

As the University navigates the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we want to thank everyone for your patience and cooperation. We are dedicated to the safety of our students, faculty and staff always, and during this time we are taking even more precautions.

The campus is not closed. We are committed to ensure continuity of classes and other critical University functions. However, a number of changes have been implemented to help ensure personal safety, and reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. All classes are migrating online and will start again on March 23. Employees who can work remotely are being encouraged to do so as a means of social distancing. Athletic events have been cancelled. The Library is also closing for the rest of the spring semester as part of our efforts to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Changes to campus functions can be seen here: <https://blog.utc.edu/coronavirus/>.

We want you to know your safety and needs are also of concern. If you are experiencing personal, food, or housing insecurities, there are University Services that may assist you.

<https://www.utc.edu/counseling-center/index.php>

<https://www.utc.edu/student-outreach/scrappys-cupboard/use.php>

Graduate Assistants play a critical role on campus in all our units and your help is both greatly needed and appreciated. Over the last week, and the functions and roles of the faculty and staff has shifted in response to the pandemic. This may also impact the roles of Graduate Assistants. **It is imperative that every Graduate Assistant reach out to your Program Director or sponsor now to define you role as we move forward as a campus for the remainder of the semester.** Your efforts in the weeks ahead will help ensure the success of this transition. Below are some potential changes. Bear in mind these are potential examples, are not all encompassing, and cannot address every possible contingency. As reiterated, please work with your director for details.

Student access to campus and face to face interactions are strongly discouraged. We should follow CDC guidelines for social distancing and increased sanitation of areas and more frequent handwashing. Exceptions may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Justification for each exception will be required. Exceptions will require approval by the faculty, department head, and dean. Additional requirements may be needed and will be communicated as things develop.

Graduate students with teaching responsibilities: (GTAs)

If you have been a GTA helping in F2F classes, your role will be changing to online, and you need to discuss this with your director.

Graduate students with research responsibilities: (GRAs)

Some GRAs can work remotely if possible. Other GRAs may be working on projects that need campus access or other interactions. You need to discuss this with your research director and work with the any units appropriate to your projects.

For access to facilities, swipe access is handled through dispatch. UTC police can be contacted at 423-425-4357. Students will need to work with respective departments to secure access to specific buildings and rooms.

Graduate students with other responsibilities: (GAs)

Roles for students here are highly varied. Some GAs may be work remotely. Again, you need to discuss this with your director.

Some Assistantship roles may change greatly. Please work together with your director to understand your responsibilities moving forward.

As this global pandemic continues to develop, the University continues to monitor the situation. Additional campus updates can be found here: <https://blog.utc.edu/coronavirus/>. As things evolve we will communicate with you as needed.

Let us know if you have any questions. Thank you,

Joanne Romagni, Ph.D.
Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean, The Graduate School
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Ethan A. Carver, Ph.D.
Associate Dean, The Graduate School
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga