



*Office of the President*  
**Dr. Antonio D. Tillis**

Greetings UHD Community,

This week marks my first 100 days as Interim President at the University of Houston-Downtown. Thank you for welcoming me to this institution and making this transition a wonderful experience. Over these last three months, I have witnessed the tenacity and resiliency of UHD students, staff, and faculty; and, a secure infrastructure supported by thousands of alumni and community supporters. Without everyone's support, these 100 days would have been beyond challenging.



I have had the opportunity to listen, learn, and engage with several Gators, understanding the pride that comes with being part of this great university.

When I joined the UHD family, my top priority was to maintain stability during a global health crisis, racial unrest, and national financial instability. What I have discovered during this time is that being a UHD Gator means commitment to exceeding expectations and facing all challenges head-on with a fierce determination. I have learned about numerous opportunities in front of us that include increasing our visibility in our region, enhancing transparency in university decision-making, focusing on increasing our diversity efforts, and fostering more engagement between our various governing bodies.

With your support and the amazing leadership that was already in place, we have successfully started the fall semester. In doing so, we enrolled a record number of Gators at our university—15,251.

And since my arrival, I've had an opportunity to visit with some of these Gators (virtually) during synchronous class sessions and other events. I need not tell any of you that these are determined, driven students who personify Gator Grit. Likewise, they are reflective of this culturally rich community that UHD serves.

To ensure that our institution continues its mission of embracing diversity, I am pleased to have recently launched UHD's first [Diversity Taskforce](#) that includes faculty, staff and students. The taskforce is one of several initiatives I am launching that will enhance our institution. Among these other priority projects are Special Funding for Students, a Special Initiatives Fund for Faculty, a Visiting Scholars Initiative, and a Faculty Diversity Initiative.

As part of that latter initiative, our University is now part of the [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity](#), which yields many benefits for our professors and graduate students.

Student internships also are part of these Presidential Initiatives, and I am happy to announce that we will place at least six UHD students in City Hall internships this spring. These will be paid positions (funded by the Office of the President) that will provide our students with excellent experience and an opportunity to work alongside city leaders, including Mayor Sylvester Turner.

These priorities, I believe, will continue to elevate and enrich our UHD Community. And, I hope I can continue to work with all of you to roll out more programs and initiatives aimed at building on our successes and continuing to make UHD the University of Choice for Houstonians.

Together, we can continue the institution's upward trajectory. As Interim President, I want to ensure that UHD reaches new heights with regard to academic excellence, student success, campus growth and continued contributions to Houston and our region. Make no mistake, UHD was in good condition upon my arrival. I intend to make sure it is even stronger for future UHD leadership ... but I am depending on your support to do so.

UHD is an institution for the people of this great city, but it is OUR people that make it a special place. I came to this realization very quickly during my first 100 Days as a Gator.

In short, these first months have been nothing short of inspiring and quite productive thanks to our efforts, and I look forward to *another* 100 days working alongside all of you.

Thank you, and have a well-deserved restful weekend!

Sincerely,

Antonio D. Tillis, Ph.D.  
Interim President  
University of Houston-Downtown