virus' spread. Many health officials advise against full reopening until a vaccine is distributed. or until the transmission rate largely dwindles largely. In other words, reopening so hastily can cause a surge of cases and potentially increase restrictions rather than lift them.

University of California, Berkeley professor, John Swartzberg, Ph.D., commented on the U.S.'s decision to proceed reopening.

"I think they're playing Russian roulette. They're hoping obviously that reopening the state is not going to lead to increased cases. They have no way of monitoring the answer to that question until it explodes. If they reopen the state without adequate testing and without adequate contact tracing, there will be more cases until they start appearing in the emergency room and then the ICU."



President Trump discusses reopening the country at his daily media briefing on April 14. Image courtesy of Fox News

measures. Gyms and hair salons will remain closed.

In Arizona, Governor Doug Ducey extended the stay at home orders until May 15. Retail businesses opened on May 4 but only curbside and delivery. He hopes to reopen dine-in options at restaurants by May 12, and further hopes to reopen gyms and salons before the end of May

In California, Governor Gavin Newsom stated that schools can continue through

open with restrictions.

In New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo stated that surgeries can resume and the "New York State on PAUSE" will be extended. Areas not severely impacted by the virus will have gradual lifting in restrictions and CDC guidelines will be closely followed.

Although many states are preparing to reopen, health officials question their ability to monitor and handle the increased cases that will soon follow. The White House revealed a plan

Flash Facts

By Carlos A. Reyes Jalomo

Welcome to Flash Facts, which presents a series of facts about comic books and the comic book industry to show off to the most hardcore of comic book fans. This installment recalls the story behind the creation of one of the most important but likely unheard of comic book characters.

Arguably one of the most influential comic book characters in existence occurred in the rebranding of an alleged Superman knockoff. In Feb. 1954, British comic book artist and author Mick Anglo created Marvel-

man. A blatant knock off of Fawcett Comics' Captain Marvel, also known as DC Comics very own Shazam!

One of the reasons behind the creation of Marvelman was due to Fawcett Comics ceasing Captain Marvel's publication when they shut down in 1953. Following, DC Comics filed to sue Fawcett Comics on account of plagiarism attributed to the similarities between Captain Marvel and Superman.

British publisher L. Miller & Son partnered with Fawcett comics - Fawcett would send reprinted issues of

Captain Marvel to L. Miller & Son. The comic would become one of England's top superhero series. Following the closure of Fawcett Comics in 1953 and knowing the company would no longer have access to Captain Marvel material to reprint, L. Miller & Son scrambled to create a new superhero to take the place of "The Earth's Mightiest Mortal."

The Marvelman comic line ran from 1954 until its abrupt ending in 1963. In 1980, L. Miller & Son sold the property to companies Quality

Comics and Eclipse Comics. The series was rebranded from Marvelman to dark and gritty Miracleman by young Alan Moore (Watchmen, V For Vendetta).

In a letter on the back of issue 2 of Miracleman, Alan Moore explained the reason behind the sudden name change.

"Despite the fact that 'Marvelman' has been a copyrighted character since 1954, it was feared that a certain major American company (not DC) might take exception to a comic entitled Marvelman being published upon its own turf."

Moore's Miracleman story ran for 16 issues. After that Alan Moore would handed the title to Neil Gaiman (Sandman, American

Gods).

A considerable amount of themes and concepts from those 16 issues would resurface later in Moore's legendary comic book writing career. Those 16 issues arguably became the most important comic books in modern history.

Moore's work on Miracleman attracted the attention of DC Comics. Moore's body of work at DC became a major influence in modern comic books for decades to come.

Once Eclipse Comics filed for bankruptcy, the rights to Miracleman were handed or auctioned to several parties. Many claimed the rights to Miracleman, including Alan Davis, Garry Leach, Alan Moore and

even Todd McFarlane (Spawn).

In 2009, Marvel Comics acquired the Marvelman/Miracleman rights from all parties willing to sell their share. Marvel Comics proceeded to reprint the legendary 16 issues of Miracleman in 2014.

While uncertain of the validity behind Moore's claim of ownership of Miracleman, Marvel Comics proceeded to credit Moore, not by name, but as "The Original Writer."

Currently, Marvel Comics still owns the rights to Marvelman/Miracleman. However, they are awaiting Neil Gaiman's return to finish the story that abruptly ceased due to the collapse of Eclipse Comics.

"Allie Cat" Comics

By Carlos A. Reyes Jalomo

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