

TTUS Charge on COVID-19 Pandemic Responses

Texas Tech University

The Committee seeks the following information related to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- 1. Are institutions of higher education ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff during the 2020 Fall Semester? When applicable, please speak directly to classroom and lab settings, dormitories and dining halls.**

Texas Tech University has put a comprehensive plan in place, which has been branded as Texas Tech Commitment and can be found at <https://www.ttu.edu/commitment/>. In March when the Governor issued his Executive Order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Texas Tech began transitioning students, staff and faculty off campus using a phased approach. To ensure timely communication, Texas Tech developed a general COVID-19 site, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/communications/emergency/coronavirus/>, which provides safety protocols as well as all campus communications regarding COVID-19. A summary of protocols and precautions that have been put in place include the following:

- **Personal Protective Equipment and Instructions**

Face masks or appropriate face coverings will be required in campus buildings by all students, faculty, and staff as indicated in these links: [Policy & Exemptions](#) | [CPE Challenges & Solutions](#). Guidance has consistently been given to follow CDC guidelines such as washing hands frequently or use of an alcohol-based sanitizer and maintaining a 6-foot physical distance from others. They have been provided with other guidance as indicated on Texas Tech's Commitment site at <https://www.ttu.edu/commitment/>. Once arriving on campus, students are discouraged from traveling away from Lubbock, especially to areas where COVID-19 infections rates are high. If students, faculty or staff suspect they may have COVID-19, they have been provided with decision trees with detailed instructions. Furthermore, Texas Tech has developed a phone app for the purpose of self-assessment before participating in face-to-face classes.

- **Classroom Protocols**

Texas Tech University will resume in-person teaching and learning for the fall 2020 semester utilizing a blend of face-to-face, hybrid (combination of face-to-face instruction and online learning), and online modalities. Our course modalities will remain flexible with approximately 61% of our courses being taught using some degree of face-to-face instruction. Classrooms, laboratories and studios will operate at reduced capacity using guidance for social distancing protocols. We will continue to adapt room assignments as needed but do not anticipate a need to make changes that would substantially affect student schedules. Students will be required to wear a mask or face covering when attending an in-person class or when they are inside a campus building unless they obtain an exemption due to an ADA issue. Seating in classrooms will be situated so that there is to ensure social distancing. Also, faculty

will not be required to wear a face mask or face covering in classrooms so that students are able to clearly understand the instruction and for the benefit of the hearing-impaired; however, a social distancing barrier may be implemented in rooms used for teaching and research as an added precautionary measure.

- **Lab Protocols**

Researchers have been given very specific guidelines for restarting their work in laboratories. Some of those guidelines include the following:

- ❖ Ensuring building operations are in place
- ❖ Research group has adequate PPE
- ❖ Traffic flow design for the laboratory with a single point of entry and exit
- ❖ Plan that limits occupancy to 144 sf of space between researchers
- ❖ Critical infrastructure research equipment must be in proper operational order
- ❖ Adequate hygiene needs must be in place

Research groups that wish to return to campus must also complete a form providing the names of all researchers within a lab to obtain approval and maintain a matrix of the research groups on campus. A more detailed review of the guidelines for researchers may be found at <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/research/downloads/restarting-campus-research.pdf>.

- **Dormitories**

In order to provide a safer environment, Texas Tech has reduced the density of seven of our traditional residence halls. Those halls that previously featured triple and quadruple spaces have been reduced to double occupancy. Common spaces within residence halls will abide by state and local occupancy guidance and the furniture in each of these spaces has been evaluated to accommodate social distancing recommendations. Some apartment style suites with full kitchen are reserved for self-isolation units, should they be needed. Signage will be placed throughout the residence halls to serve as reminders for social distancing and to provide other important information for our students. Student residents will be able to access their residence hall using their student I.D. and can escort visitors to their rooms. The number of visitors per student resident will be limited for the immediate future.

- **Dining Halls**

We will strongly encourage the use of mobile ordering through Grub Hub to assist in minimizing wait times in lines. In dining halls masks may be removed only when guests are seated and eating. A 6-foot physical distancing policy will be in place, wherever feasible, with floor guides serving as reminders throughout locations. Plexiglas barriers are being installed in areas throughout dining locations. Where possible, dining room seating will be configured to promote physical distancing. Hand-sanitizing stations have been added by all entry doors and will be readily

available in high-traffic areas and with a visible presence. Only disposable plate ware and disposable eating utensils will be used. All self-serve food stations, bars, and condiment areas have been removed. All food items will be served directly to the customer. All Grab 'n' Go food and other items such as straws will be individually wrapped for safety.

2. What plans are in place for on-campus COVID-19 testing? Do institutions have the capacity to provide testing on campus, both in terms of available supplies and labs to process tests?

Texas Tech hosted a drive-thru testing site, organized by the Texas Department of Emergency Management, for our university community from August 3rd to August 24th. The drive-thru testing was provided at no charge for students, faculty, and staff, and was voluntary. Testing will now be available at Student Health Services. We are recommending that students, faculty and staff who have not been practicing the safety guidelines recommended by the governor have a COVID-19 PCR viral test prior to returning to campus for any scheduled activities, meetings, or classes.

3. If applicable, what are plans for collegiate athletics this Fall? How will student athletes be kept safe? If fans will be permitted to attend events, how will fans be kept safe?

Texas Tech Athletics has developed comprehensive plans for protocols for our student-athletes and for all our sporting events. The Texas Tech Athletics' Return to Campus Guidelines aims to provide student-athletes with a safe re-integration into athletic activities. The goal of this plan is to provide a safe environment along with facility and personal hygiene practices. Each student-athlete will complete an extensive medical review prior to returning to campus. Each student-athlete will also be provided with information and education by Texas Tech Athletics. We will be conducting COVID testing on a regular basis to appropriately monitor our student-athletes as recommended by the NCAA. The NCAA Sport Science Institute recommendations are found at <https://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/resocialization-collegiate-sport-developing-standards-practice-and-competition>.

Texas Tech University has developed a plan in preparation for conducting sporting events during the COVID pandemic. The cornerstone of the plan is the health and safety of all participants, fans, and staff. The plan will provide overall operational guidelines for athletic events to maintain observance with local, state, and federal health and safety recommendations. We plan to require all fans to wear face masks, implement more touchless amenities such as digital ticketing and cashless transactions, and health screening requirements for all staff working events.

4. What do projected enrollment figures and formula funding look like to institutions for this school year?

Total fall 2020 enrollment is project to be approximately 40,000 students.

The fiscal year 2021 formula funding was set during the legislative session in 2019. Funding will be reduced based on a directive from the Governor and legislative leadership to implement a 5% reduction for the current biennium.

5. Has there been a noticeable impact on staff or faculty retention with regard to concerns about the pandemic?

There has been no noticeable impact on retention of staff or faculty.

6. Health Related Institutions were exempt from the 5% budget cuts earlier this year, due to their important role in resolving the public health crisis. What are some of the programs, research, and responses to the pandemic that our Health Related Institutions have contributed?

Although Texas Tech University is not a health institution, TTU's Institute for Environmental and Human Health (TIEHH) is a BSL-3 CDC bioterrorism sentinel laboratory equipped to detect potential bioterrorism agents and other human health threats from zoonotic and infectious disease. TIEHH was the first member of Texas' CDC Laboratory Research Network to begin testing samples collected from suspected COVID-19 patients. To date, TIEHH has conducted over 12,000 COVID-19 tests for hospital, clinics, county health departments, nursing homes, and industrial facilities throughout a 67-county region of West Texas.

Viral transport medium (VTM) is required to stabilize samples collected from suspected COVID-19 patients, so the samples can be transported to a testing site. During long periods over the past 4-months, VTM has been in critically short supply, threatening the state's ability to continue testing. In coordination with Professors Harvinder Gil and Steve Presley, TTU has generated over 34,000 VTM sample-collection kits. These kits have been distributed to health authorities in 26 counties throughout the West Texas region, and helped supply State of Texas COVID-19 rapid response teams working out of Austin.

7. How have state and federal COVID-related funds already impacted budgets?

Texas Tech received the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund – Student Portion in the amount of \$12,757.626. We received 21,312 student applications and awarded 21,103, disbursing the full amount of funding received by the end of June 2020. Texas Tech received the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund – Institutional Portion in the amount of \$12,757.626. We utilized the funding for costs associated with significant changes to delivery of instruction, including refunds made to students for housing and dining, costs associated with online instruction and providing students hardware for laptops and internet connectivity, and costs to return students back to campus from study abroad courses.

Texas Tech also received Minority Serving Institution funding in the amount of \$1,928,953. One-half of the amount is allocated to student emergency relief needs and the other half is allocated to institutional costs associated with changes to delivery of instruction, including changes to student fees.

8. How has the pandemic affected the overall financial status of small and rural community colleges?

N/A.

9. Does your institution have a public, online dashboard for the reporting of positive COVID-19 cases which is updated daily? Yes.

If so, what is the link to the dashboard?

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/communications/emergency/coronavirus/>

Angelo State University

1. Are Institutions of higher education ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff during the 2020 Fall Semester? When applicable, please speak directly to classroom and lab settings, dormitories and dining halls.

Angelo State University has worked diligently all summer to put a comprehensive plan in place to ensure the health and safety of students/faculty/staff during the 2020 fall semester and beyond. Information regarding our response to COVID-19 can be found here <https://www.angelo.edu/covid-19/returning-to-campus/>. Over the course of the summer, ASU developed a series of videos to educate our students/faculty/staff on how they can help the Ram Family to be safe and stop the spread. To see the Angelo State Commitment - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCouAv6HRsF5l6z-Opqy_Zgg

In addition, we have partnered with our local community, including the City of San Angelo, San Angelo ISD and Howard Community College, on a city-wide initiative to keep San Angelo healthy. https://youtu.be/BE99WUi_S6g

✓ **Health and Safety Protocols**

Per the TTUS policy (<https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/27359-ttus-policy-for-face-coverings-on-campus>) face coverings are required to be worn by the entire campus community. Specific requirements and exceptions are noted in the policy.

A wellness tool (software app) was developed for use by all students/faculty/staff for self-assessment. After completing the daily wellness screening, an electronic badge is generated with the current date and can be used to access areas on campus including classrooms.

ASU developed a contact tracing program to help stop the spread in collaboration with our local county health officials. ASU have over 100 employees that have taken a

contact tracing course through John Hopkins. Being knowledgeable about what to look for has helped us set up guidelines to ensure that we are providing a safe campus for our students (including student athletes) and employees. We have provided additional training and engaged 30 of this group to be ready to provide contact tracing out of concern that our county would not be able to keep up with the demand if a spike were to occur. This program has enabled us to quickly identify and isolate any potential spread among the ASU Ram Family.

Hand washing is highly encouraged and social distancing protocols have been implemented across campus as per CDC guidelines.

✓ **Academics, Classrooms and labs**

The academic calendar has been adjusted to encourage students not to travel outside of San Angelo and then return to campus during the semester. Fall classes started a week earlier, with finals scheduled to be completed prior to Thanksgiving. The Spring semester will start a week later, and spring break has been eliminated to reduce travel in and out of San Angelo.

Classroom seating has been reduced to 50% capacities with sanitization wipes available in every classroom. Hand sanitizer dispensers are installed throughout the campus, including all building entrances and exits.

Plexiglass barriers have been installed in areas where social distancing is not possible, such as labs.

✓ **Housing and Dining**

Dining areas have been preset with small tables set six (6) feet apart. A food ordering software app is available for to-go orders to reduce lines. Face coverings must be worn unless seated. All food will be served by a dining team member. There will be no self-serve stations. A barcode scanner has been added to the register, allowing a contactless option to use your meal plan.

Checking into Residence Halls at ASU was reimagined, which resulted in establishing a new drive thru check-in process. Students must have completed their wellness screenings to receive a check-in date and time. During move-in students could only bring two (2) guests to help them unload and get settled. Throughout the semester, students are limited to one guest at a time, with face coverings required when in common areas as per the policy <https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/27359-ttus-policy-for-face-coverings-on-campus> Housing and program events will be done within CDC guidelines for social distancing, many will be done virtually.

2. What plans are in place for on-campus COVID-19 testing? Do institutions have the capacity to provide testing on campus, both in terms of available supplies and labs to process tests?

Angelo State University, through the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM), provided free testing for all students/faculty/staff the week prior to the first day of classes, August 10th thru 14th. An additional testing period has been added for September 9th and 10th, again provided by TDEM.

Angelo State University has partnered with Shannon Medical Services, our current student health care services provider, to provide tests during the semester. Virtual screening is provided by Shannon via its telehealth program free of charge. Students who have paid the Medical Services Fee, will also be tested free of charge if instructed to do so by Shannon On Demand.

3. If applicable, what are plans for collegiate athletics this Fall? How will student athletes be kept safe? If fans will be permitted to attend events, how will fans be kept safe?

Division II NCAA championships have been cancelled for fall high contact sports. We are still competing in low to medium contact sports this fall (tennis, golf and cross country). We are actively engaged in meetings with the University Presidents in the Lone Star Conference to determine when other fall sports such as volleyball, soccer and football can compete. Additionally, we are making plans for men/women basketball, baseball, softball and track & field to safely compete later this year. All athletes have or will be tested prior to beginning practice and we have partnered with Shannon Medical Services for any on-going testing requirements. If fans are allowed to attend, we will follow all CDC guidelines regarding social distancing, the use of face coverings and sanitization.

4. What do projected enrollment figures and formula funding look like to institutions for this school year?

Enrollment at Angelo State University is projected to be flat at approximately 10,500 students, although the mix of students has changed. We anticipate an increase in our graduate students and dual credit students and a decrease in our freshman class. This could decrease the number of SCHs being taught at ASU, which could in turn, reduce out formula funding for 2022-2023.

5. Has there been a noticeable impact on staff or faculty retention with regard to concerns about the pandemic?

There has been no noticeable impact on retention of faculty or staff.

6. Health Related Institutions were exempt from the 5% budget cuts earlier this year, due to their important role in resolving the public health crisis. What are some of the programs, research, and responses to the pandemic that our Health-Related Institutions have contributed?

N/A

7. How have state and federal COVID-related funds already impacted budgets?

ASU received the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (CARES) – Student Portion in the amount of \$3,179,781. We received 2,529 student applications and awarded 2,314, and have \$153,975 remaining available for distribution for Fall needs. ASU also received the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund – Institutional Portion in the amount of \$3,179,781. We utilized the funding for costs associated with significant changes to delivery of instruction, including refunds made to students for housing & dining and distance education course fees,

costs associated with online instruction and providing students hardware for laptops and internet connectivity, and costs to return students back to campus from study abroad courses.

Angelo State also received Minority Serving Institution funding in the amount of \$470,075. One-half of the amount will be allocated to student emergency relief needs for the Fall 2020 semester and the other half will be used in support of institutional costs associated with changes to delivery of instruction.

8. How has the pandemic affected the overall financial status of small and rural community colleges? N\A

9. Does your institution have a public, online dashboard for the reporting of positive COVID-19 cases which is updated daily? Yes.

If so, what is the link to the dashboard?

<https://www.angelo.edu/covid-19/reported-cases.php>

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

The Committee seeks the following information related to the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Are institutions of higher education ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff during the 2020 Fall Semester? When applicable, please speak directly to classroom and lab settings, dormitories and dining halls.

At Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC), our top priority is the health, safety and well-being of our students, team members and patients. TTUHSC has developed a comprehensive plan that includes health and safety procedures that go above and beyond the minimum standards established federal, state and local government authorities to protect our campuses. Efforts include enhanced sanitization, health screenings, use of personal protective equipment, wellness guidance and physical distancing protocols.

The university is offering academic courses using a combination of (1) face-to-face, on-campus instruction; (2) interactive video technology (e.g., TechLink, Zoom); and/or (3) online instruction. Experiential learning activities (e.g., clinical rotations, community-based experiences) for students will continue in collaboration with participating sites and guidance from program accrediting bodies. Additionally, students will participate in research activities as instructed by laboratory personnel.

While on our campuses, all employees, students, and visitors are required to wear appropriate facial coverings, practice physical distancing, and avoid gathering in groups of more than 10 people. Attendance at university-sponsored conferences, meetings and events, including outdoor events, is limited to a maximum attendance of 25% of space capacity OR no more than 10 people, whichever is less, while ensuring appropriate physical distancing of at least 6 feet can

be maintained between individuals. Attendance for academic instruction, residency workshops and orientation activities is limited to no more than 50% of room capacity, so long as physical distancing of at least 6 feet can be maintained between individuals.

Students are encouraged to use virtual communities for study groups. On-campus individual study spaces, libraries and other common areas have remained closed to students throughout the summer. TTUHSC leaders are determining parameters to safely open these areas to students for fall 2020. These decisions will be contingent on the COVID-19 status in each of our campus communities at that time.

To assist in maintaining appropriate physical distancing, signage has been placed throughout TTUHSC's campuses to remind individuals that: All team members should maximize physical distance from others while on campus, at least 6 feet apart; No more than two individuals should ride an elevator together; Individuals should take the stairs if they are physically able to allow elevator space for those who cannot; When eating, individuals must ensure that they maintain at least a 6-foot distance between others; and Stairwells have been marked for one-way traffic where possible, keeping in compliance with fire code.

To help further ensure the health and well-being of our campus communities, the TTUHSC Facilities and Safety Services team has implemented CDC recommended practices for cleaning and sanitization protocols. The team performs deep-cleaning and sanitization of classrooms, labs, offices and common spaces throughout the day, with a heightened focus on high-touch areas such as door knobs and handrails.

As advancing knowledge through innovative research is at the core of our great university, our research team has taken steps to ensuring the safety of trial participants, research sponsors, investigators and research staff by aligning research to be consistent with the parameters of the university's operational phase guidelines as well as with applicable FDA, CDC and TTUHSC guidance.

Our priority is to maintain a safe working environment as we work and learn on our campuses for our operations, clinics, academic instruction and managed care units.

2. What plans are in place for on-campus COVID-19 testing? Do institutions have the capacity to provide testing on campus, both in terms of available supplies and labs to process tests?

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center's (TTUHSC) response protocol for COVID-19 follows the guidance of federal, state and local health officials. As team members (faculty, staff and residents) and students identify concerns of showing symptoms, having close contact exposure or testing positive for COVID-19, prompt action will be taken. This includes testing, contact tracing, notification, disinfection and self-isolation.

The TTUHSC Office of Institutional Health provides a rapid COVID test for students and employees that have known exposure to someone with COVID-19 or they are currently displaying symptoms of COVID-19. TTUHSC uses the Nasopharyngeal swab done on the SOPHIA, point of care testing machines. Results are known within the hour of testing allowing for a quick

return to work or classroom settings and efficient and timely contact tracing among those found positive with COVID-19.

Testing materials are sourced by TTUHSC and paid by institutional funds. Due to the associated costs the university is working to identify a long-term solution for funding. A portion of the Provider Relief Fund allocated through the CARES Act have been used to purchase PPE, Plexiglas shields at stations and equipment for the operation.

Limitations in our testing protocol are offering the same service for a Dallas campus due to resources and for our online students located in various geographical locations.

3. If applicable, what are plans for collegiate athletics this Fall? How will student athletes be kept safe? If fans will be permitted to attend events, how will fans be kept safe?
4. What do projected enrollment figures and formula funding look like to institutions for this school year?

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) could see a slight enrollment decline for Fall 2020. This will impact the formula funding for FY 2022-2023 but does not impact the formula funding for FY 2021.

5. Has there been a noticeable impact on staff or faculty retention with regard to concerns about the pandemic?

At this time, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) has not experienced a noticeable impact on staff or faculty retention with regard to concerns about the pandemic. However, with ongoing concerns of impact to working parents and associated school district closures as well as protocols requiring employees to self-isolate off campus in the event of exposure or testing positive for COVID-19, there is potential impact to the workforce depending on the number of employees impacted at a particular time.

6. Health Related Institutions were exempt from the 5% budget cuts earlier this year, due to their important role in resolving the public health crisis. What are some of the programs, research, and responses to the pandemic that our Health Related Institutions have contributed?

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) has been instrumental in the local and statewide efforts to address the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic currently affecting all of our communities. Our physicians and faculty are currently serving as resources to our public health departments, providing subject matter expertise in the development of strategies for testing, containment and care delivery to communities most impacted. Below are a few highlights from the various initiatives TTUHSC has contributed.

Telemedicine:

During TTUHSC's COVID-19 operations, the university has integrated our existing telehealth infrastructure with our clinical operations, which have expanded the scope of coverage and

providing access to care for patients in a predominately rural area comprised of almost half of Texas. Texas Tech Physicians have performed a weekly average of **1,195** telephone and video visits for May-July. This is a sharp increase, 27,691%, from the weekly telehealth visits of **4.3** in January and February (“Pre-Coronavirus”).

3-D Printing:

A collaborative partnership from TTUHSC, Texas Tech University, and The University of Texas Permian Basin have created 3D-printed face shields and face masks for health care workers as well as ventilators and ventilator components through the university’s West Texas 3D Printing COVID-19 Relief Consortium. During TTUHSCs COVID-19 operations, aided substantially by TTUHSC the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health that has relationships with rural hospitals and clinics, the consortium has:

- Distributed 11,239 face shields, with plans to assemble another 5,000, including face shields for pediatric patient populations.
- Distributed 243 aerosol hoods/intubation chambers, with plans to build about 60 more and to replace damaged units.
- Distributed 8,427 3D printed bands, used to protect ears of health care workers wearing masks with elasticized bands, with plans to make several thousand more.
- Built ventilators for emergency use and begun the process of seeking emergency use authorization from the FDA.
- Explored alternative sources for N95-like masks for health care professionals and learners in all schools.

Although the initial focus for the consortium was on health care facilities including hospitals, clinics and medical centers, they have expanded their target organizations broadly to meet specific needs in the referral networks of West Texas. Additional supplies produced by the consortium have been distributed to nursing homes, retirement homes, long-term care facilities and correctional facilities. Face shields have been provided to students in the schools of Medicine, Nursing and Health Professions and to educators in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and to educators and learners in essentially every school at TTU. Also, the group has distributed face shields and printed bands to Navajo Nation reservations in New Mexico and Arizona to assist in addressing the health care needs to these underserved populations.

Viral Transport Medium (VTM):

TTUHSC was featured as a lead component in Governor Greg Abbott’s Open Texas report as a producer of Viral Transport Medium (VTM), a critical component to expanding COVID-19 testing access across the state. In a partnership with the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), the agency has requested ongoing VTM production of at least 10,000 VTM vials, and possibly 20,000-25,000 weekly for the next 6-12 months.

In June, the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) procured and TTUHSC installed two automatic vial handlers (AVHs) to assist in production capacity. Currently, the lab is producing VTM both manually and via the AVHs (total 15,000 - 20,000/week). To date, the lab

has produced approximately 250,000 VTM vials. Distributions of VTM has been statewide, particularly with an emphasis in West Texas. Communities served include Amarillo, Abilene, Austin, Big Spring, Brady, Brownfield, Colorado City, Denton, Dumas, Eden, Fredericksburg, Friona, Hemphill, Hereford, Lamesa, Littlefield, Lubbock, and Muleshoe.

Convalescent Plasma Therapy:

TTUHSC's medical teams from the Panhandle and South Plains joined a study led by the Mayo Clinic to use convalescent plasma in severely-ill patients with COVID-19. This is a large cooperative program and study managed by the Mayo Clinic, including 2,719 sites, 12,729 physicians, and over 80,000 patients. In an initial analysis of 20,000 patients, the therapy appears to have an effect of a decrease in mortality from 12% in a previous study to 8.6%.

The ongoing study is dependent upon the willingness of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate their blood and plasma. Partner hospitals participating in the study are encouraging the donation of blood in our region to continue to support this effort. Both Amarillo hospitals, Baptist St Anthony's Hospital (BSAHS) and Northwest Texas Hospital System (NWTHS) are active participants in the Expanded Access to Convalescent Plasma for the Treatment of Patients with COVID-19 study, under the guidance of TTUHSC faculty physicians.

Contact Tracing:

On July 22, 2020, TTUHSC and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) executed a contract for TTUHSC to assist DSHS in contact tracing as part of the agency's statewide program, utilizing their centralized call center and the Texas Trace online system.

This agreement has an initial term of 1 year, with the option for DSHS to renew for one additional 12-month period. TTUHSC will recruit and manage a workforce of up to twenty-five (25) full-time employees and up to one hundred fifty (150) part-time workers. This staffing model will include contact tracers, case investigators, and epidemiology leads.

N95 Respirator (Mask) Decontamination:

TTUHSC has implemented a service, in collaboration with the Institute of Environmental and Human Health at TTU, that extends the useful life of N95 respirators which provides relief area healthcare facilities and providers that still face PPE shortages. Unlike other face-coverings, the N95 respirator effectively prevents the transmission of COVID-19 and is essential for healthcare providers that may come in contact with infected individuals.

The service uses hydrogen peroxide vapor to decontaminate the masks for reuse. Through August 3, 2020, almost 6,000 masks from 46 different departments and organizations have been decontaminated through this process.

Research:

During the pandemic, 12 COVID/CARES related grants were submitted by the faculty at TTUHSC between March and July. Additionally, several researchers at TTUHSC published scientific papers in COVID-19, and TTUHSC is actively participating in nation-wide COVID-19 clinical trials, including convalescent plasma transfusion study (Mayo clinic), and neutralizing antibody studies (Regeneron-initiated).

7. How have state and federal COVID-related funds already impacted budgets?

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) has received \$6,165,634 in federal stimulus funding under the CARES Act and has not received any cost reimbursement from FEMA. \$897,316 of this funding was given directly to TTUHSC students to help alleviate the financial burdens created by COVID-19. The effects of COVID-19 on our campus budget are significant and projected to total more than \$17M, a result of several challenges that have been presented to our institution. First, our medical practice has over \$11M of estimated revenue losses. Second, our institution has had an increase in expenditures to support and facilitate blended (remote and in-person) student instruction, remote working, testing, and patient care. There have also been increased costs for medical supplies and sanitizing/decontamination services that are needed to maintain a safe environment for our students, employees, patients, and visitors. The total of these COVID-19 expenditures is estimated to be over \$5.2M. Given the uncertainty regarding the length and severity of the pandemic, it is difficult to determine the lasting financial effects the pandemic may have on the institution.

8. How has the pandemic affected the overall financial status of small and rural community colleges? **N\A**

9. Does your institution have a public, online dashboard for the reporting of positive COVID-19 cases which is updated daily? **Yes.**

If so, what is the link to the dashboard? <https://www.ttuhscc.edu/safe/reported-cases.aspx>

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso

1. Are institutions of higher education ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff during the 2020 Fall Semester? When applicable, please speak directly to classroom and lab settings, dormitories and dining halls.

Classrooms

- TTUHSC El Paso has implemented health and safety protocols for its classrooms and labs Fall 2020 which are informed by the CDC, TTU System, and THECB.

Labs

- The university has implemented a coordinated, phased response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This response has included the following precautions in research and laboratory settings to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and faculty.
- In March, the university implemented a Phase IV campus closure. Research and classroom laboratories were closed at that time, and on-campus laboratory activities were restricted to only those necessary to maintain precious research resources

(frozen samples, animal colonies, equipment, etc.). The research continuity plans during the Phase IV campus closure were communicated to the campus community and posted on the university's website on March 21, 2020.

- Starting June 1, 2020, on-campus research and laboratory activities moved into Phase III: Restricted Operations. A limited number of personnel were permitted to work in laboratories, based on a justified need as approved by department chairs. The total lab and building occupancy at a given time was limited to 25% to maximize social distancing. This was accomplished by working on alternating days or rotating shifts. Lab personnel were required to wear face coverings, to maintain personal hygiene and hand washing and to avoid social gatherings. Each day, prior to entering buildings, all personnel had to complete an online attestation regarding their health and COVID status and were screened with temperature checks at the building entrance.
- On July 6, 2020, the on-campus research and laboratory activities moved into Phase II: Limited Operations. The precautions taken in Phase II have been similar to those used in Phase III. However, laboratory occupancy is now limited to 50% at any given time. We continue to operate in Phase II. Personnel who can work remotely have continued to do so during Phase II, so laboratory occupancy has remained low. We continue to take precautions (temperature screenings, face coverings, hand washing, avoid gatherings) to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and faculty working in laboratory settings.

Dormitories and Dining Halls

- TTUHSC EL PASO does not have dormitories nor dining halls; no on-campus food services are provided at this time due to COVID-19 and the delayed opening of a new facility with new food vendors.

Clinical Settings

- Creation of COVID-19 specific clinics or clinic extensions, including space and staffing, for ambulatory patients suspected of having COVID-19 infection;
- Implementation of dedicated phone line for COVID-19 suspects, telephonic screening and prompt clinical evaluation of those suspects;
- Additions to the clinical website to instruct patients on new processes at our clinics and remote ways to obtain clinical service;
- Implementation of COVID-19 precautions in ambulatory clinics including patients and staff screening stations, signage, personal protective equipment and staffing for screening stations and monitoring of compliance with related mandates;
- Doubling of inpatient Medical Critical Care services including faculty and trainees;
- Development of Telemedicine services including internet platform, staff and provider training, EMR documentation and billing practices;
- Periodic meetings of involved clinical staff and offices of the School for decision making and dissemination of new processes;
- Expansion of Occupational Health services and staffing to evaluate and instruct clinical personnel with symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19.

2. What plans are in place for on-campus COVID-19 testing? Do institutions have the capacity to provide testing on campus, both in terms of available supplies and labs to process tests?

- Under the supervision of the Manuel de la Rosa, M.D. Vice President of Outreach and Engagement, Occupational Health is offering on-campus testing. Additionally, front-line healthcare providers received testing with rapid turn-around time at our county hospital (University Medical Center). We have access to adequate testing at this time.

3. If applicable, what are plans for collegiate athletics this Fall? How will student athletes be kept safe? If fans will be permitted to attend events, how will fans be kept safe?

- Not applicable.

4. What do projected enrollment figures and formula funding look like to institutions for this school year?

- TTUHSC El Paso projected a total enrollment of 819 students for the 2020-21 Academic Year.

Preliminary enrollment data indicates that fall 2020 enrollment is on track, and TTUHSC El Paso is expecting to meet its enrollment projections.

FY21 Budget - Enrollment Assumptions			
AY 2020-21 Enrollment Projections by TTUHSC El Paso School and Texas Residency Status			
	Actual FY20	Projected FY21	Difference
Paul L. Foster School of Medicine	400	406	6
Gayle Greve Hunt School of Nursing	283	363	80
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences	45	50	5
Total Enrollment	728	819	91

5. Has there been a noticeable impact on staff or faculty retention with regard to concerns about the pandemic?

- Minimal impact to staff and faculty retention has been experienced to date.

6. Health Related Institutions were exempt from the 5% budget cuts earlier this year, due to their important role in resolving the public health crisis. What are some of the programs, research, and responses to the pandemic that our Health Related Institutions have contributed?

The university's research and grant initiatives in response to the COVID pandemic include the following:

- development of an intra-nasal vaccine for the SARS-CoV2 virus, the cause of COVID-19;
- evaluation of convalescent plasma for the treatment of severely ill COVID-19 patients (multi-site clinical trial with Mayo Clinic);
- discovery and validation of biomarkers for the screening, diagnosis and triage of COVID-19 patients (multiple projects);
- defining the predictors of poor outcomes in hospitalized COVID-19 patients;
- characterizing COVID-19 on the US-Mexico border; clinical study of a predominately Hispanic population;
- expanding telehealth infrastructure and services across far West Texas in response to COVID-19 (FCC and USDA grant submissions);
- assessing the GI and liver manifestations of COVID-19;
- COVID-19: Surgical Implications Study (with University of Birmingham);
- developing a national registry for the surveillance and epidemiology of perinatal COVID-19 infection (multi-site study with Univ. of Florida);
- development of a portable companion ventilator (CoVent) for the emergency response to COVID-19.

7. How have state and federal COVID-related funds already impacted budgets?

- As of August 12th, TTUHSCEP has been awarded \$1.9M in federal stimulus funding under the CARES Act and has not received any cost reimbursements from FEMA.
- Unfortunately, the effects of COVID-19 on our campus budget are significant and projected to total more than \$8.5M, a result of several challenges that have been presented to our institution.
 - First, our medical practice has over \$6.8M of estimated revenue losses.
 - Second, our institution has had an increase in expenditures to support and facilitate hybrid (online and face-to-face) instruction, remote working, testing, and patient care.
 - There have also been increased costs for medical supplies and sanitizing/decontamination services that are needed to maintain a safe environment for our students, employees, patients, and visitors.
 - The total of these COVID-19 expenditures is estimated to be over \$1.6M.

- Given the uncertainty regarding the length and severity of the pandemic, it is difficult to determine the lasting financial effects the pandemic may have on the institution.

8. How has the pandemic affected the overall financial status of small and rural community colleges?

- Not applicable.

9. Does your institution have a public, online dashboard for the reporting of positive COVID-19 cases which is updated daily? Yes.

If so, what is the link to the dashboard?

<https://ttuhscep.edu/coronavirus/students-and-employees/reported-cases.aspx>