

**UT Health Science Center:
COHP116 - COHP Emergency Suspension of Operations on Campus – Academic Policy**

No./Title: COHP 116 COHP Emergency Suspension of Operations on Campus	Resp. Office: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS Approval Body: College Council	Effective Date: March 2020
Category: Academic/Student/Faculty/Research	Last Review: March 2020	Next Review: March 2020
Contact: Dr. Stephen Alway Dean	☎ 901.488.7951	✉ salway@uthsc.edu
Related Policies:		

Purpose

This document provides the Emergency Suspension of Operations on Campus Policy for the College of Health Professions (COHP) activities should the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) modify on campus teaching, research and clinical services and/or suspend non-essential operations. While moving into a modified operations status, the campus must maintain the safest, most well-organized and productive environment for all constituents. The intent of this policy is to provide guidance for developing a contingency plan to address a crisis that interrupts normal college operations while ensuring the safety of students, staff, and faculty within the COHP. This COHP Emergency Suspension of Operations on Campus Policy will be subject to University policies and procedures.

Procedure

Contingency Plan

COHP Dean’s Office will develop a response specific Contingency Plan for any crisis that interrupts normal operating procedures. The Contingency Plan will be reviewed and approved by members of the Dean’s Council who will act as the Emergency Response team for the COHP. Depending on the crisis, the plan may involve mild modifications in College operations, up to a full suspension of non-essential operations. The COHP Contingency Plan will adhere to all policies and procedures of the institution and as mandated by the state and federal agencies. The Contingency Plan and the time for its implementation will be communicated to the College and the College Department Chairs for dissemination by the appropriate communication tools such as email. All COHP individuals in the Contingency Plan will adhere to the plan to the best of their ability as circumstances allow. This Contingency Plan will provide the basis for specific crisis plans that can be subject to change as conditions dictate and does not supersede University policies and procedures.

Administrative Offices

The COHP will remain open to the extent possible as determined by institutional policy. College business will be conducted largely through electronic media and telephone rather than in person. As fluidity of responses for crisis management of the college and as

requested by UTHSC is needed, additional emergency policies and plans beyond the scope of this document may be developed and implemented from the Dean's office to address a particular crisis.

Communication

Unless it is impossible to do so, departmental administrators should maintain real-time responses to phone calls that are directed to the department but may do so remotely if deemed appropriate by the Departmental Chair and university policy. Communication with students, staff, and faculty will occur by email (the official form of communication of the University) as long as electronic communication grids are unaffected by the crisis. Zoom or other university approved video communication networks may also be used for communication, but this will be conveyed to all constituents via email. If email communication for an individual is not possible, the affected individuals should seek an alternative form of communication known to their immediate supervisor as soon as possible. For example, Departments can establish a phone call chain to be activated in emergency situations. The supervisor must relay this contact information to the College, and all parties who might need to contact the individual.

All programs must establish regular communication with their students, which will keep them informed and updated with any developments pertaining to University or College developments and responses to the specific crisis. If communication is not able to be established with a student it should be reported to the Departmental Chairs and Program Directors so that appropriate wellness checks are initiated, as appropriate and feasible.

Instruction

Unless it is impossible to do so, didactic instruction will typically continue using remote instruction if the University suspends all non-essential activities. UTHSC currently has adequate resources to provide online instruction for didactic, seminar or other courses (e.g., Zoom, Blackboard, etc.). Online examinations using available tools such as BlackBoard, ExamSoft, ProctorU, etc. are available. Instructors can also consider alternative assessments such as authoring essay or reflection papers.

Research laboratory instructional exercises/rotations/experiments will be adjusted as needed. The College will consider alternative approaches if critical resources become unavailable to students or faculty.

Clinical rotations for students will follow the guidelines established by the institution, college, accrediting bodies and the sponsoring partner institutions.

Program Accreditation

Each academic program in the College is expected to meet and maintain the requirements set forth by the respective education regulatory and accrediting agencies. In this regard, the health and safety of the program's students are the utmost priority. Programs should seek approval and/or notify the appropriate accrediting body for any changes in delivering the program.

Student Admissions

Student recruitment, interviews and admissions may be moved to an online or remote format. Admission to a degree or certificate program will be adjusted, as necessary, to take into account difficulties with application completion, obtaining visas, and travel consideration.

Budgets and funding for the College and Departments

In the event of a partial or full suspension of non-essential operations, or as a result of loss of projected college funding for reasons associated with the reduction of operations, the availability of funding from the university to the College may be interrupted. This event may require an adjustment of college and departmental expenditures as subject to university policy. However, in the face of financial and budgetary loss for the Departments and College every attempt will be made to follow our Strategic Plan for strengthening our educational, research and clinical missions.

New Faculty and Staff Hires and Searches

If suspension of non-essential activities occurs, all offers for faculty or staff positions, whether approved or ongoing, will be suspended and/or terminated as subject to university policy. Offers, whether accepted or not, will be subject to review by the College and approval by the University. Losses of faculty and staff lines may be permanent and may require restructuring within the programs, departments and college.

College Sponsored Gatherings

All student, faculty or staff activities on campus or by remote interactions that require college/departmental budget resources will be suspended and only mission critical events will be approved as subject to university policy. Events may be reinstated on an ad hoc basis if the College, upon consultation with the University administration, determines that the event provides financial and/or academic benefit to the College that outweighs potential risks and costs of holding the event.

COHP Clinics

In the event of partial or full suspension of essential operations, UTHSC guidelines for clinics will be followed. All non-emergency clinical activity will be suspended.

College Sponsored Travel

All travel that is not deemed essential to the operations of the institution will be suspended and/or restricted and subject to university policy.

Other expenses

Funding for college sponsored research activities (e.g., including but not limited to funding startup expenditures, purchasing equipment, or using clinically generated faculty research) will be suspended. Some modified level of expenditure may be approved after review by the office of the Dean in consultation with the Department Chair on a case-by-case basis and subject to university policy.

Research Activities

Subject to university policy, research activity will continue in the event of a partial or full suspension of operations. On campus wet lab, and face-to-face (patient/subject-based) research may be either suspended or reduced to essential activities (e.g., animal care) unless contraindicated by campus policy and/or the respective Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) for the campus. No new basic science or in person/patient/subject experiments within the restriction of the current campus policy, may begin if a full suspension of essential operations occur, and existing experiments should be brought to an appropriate endpoint as soon as possible. However, other research activities (e.g., submission of grant proposals, data analyses, writing manuscripts, IRB or IACUC revisions/submissions etc. will not be suspended but will be conducted remotely.

Academic Policies

All COHP policies pertaining to academic, faculty and student affairs will remain in effect during a crisis. The College will abide by all university, college bylaw and faculty handbook policies. The Dean reserves the right to suspend certain policies or parts of policies to accommodate the immediate needs for the faculty, staff and students.

Policy Scope

Applies to all COHP students, postdoctoral fellows, staff, and faculty. This does not supersede any UTHSC policy.

Related Policies

TBD

Definitions

Non-essential operations. Those activities that are not required, under the circumstances, to achieve the critical mission of the University. This designation is assigned by the University.

APPROVAL HISTORY

Effective: March 27, 2020

Approved: March 27, 2020, HPFO

Approved: March 27, 2020, Dean