2026 – 2027

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK



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How to Use This Handbook

This handbook is designed to be searched, not read cover to cover. Every section opens with a brief explanation of why the topic matters to you, followed by the practical details: who to contact, what the deadlines are, and what steps to take. Look for these markers as you read:

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
> You'll see this box at the start of most sections. It connects a policy or resource to something concrete, such as your degree timeline, funding, research, or career, so you understand why it matters to you.

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
> This box translates official policy language into plain terms. The official wording still applies; this is simply a faster way to understand it.

> ⚖️ **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**
> This box explains a right or protection you have as a UHD graduate student. It is worth knowing before you need it.

> ❗ **HEADS UP**
> This box flags a deadline, common mistake, or consequence you will want to avoid.

Throughout the handbook, office contact cards give you the room number, phone, email, and website for the people who can help, because the fastest way to solve a problem is to reach the right office the first time. Appendix A also gives you a direct line to your Graduate Program Director, who should be your first contact for anything program-specific.

Organization, Administration & Scope of Policies

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> Before reviewing the details, it helps to know where these policies come from, who has the authority to change them, and where they apply. This page is the foundation that makes everything else in the handbook clear and enforceable for you and for the university.

Review and Revision

This handbook and the Student Rights and Responsibilities policies that support it are reviewed regularly to remain current with federal and state law, University of Houston System policy, and best practices in higher education. Final authority to approve and implement policy changes rests with designated university administrators and the university's governance process. Because policy can change between print runs, the version on the UHD website always takes precedence. If anything here appears out of date, check online.

Your Voice in Shared Governance

UHD treats shared governance as a genuine practice, not a slogan. Graduate students can shape university policy directly through the **Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)**, university committees, student advisory groups, and other established feedback channels. If a policy in this handbook does not make sense to you, or you believe it should change, these are the channels that can address it.

Where and When These Policies Apply

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> These rules apply even when you are not in a classroom.
>
> - On campus, at any UHD-sponsored or UHD-affiliated event, anywhere you are using university technology, and in online spaces that affect the campus community.
> - Off campus, if your conduct affects the safety, security, learning environment, operations, or reputation of UHD or its community.
> - For the entire time you are enrolled, including breaks, intersession, study abroad, research placements, internships, practica, and assistantship duties. There is no pause.

PART 1

Welcome & Introduction

Welcome messages, UHD history and traditions, and the graduate student community.

Welcome from the Dean of Students

To our new and continuing Graduate School Students,

Choosing the University of Houston Downtown as your avenue for graduate education is a privilege we hold dear. Your investment in your professional advancement, intellectual growth, and leadership development is invaluable. The expectation for any student at UHD is to pursue ethical academic excellence and integrity. For graduate students, that expectation is enhanced by your professional conduct, respect for diverse perspectives, and responsible use of university resources.

Graduate students play a unique role in advancing industry knowledge and practice. Houston is one of the fastest-growing major metro economies in the nation. Your choice to study and develop here is a key component of UHD's mission to generate knowledge that drives socioeconomic mobility for a just and sustainable future. Balancing career, education, and other competing responsibilities is a challenge we do not expect you to tackle alone. At UHD, we are committed to supporting the whole student, responsibilities included. This is why finding your place as a graduate student requires you to engage with our community actively.

You have many options for how your engagement can fit into your life. Faculty are not only instructors but also mentors. The Graduate & Professional Student Association is an ever-present opportunity to shape how UHD continues to support its graduate student population. You can get a post-class workout at the Wellness and Success Center or use our telehealth options for counseling and medical care. However you choose to engage with UHD, this handbook serves as a practical guide for curating your graduate journey. It contains policies, procedures, and key contacts to support you. Use this tool as much or as little as you need. We are here to support you at every step until you cross the commencement stage.

With Gator Pride,

Kira Gatewood, Ph.D.

Assistant Vice President / Dean of Students



Welcome from the President, Graduate & Professional Student Association

Dear Graduate Students,

Welcome to the University of Houston-Downtown! My name is Zamaiah Robertson, and I will serve as your Graduate and Professional Student Association President for the 2026-2027 academic year.

It is truly an honor to welcome you not only as your GPSA President but also as someone whose own journey has been shaped by this university. Five years ago, I arrived at UHD as an undergraduate student with big dreams but plenty of uncertainty. Through the people I met, the opportunities I embraced, and the challenges that pushed me to grow, UHD became so much more than a campus; it became home. Today, as I continue my journey as a graduate student, I couldn't be more excited to advocate for this incredible community.

GPSA exists to ensure that every graduate and professional student feels represented, connected, and supported throughout their time at UHD. This year, our mission is to build a stronger graduate student community by creating meaningful opportunities for professional development, networking, advocacy, and a sense of belonging. Whether you attend classes in person, online, or somewhere in between, we want you to feel like an important part of our graduate family. Your voice matters, your experiences matter, and your success matters.

I look forward to meeting many of you throughout the year, celebrating your accomplishments, and working alongside you to make this an unforgettable year for graduate students at UHD. Welcome to UHD, welcome to GPSA, and welcome to another chapter of your journey.

With Gratitude,

Zamaiah Robertson

President, Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)



Graduate Education at UHD

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> UHD's graduate programs are deliberately built around working professionals. Evening, hybrid, online, and part-time pathways exist because the university assumes you have a job, which is worth keeping in mind as you plan your course load and timeline.

UHD offers master's degree and graduate certificate programs across business, education, public service, the humanities, social sciences, technology, artificial intelligence, data analytics, criminal justice, social work, and other high-demand fields, currently serving more than 1,400 graduate students. Most programs offer flexible scheduling and hybrid, online, and part-time options to accommodate students balancing academics with careers and family.

The Graduate Student Community

Graduate students contribute to UHD through scholarship, leadership, research, and professional engagement, and have access to the same core campus resources as every other student: advising, career services, the library, tutoring, counseling, accessibility services, and student organizations. Getting involved in the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA), attending campus events, and building relationships across disciplines tend to make the difference between just attending UHD and being part of it.

Graduate Student Resources

Resource	What It's For
Graduate Admissions	Information on graduate admission requirements and application procedures.
Graduate Degree Programs	Overview of UHD's graduate degree and certificate programs.
Graduate Program Contacts & Deadlines	Program contacts and application deadlines for graduate admissions.
Graduate Open House & Info Sessions	Events to explore graduate programs and the admissions process.
Graduate & Professional Student Association	Supports graduate student engagement, leadership, and advocacy.
Academic College Advising Centers	Academic advising for degree planning and student success.
Center for Career and Professional Development	Career resources, job search assistance, and professional development.
W.I. Dykes Library	Research resources, library services, and academic support for graduate students

UHD History, Mission & Traditions

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> Understanding where UHD comes from and what it is built to do provides context for nearly every policy in this handbook. UHD's mission of “socioeconomic mobility” is why advising, funding, and flexible scheduling receive so much attention: the university is designed to help students finish a degree, not simply enroll in one.

Mission

The University of Houston-Downtown is a dynamic and welcoming community of faculty, staff, students, and regional partners dedicated to nurturing talent, generating knowledge, and driving socioeconomic mobility for a just and sustainable future.

History

In 1974, the University of Houston acquired South Texas Junior College and opened the University of Houston-Downtown College at One Main Street as a four-year institution. By the end of the decade, the Texas Legislature had approved UHD as a distinct university within the University of Houston System. Today UHD is woven into the streets of downtown Houston, the fourth-largest city in the country, with Fortune 500 companies, world-class arts, and professional sports all within walking distance. The full history lives in the university archives online.

The Seal

Steeped in Texas tradition, the UHD Seal is the official Seal of Arms of General Sam Houston, handed down from his ancestors. The checkered chevrons at its center denote nobility; the three Martlets (gentle Lowland birds) symbolize peace and deliverance. A winged hourglass sits above the shield beneath the motto “In Tempore,” meaning “In Time.” Greyhounds flank the sides, representing the speed of giving aid.

Gator Traditions, Pride & Spirit

Tradition	When	What It Is
Weeks of Welcome	Start of fall & spring	Campus-wide welcome events for new and returning Gators.
Student Involvement Day	Fall & spring	Resource and tabling fair featuring clubs, Greek life, CAB, and SGA.
Homecoming	Fall	Pep rally, Homecoming games, and Tail-Gatoring with alumni and community.

Tradition	When	What It Is
Bayou Bash	Spring	Crawfish, zydeco, and culture; clubs fundraise and celebrate.
GatorServe	MLK Day & Sept. 11	A National Day of Service connecting students, staff, and the Houston community.
One Main Event	Spring	The annual awards gala honoring student organizations and their members.

Mascot: Ed-U-Gator is UHD's official mascot; look for him at games, community events, and anywhere Gator Pride needs a face.

UHD Locations

UHD's main campus sits at One Main Street in downtown Houston, with additional programs offered at Lone Star College campuses around the city. Courses taken at any of these locations apply toward your UHD degree the same as a downtown-campus course.

Location	Address	Phone
UHD – Downtown Campus	One Main Street, Houston, TX 77002	(713) 221-8000
UHD Northwest at Lone Star College – University Park	20515 SH-249, Bldg. 12, Ste. 201, Houston, TX 77070	(713) 237-5400
UHD at Lone Star College – CyFair	9191 Barker Cypress Rd., CASA Bldg. 109P, Cypress, TX 77433	(281) 290-3435
UHD at Lone Star College – Kingwood	20000 Kingwood Dr., SCC 113, Kingwood, TX 77339	(281) 318-4339

Online

UHD also offers a growing selection of graduate courses online, including hybrid and degree-completion pathways. Online courses are identical in content and credit to their on-campus counterparts, and online students are not excluded from in-person classes. You may combine campus, off-campus, and online courses as needed.

PART 2

Getting Started

Admissions, enrollment, and new graduate student orientation.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Admission requirements and deadlines vary by graduate program at UHD; there is no single university-wide checklist. The best way to avoid a missed deadline is to confirm your specific program's requirements directly rather than assuming they match those of a friend in a different department.

Admission requirements, application procedures, deadlines, and supporting documentation can all vary by graduate program. Admission decisions are made by the academic program and university officials based on each program's established criteria, so review your specific program's requirements and submit everything by its published deadline.

Once admitted, you're responsible for completing enrollment: activating your university accounts, registering for courses, satisfying tuition and fee obligations, and submitting any required documentation. New graduate students should meet with their graduate advisor early to build an academic plan and get oriented to university resources, policies, and expectations.

Admission and Enrollment Resources

Resource	Link
Graduate Admissions	https://www.uhd.edu/admissions/graduate/index.aspx
Graduate Degree Programs	https://uhd.edu/academics/academic-gradprograms.aspx
Application Deadlines & Program Contacts	https://www.uhd.edu/admissions/graduate/contacts-and-deadlines.aspx
Apply Texas Application	https://www.applytexas.org/
Registrar's Office	https://uhd.edu/registrar
Registration Information	https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students/registration-services/index.aspx
Tuition and Fees	https://www.uhd.edu/administration/cashiers/cashiers-tuition-fees.aspx
Financial Aid and Scholarships	https://www.uhd.edu/financial/index.aspx

Resource	Link
Academic Advising	https://www.uhd.edu/academics/advising/index.aspx
Office of International Student Admissions and Study Abroad	https://www.uhd.edu/admissions/graduate/graduate-international.aspx and https://www.uhd.edu/academics/international/index.aspx

New Graduate Student Academic College Orientations

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> Orientation is not just a welcome event produced by each academic college. It is where you learn the systems (myUHD, GatorMail, Canvas) you will depend on every week of your graduate program. Skipping it usually means learning those systems later, under deadline pressure, instead of up front.

New Graduate Student Orientation introduces you to key university resources, policies, and expectations, and helps you begin building connections with faculty, staff, and fellow students. It also covers the specific expectations of graduate education: academic integrity, research and scholarly engagement, professional conduct, and degree planning.

PART 3

Academic Success

Advising, degree requirements, registration, thesis/capstone, grading, and research opportunities.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Graduate advising is a two-way relationship, not a service you passively receive. Students who meet with their advisor regularly catch problems, such as a missing prerequisite or a slipping thesis timeline, months before they would otherwise notice, when there is still time to address them.

Faculty advisors, program coordinators, and mentors help you develop academic plans, monitor progress toward degree completion, and pursue your professional and career goals. Course selection, program requirements, research opportunities, professional development, and career preparation all run through this relationship.

Your Responsibilities

- Meet regularly with your faculty advisor or program coordinator
- Know your degree requirements and academic policies
- Develop and follow an academic plan for degree completion
- Monitor your academic progress and maintain satisfactory standing
- Seek assistance when academic, personal, or professional challenges arise
- Communicate promptly about anything that could affect your academic progress
- Use university resources and support services to strengthen your graduate experience

Your Advisor's Responsibilities

- Guide you on degree requirements and academic planning
- Help you understand program expectations and university policies
- Mentor you on research, scholarship, professional development, and career preparation
- Connect you with campus resources and professional opportunities
- Support your growth, engagement, and timely degree completion

Degree Requirements & Program Structure

Each graduate program sets its own degree requirements: required and elective coursework, performance standards, and, where applicable, internships, practica, capstone projects, comprehensive exams, or a thesis. You are responsible for understanding and meeting all requirements set by your program and the Graduate Catalog, not just what is listed here.

Programs vary in delivery format, including in-person, online, hybrid, evening, weekend, full-time, and part-time, so work with your advisor or program coordinator to build a plan that fits your goals and keeps you progressing toward graduation.

Degree Planning Checklist

1	Review the requirements for your specific degree program.
2	Meet regularly with your faculty advisor or program coordinator.
3	Develop an academic plan that supports timely graduation.
4	Understand course sequencing and prerequisite requirements.
5	Monitor your progress toward degree completion.
6	Meet all graduation application and degree completion deadlines.

Academic Requirements

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> Across programs, you're generally expected to:
>
> - Complete the minimum graduate credit hours your program requires.
> - Maintain the minimum cumulative GPA your program and the university set.
> - Finish required courses and experiential learning components.
> - Follow academic honesty and behavioral conduct expectations.
> - Complete any comprehensive exams, capstone projects, internships, practica, or thesis your program requires.

> ❗ **HEADS UP**
>
> Graduate degrees must typically be completed within a timeframe set by the university and program policy. If you anticipate an interruption to your progress, talk to your advisor or program coordinator about your options before it becomes a deadline problem.

Program Information & Academic Resources

Resource	Link
Graduate Programs	https://www.uhd.edu/academics/academic-gradprograms.aspx
UHD Graduate Catalog	https://catalog.uhd.edu/index.php?catoid=40
Academic Advising Center	https://www.uhd.edu/academics/advising/index.aspx
Registrar's Office	https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/index.aspx
Graduation Information	https://www.uhd.edu/admissions/graduate/graduate-info-sessions.aspx

Registration, Course Load & Scheduling

Registration dates, deadlines, and enrollment periods are set by the university and published by the Registrar's Office. Meet with your advisor or program coordinator before registering each semester to talk through sequencing, degree progress, and graduation planning. Course availability and formats (in-person, online, hybrid, evening, weekend) can vary by semester and program.

Course Load

Enrollment Status	Typical Enrollment
Full-Time Graduate Student	9 or more graduate credit hours (fall/spring)*
Part-Time Graduate Student	Fewer than 9 graduate credit hours (fall/spring)
Summer Enrollment	Varies by program and student circumstances

Verify enrollment requirements with your academic advisor, graduate program, and the appropriate university office, as they can differ depending on your major or concentration.

Special Enrollment Considerations

IN PLAIN TERMS

Your required enrollment status can shift depending on your situation, so check with the relevant office before assuming:

- **Financial Aid Recipients**: enrollment status can affect eligibility for grants, loans, and scholarships.
- **Veterans and Military-Affiliated Students**: benefits certification may require a specific enrollment status.
- **Graduate Assistants**: your hiring department may set a minimum enrollment requirement for your appointment.
- **International Students**: visa regulations may require a minimum course load.
- **Employer Tuition Assistance Recipients**: some employers require minimum enrollment for reimbursement.

Registration Responsibilities

- Register for courses by published deadlines in the academic calendar
- Review degree requirements and course prerequisites
- Monitor your enrollment status each semester
- Pay tuition and fees by university deadlines
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Review university communications sent to your UHD email
- Understand the academic and financial implications of schedule changes

Academic Calendar & Important Deadlines

Registration dates, fee deadlines, financial aid and refund dates, holidays, drop/add deadlines, graduation application dates, reading days, and finals all live on the online Academic Calendar. UHD can change these dates as needed, so check often rather than relying on memory.

Thesis and Capstone Guidelines

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
> Choosing between a thesis and a capstone is one of the more consequential decisions in your program, and it is not purely academic; it should reflect your career direction. A thesis builds the research credentials that matter for doctoral study or scholarly publication; a capstone builds the applied deliverable that matters for direct professional practice.

Many UHD graduate programs let you demonstrate mastery through a thesis, capstone project, comprehensive exam, portfolio, internship, practicum, or other culminating experience, depending on your program.

Path	What It Is
Thesis	A research-focused project investigating a topic in depth: research question, literature review, methodology, analysis, conclusions, and a formal review or defense.
Capstone	An applied learning experience, such as solving a real-world problem, building a professional product, evaluating a program, or completing another project that demonstrates professional competency.

By College

College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS): Graduate students in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences may be required to complete a thesis, capstone, or other culminating experience as part of their degree requirements. These projects emphasize scholarly research, critical analysis, and the application of disciplinary knowledge to contemporary issues. Students should review their program requirements and coordinate with their faculty advisor to ensure timely completion of all milestones.

Marilyn Davies College of Business (MDCOB): Graduate students in the Marilyn Davies College of Business may complete a capstone project, thesis, or other culminating experience, depending on their degree program. These experiences allow students to apply advanced business knowledge to real-world organizational challenges through research, strategic analysis, or applied projects. Students should consult their graduate program advisor for program-specific requirements, timelines, and approval processes.

College of Public Service (CPS): Graduate students in the College of Public Service complete a culminating experience that may include a capstone project or thesis, depending on the program. These experiences integrate coursework through applied research, policy analysis, or professional practice that demonstrates mastery of the discipline. Students should work closely with their faculty advisor to meet all program requirements, deadlines, and defense or presentation expectations.

College of Sciences and Technology (CST): Graduate students in the College of Sciences and Technology may complete a thesis, capstone project, or other culminating academic experience based on their degree program. These experiences provide opportunities to conduct research, solve complex technical problems, and demonstrate advanced knowledge within the discipline. Students should consult their graduate program and faculty advisor for specific requirements, deadlines, and evaluation procedures.

> ❗ **HEADS UP**
>
> Program-specific requirements always take precedence over this general handbook guidance. Confirm details with your advisor, program coordinator, and the Graduate Catalog before assuming a path applies to you.

Grading Systems & GPA

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> Your GPA is the single number that determines whether you stay in good standing, qualify for an assistantship renewal, keep your financial aid, and ultimately graduate. Knowing exactly which grades count toward it, and which do not, keeps you from over or under estimating where you stand.

Grades Included in GPA

Grade	Meaning	Points
A	Superior	4.0
B	Above Average	3.0
C	Average	2.0
D	Below Average	1.0
F	Failure	0.0

Incomplete grades count too, at the value of the grade ultimately earned: **I/A** (4.0), **I/B** (3.0), **I/C** (2.0), **I/D** (1.0), **I/F** (0.0).

Grades Not Included in GPA

Code	Meaning
A* / B* / C*	Non-credit grade
IP	In Progress
AUD	Audit
S / U	Satisfactory (Passed) / Unsatisfactory (Failed)
W	Drop
CA	Credit Awarded
WM	Withdrawn – Military

How GPA Is Calculated

Your GPA is total grade points earned at UHD divided by total UHD semester hours attempted. If you repeat a course, only your highest grade from all attempts counts toward the GPA; the lower attempts stay on your transcript but no longer affect your average.

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
> Transfer grades never factor into your UHD GPA; only coursework actually taken at UHD does.

GPA at Graduation

The GPA certified at graduation is final. It will not be adjusted by courses you take afterward, and your honors eligibility at that moment is locked in, unless a grade appeal is later decided in your favor.

Grade of I (Incomplete)

An I is reserved for students who've completed substantial coursework but face a documented emergency that prevents finishing. Your instructor must get department chair approval and complete a form specifying the remaining work and deadline. Until resolved, an I counts as an F for graduation-eligibility GPA purposes.

If the I was assigned in…	It must be resolved by the end of…	If not resolved, it becomes…
Fall	The following Spring	I/F
Spring or a summer term	The following Fall	I/F
A mini-term	The following long semester	I/F

> ❗ **HEADS UP**
>
> **Military Leave:** you have one year from the end of qualifying active duty to complete the work, or the I becomes WM.
>
> **Title IX Leave:** You have one long semester after your leave expires to complete the work. If you don't finish in that window, I can remain indefinitely unless you choose to accept the grade you'd already earned.

Other Special Grades

IP (In Progress): used primarily in thesis and selected research courses. No grade-point value, can sit on your transcript indefinitely, and the only way to get credit is to repeat the course and pass.

S/U (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory): only in officially approved courses; doesn't affect GPA either way.

AUD (Audit): under PS 03.A.03, approved courses only; no GPA impact.

CA (Credit Awarded): non-course-based credit, capped at 24 hours under PS 03.A.11.

W (Drop): no grade if dropped by the Official Day of Record; an automatic W if dropped after that date but before the withdrawal deadline.

Research Opportunities & Funding

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> Research experience, conference presentations, and faculty collaborations are some of the most career-relevant lines on a graduate transcript, and most of them start with a single conversation you have to initiate yourself.

Depending on your program, you may work with faculty mentors on research, present at conferences, complete applied learning experiences, contribute to community-based projects, or pursue independent scholarly work. Connect with faculty, program coordinators, and academic advisors early to learn what's available.

Funding Opportunities

Funding may come through scholarships, grants, federal and state financial aid, work-study, tuition assistance, or graduate assistantships (a stipend in exchange for part-time service to the university, with valuable teaching, research, or administrative experience attached). Many colleges also offer program-specific scholarships and emergency funding.

Research & Funding Resources

Resource	Link
Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid	https://uhd.edu/financial

Resource	Link
Graduate Student Financial Aid	https://uhd.edu/financial/apply/financial-apply-graduate.aspx
Graduate Programs	https://uhd.edu/academics/academic-gradprograms.aspx
CHSS Graduate Program Scholarships	https://uhd.edu/academics/humanities/graduate-programs/graduate-program-scholarships.aspx
College of Sciences and Technology Scholarships	https://uhd.edu/academics/sciences/sciences-scholarships.aspx
College of Public Service	https://www.uhd.edu/academics/public-service/scholarships.aspx
Marilyn Davies College of Business	https://www.uhd.edu/academics/business/scholarships/index.aspx
Impact Learning Office	https://www.uhd.edu/academics/impactlearning/index.aspx

PART 4

Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity, probation/suspension, grade appeals, leave of absence, transfer credit, and graduation.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

A UHD graduate degree is meant to certify real expertise, including the integrity of how that expertise was earned. The academic honesty process exists to protect that meaning, for you as much as anyone, since the value of your degree depends on every other graduate's degree, meaning the same thing.

Graduate students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, ethical conduct, and scholarly responsibility in all academic, research, and professional activities. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, fabrication or falsification, submitting someone else's work as your own, submitting the same work for multiple courses without permission, unauthorized materials during an exam, and misusing AI tools when an instructor has prohibited it.

Academic Honesty Process

1	The faculty member reviews the alleged violation and notifies you of the allegation and proposed academic sanction.
2	You can discuss the allegation with the faculty member and review the information supporting it.
3	You can appeal a finding or sanction, starting with the instructor, then the department chair, dean, and other designated officials, as university policy provides.

***Faculty are required to report academic honesty violations to the Dean of Students Office for recordkeeping and review. ***

Graduate Academic Probation, Suspension & Appeals

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

This section is a warning system, not a punishment system. The steps below are designed to catch a slipping GPA early enough to recover it, ideally before it affects an assistantship, funding, or visa status that depends on good standing.

Academic Probation

🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**

You're placed on probation if your cumulative UHD GPA falls below 2.0 at the end of any term (I, IP, S, and W grades are excluded from this calculation).

- You must meet with an academic advisor before registering again to talk through GPA repair and available support.
- While on probation, you need a term GPA of 2.0 or higher every term until your cumulative GPA recovers to 2.0.
- Miss that term GPA once more and you move to continued probation; miss it again and you're suspended.

Academic Suspension & Dismissal

Suspension means you can't register or remain enrolled for that term. The Registrar's Office administratively drops any coursework you registered for.

1	Appeal the suspension to your academic dean (or their designated representative), with clear evidence that you're likely to succeed.
2	If approved, you're placed on extended probation and must meet with a dean's representative or advisor to build an improvement plan.
3	Maintain a term GPA of 3.0 or higher every term until your cumulative GPA reaches 3.0. Fall short once more, and academic dismissal follows.

❗ **HEADS UP**

Academic dismissal is permanent unless you successfully appeal to your dean again or are readmitted under Academic Amnesty. Both academic probation and suspension appear on your official transcript and can jeopardize assistantship eligibility, so talk to your advisor the moment your GPA dips, not after.

Grade Appeals & Change of Grade Process

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
> A grade appeal is for a miscalculation or a process that did not follow the instructor's stated procedure. It is not a way to request a higher grade.

1	Appeal to the **course instructor** first.
2	If it is not resolved, appeal to the home department chair.
3	If it is still not resolved, appeal to the dean, which is the final level.

> ❗ **HEADS UP**
> You must appeal within one calendar year of the semester in which you received the grade, or it becomes final. Each level of review has 14 business days to respond in writing unless the dean grants an exception. Appeals must be in writing and include the documentation you provide.

Change of Course Grade

An instructor-initiated grade change needs department chair approval within one calendar year of the semester's end (and dean approval, too, if it's past that year or changes a grade from an F). Chair-initiated changes require dean approval and instructor notification; dean-initiated changes require notification of both the instructor and the chair.

Leave of Absence & Withdrawal

A leave of absence may fit if you plan to return after a temporary interruption. Work with your academic program to confirm whether a formal leave process exists and what it means for your enrollment status, completion timeline, assistantship, financial aid, or immigration status. Seek guidance before you stop enrolling, not after.

A withdrawal is dropping one or more courses, or the university entirely, after classes have begun. It can affect academic progress, financial aid eligibility, tuition refunds, veterans' benefits, assistantships, international student status, and your graduation date.

Before Requesting a Leave or Withdrawal

- Meet with your faculty advisor or graduate program coordinator
- Review academic and degree completion requirements
- Consult the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid about aid implications
- Consult the Office of International Student Admissions and Registrar’s Office if you hold a student visa

- Review applicable tuition refund and withdrawal deadlines
- Explore available support resources and accommodations

Retroactive Withdrawal

Granted only for unusual, well-documented circumstances, and only if you appeal within one calendar year of the term's end.

1	Submit your appeal to the Office of the Registrar, which archives the request.
2	The Registrar routes it to the academic dean of your declared major's college (for a full withdrawal) or the dean of the college offering each specific course (for a partial withdrawal).
3	The dean decides. If approved, their office notifies your instructors and department chairs; the Registrar notifies you of the final decision.

Transfer Credit Policies

Graduate-level coursework completed at other accredited institutions may sometimes apply toward a UHD graduate degree, subject to university and program approval. Talk to your graduate program coordinator or faculty advisor as early as possible, ideally in your first semester, and submit official transcripts and any required documentation for review. Transfer credit is never automatic; it must be formally evaluated and approved.

General Guidelines

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> - Only graduate-level coursework from an accredited institution may be considered.
> - Courses must be relevant to your degree program and comparable in content and rigor to UHD graduate coursework.
> - Transfer credit needs program and university approval.
> - Transfer grades are never included in your UHD graduate GPA.
> - Programs may cap how many transfer credits count toward degree completion; ask your advisor for specifics.

Coursework completed outside the United States may require a professional credential evaluation and additional documentation through the Office of Admissions.

Graduation Application & Commencement

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

The graduation application is not a formality. It is what prompts your degree to be audited, your diploma name to be confirmed, and your commencement seat to be reserved. Submitting it late or with unresolved holds is one of the most common reasons students delay their graduation by a semester.

Application for Graduation

1	Run your Degree Progress Report and talk to your advisor to confirm you're eligible.
2	Submit the online graduation application through myUHD2.0, reviewing your program, commencement attendance, diploma name/address, and graduation fee.
3	Complete the graduation exit survey.
4	Pay the $50 graduation fee, which has been added to your Student Account Statement.
5	Resolve any financial or administrative holds; your diploma and transcripts are held until they are cleared.

❗ **HEADS UP**

If you don't finish your degree requirements in the term you applied for, or you want to change your graduation term, you'll need to reapply online and pay the graduation fee again.

You can request up to three diploma copies on the application (additional copies are $50 each). Diplomas are printed roughly three months after the semester ends, once the Registrar certifies you've met all degree requirements, and are mailed to your address on file.

Commencement

Commencement is the university's formal celebration of degree completion, but participating in the ceremony is a symbolic recognition and does not confer your degree. You must still be officially certified for graduation by your program and the Registrar's Office. Meet with your advisor before applying to confirm that you have met all requirements.

Graduate Hooding Ceremony

Many master's graduates have the option to participate in a Hooding Ceremony, where faculty place academic hoods on graduating students to mark their entry into a community of scholars and professionals. Check eligibility and registration details with your academic college and the Registrar's Office.

Commencement Resources

Resource	Link
UHD Commencement Website	https://uhd.edu/registrar/commencement
Apply for Graduation	https://uhd.edu/registrar/students/records-requests/registrar-graduation.aspx
Commencement Orientation	https://uhd.edu/registrar/commencement/commencement-orientation.aspx
Commencement FAQ	https://uhd.edu/registrar/commencement/faq.aspx
Commencement Tickets	https://uhd.edu/registrar/commencement/tickets.aspx

PART 5

Financial Resources

Tuition, assistantships, scholarships, financial aid, holds, refunds, and emergency deferment.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

An unpaid balance can block your registration, hold your transcript, and prevent your diploma from being released. Understanding these rules keeps a cash-flow problem from becoming an academic one.

Financial Responsibility

❗ **HEADS UP**

You are responsible for monitoring your account, paying tuition and fees by published deadlines, and completing the Financial Responsibility Agreement every semester. An outstanding balance at any University of Houston System institution, not just UHD, can block registration and the release of transcripts or diplomas.

How Costs Are Set

Tuition rates are set by the Texas State Legislature and the UH System Board of Regents under state law. In addition to tuition, mandatory fees fund advising, technology, the library, student support programs, and wellness initiatives; specific courses or services may incur additional fees.

Deadlines & Payment

🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**

All admissions, registration, schedule change, tuition, and graduation application deadlines are listed in the Academic Calendar and UHD Catalog. The university does not track them for you.

- Pay in full, or set up an installment plan, online, by mail, or in person.
- Falling behind risks late fees, a registration hold, loss of future enrollment access, and withheld transcripts/diplomas.

Scholarships, Fellowships & Assistantships

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> A graduate assistantship is often the single best-value opportunity on campus: it pays you while building the teaching, research, or administrative experience that strengthens your resume or doctoral application. Most students don't get one because they never ask their department directly.

UHD supports graduate student funding through assistantships, scholarships, grants, financial aid, tuition assistance, and external fellowships. Explore options early. Funding cycles and deadlines vary by department, and the best opportunities tend to go to students who ask early in the semester, not at the deadline.

Graduate Assistantships

An assistantship provides financial support while you gain professional, administrative, teaching, or research experience: supporting faculty research, assisting with instruction, tutoring, mentoring, administrative work, program coordination, or data analysis. Assistantships are competitive and typically require maintaining enrollment and good academic standing; most provide a stipend, and some include additional benefits.

Program/College	What's Available
Marilyn Davies College of Business	Graduate Teaching Assistant and Graduate Administrative Assistant positions for qualified MBA and MPAC students, with a monthly stipend plus professional development.
College of Public Service	Competitive assistantships in select programs (e.g., MS in Criminal Justice) provide stipends for research, teaching, and administrative support.
College of Humanities and Social Sciences and College of Sciences and Technology	As graduate programs expand and refine, opportunities vary; contact your academic college or graduate program coordinator directly for opportunities or openings.

Scholarships, Grants & Fellowships

Funding eligibility may depend on financial need, academic achievement, enrollment status, or program participation. Complete the FAFSA or TASFA annually to maximize what you qualify for. Some colleges run graduate-specific scholarships, for example, for Data Analytics and AI students through the College of Sciences and Technology, or tuition grants and program-specific awards for graduate business students.

Finding Funding

- Complete the FAFSA or TASFA as early as possible
- Apply through the Gator Scholarship Center
- Consult your graduate program coordinator and faculty advisor
- Monitor university and department communications for funding announcements
- Explore external fellowships, professional association scholarships, and research grants in your field

Financial Aid for Graduate Students

Federal Financial Aid

Complete the FAFSA annually to determine eligibility. Most graduate students qualify for Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans, graduate-level federal loan programs, limited state and institutional grants, and work-study (when available).

> **! HEADS UP**
> To remain eligible, you generally must be enrolled at least half-time (4 graduate credit hours) and maintain satisfactory academic progress.

Graduate Tuition Grant

UHD offers a Graduate Tuition Grant for students with financial need. Priority goes to students whose financial aid applications are complete by April 1 each year. Funds are limited and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, so this date matters more than it may seem.

Graduate Scholarships

Many colleges and programs offer graduate-specific scholarships, including Entering Graduate Student Scholarships, Continuing Graduate Student Scholarships, program-specific awards, and college-based merit awards. Check both the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and your academic college.

Emergency Financial Assistance

Through the Gator Resource Center, graduate students may access emergency textbook assistance, utility assistance referrals, financial literacy resources, and other emergency support when funding is available.

Payment Plans

If your aid doesn't fully cover tuition, UHD's installment payment plans let you spread payments across the semester.

Maximizing Your Funding

- Submit the FAFSA as early as possible
- Apply for both university-wide and program-specific scholarships
- Contact your graduate program coordinator about assistantships and fellowships
- Monitor college websites for new grant opportunities
- Explore employer tuition reimbursement if you're employed full-time
- Apply for external professional association scholarships in your field

Financial Holds, Refunds & Emergency Deferment

Financial Holds

Resolving a financial hold is your responsibility; contact the appropriate UHD office to clear an outstanding debt. Holds can delay registration, transcript requests, diploma release, and even the posting of academic credit across the UH System.

> ❗ **HEADS UP**
>
> Unresolved financial obligations can result in withdrawal from your classes and referral to a collection agency, along with additional costs, attorney fees, and damage to your credit report. This can escalate quickly, so contact the university as soon as you are aware of a problem.

Refunds

Refunds for withdrawals or schedule changes follow the Academic Calendar's timing rules; financial aid recipients may see their refund adjusted under aid regulations. Refunds are issued via BankMobile or returned to your original payment method.

Emergency Deferment Plans

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> If you cannot pay tuition up front, an emergency deferment plan can give you time, with conditions:
>
> - Setup fees and interest apply.
> - Available once per semester.
> - Must be fully repaid before you can register for a future term.

PART 6

Student Life & Support Services

Counseling, accessibility, career development, library and research support, technology, and student organizations.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Seeking support for your mental health is not a sign of weakness or failure. It is a practical step that protects both your academic performance and your wellbeing. Confidential counseling is already covered by your enrollment; the only cost is reaching out.

Counseling Services

Free, confidential counseling with a licensed mental health clinician for any currently enrolled student, from everyday stress to substance use to serious life challenges. Start through the Gator Health Portal (gatorhealth.uhd.edu); once your intake form is in, a team member will reach out to schedule your first appointment. All records are confidential under applicable federal, state, city, and university law.

Location: OMB S280 (Annex: OMB S601)
Phone: 713-221-8121
Web: www.uhd.edu/sssl/counseling/

Accessible Education Center (AEC)

Ensures full access to academic and co-curricular programming for students with documented physical, psychological, learning, sensory, or other qualifying disabilities. Apply through the AEC's Apply for Services page, submit documentation from a licensed healthcare or clinical professional, and complete an intake meeting to build your accommodation plan.

Location: SLC, 3rd Floor
Phone: 713-221-5078
Web: www.uhd.edu/sssl/student-success/disability/index.aspx

Career Center and Professional Development (CCPD)

Open to enrolled students and alumni across all four colleges. Services include career self-assessment, résumé/cover letter coaching, interview prep, job search strategy, the Jobs4Gators internship/job portal, employer networking events, and help with graduate school applications and personal statements.

Location: S402
Phone: 713-221-8980
Email: uhdcareer@uhd.edu
Web: www.uhd.edu/career

Academic Support Center (ASC)

Home to the Writing & Reading Center and the Center for Math and Statistics Support (C4MS2). Offers in-person and online tutoring for individuals and groups, faculty/professional/peer consultations, and loanable tools like graphing calculators and writing guides.

Location: N530
Phone: 713-221-8669
Web: www.uhd.edu/asc

Center for Math and Statistics Support (C4MS2):

Free tutoring for core math courses (MATH 0010, 1301, 1306, 1310, 1324, 1505), statistics (STAT 1312, 2300, 2305, 3311), education-track math (MATH 3321, 3322), and calculus (MATH 2401, 2402, 2411), plus study groups, final exam review sessions, and computers for online homework.

Location: N530
Phone: 713-221-8669
Email: asc@uhd.edu
Web: https://www.uhd.edu/sssl/student-success/mss/index.aspx

Writing & Reading Center (WRC)

One-on-one help with any course writing assignment, plus professional documents like personal statements, cover letters, and scholarship essays; in person or online.

Location: N530
Phone: 713-221-8669
Email: asc@uhd.edu
Web: https://www.uhd.edu/sssl/student-success/mss/index.aspx

Supplemental Instruction (SI)

SI sessions are peer-led study groups attached to specific, historically challenging courses and led by students who have already excelled in them. Unlike one-on-one tutoring, SI is collaborative by design: you learn alongside classmates in the same course, which helps surface and resolve shared points of confusion more quickly.

Location: S405
Phone: 713-222-5338
Email: siprogram@uhd.edu
Web: https://www.uhd.edu/sssl/supplemental-instruction/index.aspx

Library & Research Support

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Graduate-level work depends on research skills that undergraduate coursework rarely demands in full: literature reviews, discipline-specific databases, citation management, and research ethics. The library's subject librarians exist specifically to shorten the learning curve on all of it.

W. I. Dykes Library

The 4th floor houses a computer lab (84 computers), 12 group study rooms, 2 presentation practice rooms, a One Button Studio, a video-recording room, a large reading room, two instruction classrooms, an event room, and a meditation room. Access electronic resources remotely with your UHD credentials. Open seven days a week fall/spring, Monday–Saturday in summer.

Location: 5th Floor (and north portion of 4th Floor)
Phone: 713-221-8187
Web: www.uhd.edu/library

Research Assistance

Librarians help graduate students develop research questions, identify scholarly sources, conduct literature reviews, navigate databases, evaluate information, build search strategies, and track down hard-to-find materials. Schedule a one-on-one consultation with a subject librarian rather than guessing your way through a database alone.

Research Databases

Discipline-specific databases cover business and management, criminal justice, education, humanities and social sciences, public service and nonprofit management, sciences and technology, and psychology/behavioral sciences. Ask your program and librarians for recommendations specific to your field.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

If UHD does not own a book or article you need, request it through ILL, and the library will work to borrow it from another institution nationwide, including delivery service for off-campus students and faculty.

Building Research Skills

- Locating scholarly information and evaluating source credibility
- Conducting literature reviews
- Using citation styles correctly (APA, MLA, Chicago/Turabian, and discipline-specific formats)
- Avoiding plagiarism and managing research projects effectively

Library staff can also help with citation management software and broader research organization tools.

Academic Integrity in Research

> **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> As a graduate researcher, you're expected to:
>
> - Properly cite all sources.
> - Avoid plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration.
> - Follow copyright and fair-use guidelines.
> - Adhere to research ethics standards.
> - Maintain integrity in data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Technology Resources

Student Technology Services

Technical support for software, account access, password resets, email, wireless connectivity, Canvas, Office 365, and other tech issues is available by phone, email, chat, or in person.

Location: ACAD 700
Phone: 713-221-8031
Web: www.uhd.edu/computing/uss/it-service-desk.aspx

Computer Labs

Open computer labs across UHD's campuses provide academic software, internet access, printing, and productivity tools during regular building hours.

Location
Academic Building – 6th Floor Study Area
W.I. Dykes Library – Room N401

Location
Marilyn Davies College of Business Building – Room B200
Commerce Street Building – Rooms C300 and C410
UHD Northwest – Room B12.353 and Commons Area

Laptop Checkout: a self-service kiosk in Library N480 provides temporary access to laptops for coursework and research.

Software & Collaboration Tools

Tool	What It's For
Microsoft 365	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneDrive, and Teams, free for all enrolled students.
Academic/discipline software	Statistical analysis, data visualization, database, and programming tools vary by program; check with your department.
Azure Dev Tools for Teaching	Free access to select Microsoft developer and design software for eligible students.
Zoom & collaboration tools	Plus Panopto, Qualtrics, LinkedIn Learning, VoiceThread, and EndNote for research and online classes.
Canvas	UHD's learning management system for course materials, assignments, grades, and faculty communication.

Wireless internet is available throughout UHD campuses using your UHD credentials; the Technology Teaching and Learning Center (TTLC) offers training on Canvas, Zoom, research software, and other educational technologies.

Student Organizations & Leadership

Clubs and Organizations

Academic, cultural, social, and professional organizations cover nearly every interest. All organizations operate under university policy and are supported through Student Leadership & Involvement (SLI).

Location: OMB N310
Phone: 713-221-8573
Web: www.uhd.edu/sa

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The voice of graduate and professional students at UHD, advocating for graduate-specific concerns, building community across programs, and running initiatives tailored to graduate student success. This is your most direct channel for shaping university decisions that affect graduate students.

Location: OMB S365

PART 7

Health, Wellness & Safety

Medical care, immunizations, campus safety, emergency procedures, and reporting.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Your physical health supports everything else in this handbook; a research deadline or a teaching assistantship does not pause because you are ill. Addressing a minor issue early, here on campus, is almost always faster and less expensive than waiting until it becomes serious.

Student Health Services

Primary care at the same standard as a private physician's office: health promotion, disease prevention, treatment of minor illnesses and injuries, women's health, routine diagnostics, pregnancy testing, and confidential STI screening. Appointments are recommended; walk-ins welcome. Specialized care gets a referral to community experts.

Location: S445
Phone: 713-221-8137
Web: www.uhd.edu/health

UHD Sports and Fitness & Wellness and Success Center

Free for all current students. The 75,000-square-foot WSC features three levels of cardio/weight equipment, three multipurpose courts, a bouldering wall, an indoor track, fitness studios, and the Gator Study Zone. Group fitness classes are free; personal training and CPR/AED certification cost extra.

Location: Wellness & Success Center (WSC)
Phone: 713-221-8225
Email: sportsandfitness@uhd.edu
Web: www.uhd.edu/sports&fitness

Counseling Services

Free, confidential counseling with a licensed mental health clinician for any currently enrolled student, from everyday stress to substance use to serious life challenges. Start through the Gator Health Portal (gatorhealth.uhd.edu); once your intake form is in, a team member will reach out to schedule your first appointment. All records are confidential under applicable federal, state, city, and university law.

Location: OMB S280 (Annex: OMB S601)
Phone: 713-221-8121
Web: www.uhd.edu/sssl/counseling/

Immunizations

The American College Health Association, the State of Texas, and UHD all recommend that students be fully immunized before enrolling.

Disease	Why It Matters	Recommended Protection
Influenza	Mild to severe illness; can trigger pneumonia or worsen asthma/heart conditions.	Annual vaccine, age 6 months+
Measles	Highly contagious; it can mean two weeks of missed school and isolation.	Two doses of live vaccine after 15 months (often combined as MMR)
Meningococcal disease	Severe, sometimes fatal bacterial illness; periodic U.S. campus outbreaks.	Vaccine at ages 11–12, booster at 16
Mumps	Can cause deafness, encephalitis, or rarely sterility.	One dose after 12 months
Rubella	Mild in most people, but it can cause serious birth defects during pregnancy.	One dose after 12 months
Tetanus-diphtheria	Serious, potentially fatal bacterial infections.	Initial series, then booster every 10 years

Questions about your own immunization status? Talk to your physician, a public health clinic, or UHD Student Health Services (S445, 713-221-8137).

Campus Safety, Emergency Procedures & Reporting

! HEADS UP

Emergency: 713-221-8911 · **Non-emergency:** 713-221-8065

Yellow call boxes are stationed near every building entrance/exit, parking garage, and elevator. UHDPD also offers escort service to your vehicle and limited motorist assistance (locked keys, jump-starts) on request.

UHD Police Department

If something feels wrong, change direction, move to a public building or emergency phone, and call. “If you see something, say something” is not just a slogan here; it is how the department asks you to respond.

Location: OMB N118
Phone: 713-221-8065
Web: www.uhd.edu/police-department

Emergency Management

Plans for, mitigates, responds to, and helps the campus recover from emergencies and disasters. During an active emergency, UHD notifies the campus by email, text, and digital displays, with public updates on the UHD homepage and social channels.

Location: S205
Phone: 713-221-5848
Web: www.uhd.edu/administration/emergency-management/index.aspx

If You Hear a Fire Alarm

Alarm Type	What You'll Hear	What To Do
Automatic alarm	One continuous whooping tone + announcement	Proceed to the nearest stairwell and prepare to exit. If there is evidence of fire on your floor, evacuate using the stairwells. Never use elevators.
Fire/smoke reported	Two short tones + live message naming the affected floor	Floors named (and the floors above/below) must evacuate immediately. Never use elevators.
All clear	Two short tones + live message	Return to your office or classroom; elevators resume service.
No visible smoke/fire	Not applicable	Go to the nearest stairwell and wait for an announcement or an official (Police, EM, EH&S, or Facilities Management).
Visible fire or smoke	Not applicable	Evacuate the building immediately; do not wait for an announcement.

PART 8

Campus Facilities & Logistics

ID cards, email, parking, dining, study spaces, campus activities, sports, and the bookstore.

UHD ID Card: UHD Police Department

Required for all enrolled students to use on-campus services, including the library, computer labs, gym, and more. Your first card is free; replacements are $10. Bring an unexpired, valid government photo ID to get yours processed.

Location: OMB N118
Phone: 713-221-8065
Web: www.uhd.edu/administration/auxiliary-services/gator-card/index.aspx

GatorMail

GatorMail is UHD's Office 365 email and calendar system, with 50GB of storage, premium spam and malware protection, and the same login as your UHD network account. Log in at **uhd.edu/gatormail** using *username@gator.uhd.edu* and your network password.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

GatorMail is UHD's official channel for registration holds, financial aid updates, assistantship communications, and emergency alerts. An unchecked inbox can mean a missed deadline you never even knew existed.

GatorMail Ground Rules

🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**

Your UHD email is for academic and scholarly purposes. In practice, that means the following:

- Check it regularly. Some communications are time-sensitive, and the university is not responsible for messages lost because your inbox reached its storage limit.
- Do not treat it as fully private; use discretion with sensitive information.
- No mass mailings, chain letters, impersonation, harassment, commercial use, or attempts to intercept someone else's mail.
- Everything in your account is permanently deleted once the account is terminated.

Parking & Transportation

A valid permit displayed on your rearview mirror is required to park on campus. Permits must be purchased online; the Parking and Transportation Services office does not sell them in person. A permit makes you eligible to park but does not guarantee a space.

Permit Type	Where You Can Park
Surface lot permit	Daly Street Lot, Naylor Street Lot, Lot B (North Main St.), or Washington Street Lot
Garage permit	Vine Street Garage (adjacent to the College of Business): $10 nonrefundable proximity card fee on first order
Accessible permit	Designated accessible spaces; available as permanent or temporary, issued with a valid state placard or plate
UH System permit (UH, UH-Clear Lake, UH-Sugar Land)	Any UHD student surface lot, if properly displayed

Shuttle & Alternative Transportation

The UHD shuttle is free and runs between the Daly Street Lot and the Commerce St. building, Monday–Thursday 6:30 a.m.–10:30 p.m. and Friday 6:30 a.m.–6 p.m., arriving roughly every 15–20 minutes (track it live with the Ride Systems app).

RideSponsor: Through a partnership with METRO, UHD subsidizes 25% of monthly public transit fares for participating students, faculty, and staff.

Parking Refunds

> **! HEADS UP**
> To receive a parking refund, you must return the permit and submit a refund form to Parking & Transportation Services; dropping your classes alone does not cancel it. Questions: UHDparking@uhd.edu or 713-221-8127.

Dining & Study Spaces

Dining Services

The 3rd-floor Academic Building food court houses Starbucks, Slices, Handcrafted, Gator Grill, and Created With Love. Additional cafes: Shea Street Café, Commerce Street Café, and the Wellness and Success Center. All locations accept GatorCash. Hours: Mon–Thu 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Fri 7:30 a.m.–2 p.m. (summer hours vary).

Location: A308
Phone: 713-221-8462
Web: uhd.sodexomyway.com/en-us/

Beyond the library (see Student Life & Support Services), UHD offers lounge and study spaces throughout the Wellness & Success Center, academic buildings, and common areas of the One Main Building.

Sports & Fitness

UHD Sports and Fitness

Free for all current students. The 75,000-square-foot WSC features three levels of cardio/weight equipment, three multipurpose courts, a bouldering wall, an indoor track, fitness studios, and the Gator Study Zone. Group fitness classes are free; personal training and CPR/AED certification cost extra.

Location: Wellness & Success Center (WSC)
Phone: 713-221-8225
Email: sportsandfitness@uhd.edu
Web: www.uhd.edu/sports&fitness

Bookstore and Academic Supplies

UHD Bookstore

New and used textbooks, digital course materials, rentals, school and office supplies, technology accessories, UHD apparel, and graduation regalia. Accepts eligible financial aid, scholarships, textbook loans, and veteran education benefits. Hours: Mon–Thu 10 a.m.–4 p.m., Fri 10 a.m.–1 p.m. (subject to change around holidays and breaks).

Location: One Main Street, Suite N351
Phone: 713-221-8025
Email: uhdbookstore@uhd.edu
Web: www.bkstr.com/houstondowntownstore/home

Gator Textbook Access Program (GTAP)

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
> GTAP trades a flat, predictable fee for the uncertainty of buying individual textbooks each semester. It is worth comparing the GTAP fee to what your specific courses would cost separately before deciding to opt out.

GTAP gives undergraduate and graduate students access to required course materials by the first day of class for a flat semester fee. You're automatically enrolled each semester, but can opt out.

Term	Graduate Student Fee
Fall Semester	$200
Spring Semester	$200

Term	Graduate Student Fee
Summer Semester	$128

Applicable sales tax may apply. Since its implementation, GTAP has saved UHD students millions of dollars in course material costs.

Graduation Regalia

Graduate students planning to participate in commencement can purchase official UHD regalia through the bookstore: master's cap, gown, and hood; First-Generation Student stoles; diploma frames; and other commencement merchandise. Review commencement deadlines and order regalia well in advance.

Managing Textbook Costs

- Compare new, used, rental, and digital textbook options
- Evaluate GTAP participation each semester rather than assuming it's worth it by default
- Order early to maximize availability and pricing
- Check library reserves and electronic library resources
- Use eligible financial aid and scholarship funds for course materials
- Sell back eligible textbooks once courses are completed

PART 9

University Policies & Student Rights

Conduct, due process, nondiscrimination, Title IX, legal compliance, and free expression.

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Every policy in this section supports the same mission you read about at the start of this handbook: nurturing talent and driving socioeconomic mobility. At the graduate level, that means producing scholars and professionals ready to lead in their fields. A safe, fair, and predictable campus makes that mission possible; you cannot do serious graduate work in an environment where you do not know your rights or cannot trust the process. This section is here so you **never have to guess** what happens if something goes wrong, what protections you have, or who to call.

What the Conduct Process Is Trying to Teach You

UHD's student conduct process is built to be educational and developmental, not just punitive. The goal is for every student who goes through it, regardless of outcome, to come out better equipped to:

Skills the Process Builds	What That Looks Like
Personal responsibility	Understanding and accepting accountability for your own actions
Ethical decision-making	Making informed, principled choices under pressure
Impact awareness	Recognizing how your behavior affects others and the campus community
Communication under conflict	Navigating disagreement respectfully and effectively
Policy navigation	Knowing how to use university procedures and resources
Community contribution	Helping sustain a safe, respectful, inclusive campus

Students who understand these expectations and resources are better positioned to advocate for themselves and engage productively with the UHD community, academically, personally, and professionally.

Code of Conduct & Academic Integrity

UHD expects every student to uphold high standards of personal integrity, ethical behavior, and academic excellence. The Student Code of Conduct, detailed in the UHD Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy (PS 04.A.01), sets behavioral expectations that help keep the learning environment safe, respectful, and

inclusive for everyone. Violations can lead to educational interventions and disciplinary action, which is designed to support growth and accountability rather than simply to punish.

🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**

Academic integrity, under the UHD Academic Honesty Policy (PS 03.A.19), means doing your own work, properly crediting others' contributions, and avoiding cheating, plagiarism, falsification, and unauthorized use of AI where an instructor has prohibited it. This protects the value of your degree; a UHD diploma means something specific because the university enforces the standards required to earn it. At the graduate level, this extends to your thesis, capstone, or other research: data fabrication, falsification, and research misconduct are treated with the same seriousness as classroom dishonesty, since your name and UHD's name are both permanently attached to whatever scholarship you produce.

Student Rights, Due Process, Appeals & Sanctions

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

If you are ever named in a conduct or academic honesty matter, the steps below are not optional courtesies; they are guarantees. Knowing them in advance means you will immediately recognize if something in your process is not being followed correctly. This matters even more at the graduate level, since a finding can also affect your assistantship, your standing in a cohort, or your relationship with a faculty mentor you will continue working with.

⚖️ **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

If you're involved in a student conduct or academic honesty matter, UHD guarantees you:

- **Notice**: written notification of the reported behavior, the alleged violation(s), and how the resolution process works.
- **A chance to respond**: you can review the available information, prepare a response, submit documentation, and present your perspective.
- **An advisor of your choice**: present with you in meetings, hearings, and appeals.
- **The chance to present evidence and witnesses**: including identifying people with relevant knowledge of what happened.
- **Impartial review**: a trained official, faculty member, or committee decides based on the facts presented, not on assumptions.
- **Written notice of the outcome**: the findings, the reasoning, and any sanctions, in writing.
- **The right to appeal**: within the university's established timeframe, if valid grounds exist.

Standard of Evidence

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> Conduct and academic honesty cases use the preponderance-of-the-evidence standard, meaning more likely than not. If the available information indicates a greater-than-50% chance that the alleged conduct occurred, a student can be found responsible. This is a civil standard, not the “beyond a reasonable doubt” standard used in criminal courts, and it is a deliberate, common choice across higher education.

If You Want to Appeal

An appeal is not a second chance to re-argue facts that were already considered, and it is not a new hearing. It is limited to specific grounds:

Valid Ground for Appeal	What It Means
Procedural error	A mistake in the process that significantly affected the outcome
New information	Evidence that wasn't reasonably available before and could change the decision
Disproportionate sanction	The consequence is substantially out of line with the violation
Bias or unfairness	Evidence of bias, conflict of interest, or a fundamentally unfair process

Submit your appeal within the university's established timeline; missing it closes this avenue entirely.

Sanctions Are Designed to Teach, Not Just Punish

This is one of the most important things to understand about UHD's conduct process: educational sanctions exist to build skills, not just impose consequences. Through the process, regardless of the specific outcome, students typically gain:

- Stronger ethical decision-making and personal responsibility
- A clearer understanding of academic integrity and university expectations
- Better communication, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills
- A real sense of how their behavior affects others and the broader community
- Strategies for avoiding future policy violations
- A stronger stake in contributing to a safe, respectful, inclusive campus

***These outcomes are the goal. A sanction that teaches nothing has not served its purpose*.**

Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Sexual Misconduct & Title IX

💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**

These protections exist because you cannot learn, work, or grow in an environment where you fear discrimination or harassment. UHD's nondiscrimination commitment is not a separate policy attached to the mission statement; it is a precondition for the mission being achievable at all.

Nondiscrimination Commitment

⚖️ **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

UHD prohibits discrimination on the basis of:

- Race, color, national or ethnic origin
- Sex, including pregnancy
- Religion
- Age (40 and older)
- Disability
- Veteran status
- Genetic information
- Gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation

The **Office of Title IX/Equal Opportunity Services** oversees compliance and serves as your resource for information, support, or resolution options. If you believe you've experienced discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or unequal treatment, you can file a report through that office, and reports are reviewed promptly and equitably, and retaliation against anyone who reports, participates in an investigation, or assists a complaint is itself a policy violation. This protection applies regardless of who is involved, including a thesis advisor, program director, or graduate assistantship supervisor.

Title IX & Sexual Misconduct

UHD prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and other forms of sex-based discrimination.

🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**

If you experience or witness sexual misconduct:

- You're encouraged to report it and seek assistance.
- Supportive measures can be available even if you never file a formal complaint. Getting support and pursuing a formal process are two separate decisions, and you control both.
- The Office of Title IX/Equal Opportunity Services coordinates reporting, supportive measures, investigations, and grievance procedures to keep the process fair and impartial for everyone involved.

Disability Accommodations in These Processes

UHD is committed to equal access to educational opportunity for students with disabilities, including during conduct or academic-integrity proceedings. If you need an accommodation or need to renew or modify an existing one, contact the Accessible Education Center (see Health, Wellness & Safety) as early as possible. Every request is reviewed individually.

Helpful Resources

- **Title IX & Equal Opportunity Services:** https://uhd.edu/title-ix
- **Title IX & Sexual Misconduct Info:** https://uhd.edu/title-ix/title-ix-sexual-misconduct.aspx
- **Anti-Discrimination Resources:** https://uhd.edu/title-ix/index.aspx

How to Report a Concern

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> If you are not sure which form applies to your situation, the table below can help. Submitting the closest form is always better than not reporting at all.

Form	Use It For
Care Form	Death of a loved one, hospitalization, primary caregiving responsibilities, incarceration, or physical health challenges affecting you as a student.
Student Conduct Incident Report Form	Policy violations such as alcohol, drugs, physical harm, or disruptive activity.
Sexual Misconduct Form	Required for reporting non-consensual fondling, sexual assault, groping, or domestic violence.
Discrimination & Harassment Form	Harassment or discrimination against a protected class, experienced or witnessed.
Complaint Form	Grievances, or university processes/procedures not followed by a department or staff member.

***All of these forms are available through the Dean of Students Office website. Submitting one starts a review; it does not commit you to a specific outcome. ***

Technology Use, Law & Compliance

Technology & Email Use

Your UHD email is the university's **official channel** for registration, financial aid, academic deadlines, campus events, and emergency notifications, so monitoring it is a responsibility, not an option. University

networks, computers, software, and digital platforms must be used responsibly in accordance with UHD's Information Security Program and Acceptable Use standards.

> ❗ **HEADS UP**
> Misuse, such as unauthorized access, sharing credentials, copyright infringement, or disrupting university operations, can result in disciplinary action. Details are maintained by UHD Information Technology Services and the UHD Information Security Office.

Your Legal Protections

> ⚖️ **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**
> **Title IX:** the right to learn free from discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation, with reporting options and supportive measures through the Office of Title IX/Equal Opportunity Services.
>
> **FERPA** (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act): your educational records are private, and the university may release them only under specific, legally permitted circumstances.

Campus Safety Disclosures (Clery Act)

UHD publishes an **Annual Security Report (ASR)** covering campus crime statistics, safety policies, and emergency notification procedures, as required by the federal Clery Act. It is available through the UHD Police Department and is worth reviewing.

Drug-Free Schools Compliance

Under the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, UHD prohibits the unlawful possession, use, distribution, or manufacture of alcohol and illicit drugs, and provides education on the legal, academic, and health risks involved.

Medical Amnesty / Good Samaritan Policy

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
> This policy exists for one reason: fear of getting in trouble should never stop someone from calling for help in a medical emergency**.** If you seek medical assistance for yourself or someone else during an alcohol- or drug-related emergency, in good faith, UHD's Medical Amnesty and Good Samaritan approach makes you eligible for educational interventions and support rather than certain disciplinary sanctions. Health and safety come first.

Campus Use, Free Expression & Other Rights

> ⚖️ **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**
>
> UHD supports your right to express ideas, share opinions, peacefully assemble, distribute literature, and participate in demonstrations and other expressive activities. The university welcomes diverse viewpoints and respectful dialogue as a feature of campus life, not a disruption to it.

Time, Place & Manner

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> To keep the campus safe and functioning, expressive activity may be subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, such as where, how long, or which spaces you may use. These restrictions apply equally to every viewpoint. They address logistics, not content, and they are not a means of silencing a particular opinion.

Where Free Speech Ends

Broad protection for speech does not mean unlimited protection for all conduct. Discrimination, harassment, threats, retaliation, or behavior that substantially disrupts classes, university business, or the rights of others can violate university policy even when it is framed as “just speech.” The same principle applies to technology: university networks, email, learning platforms, and digital resources must be used lawfully and ethically. Unauthorized access, academic dishonesty, copyright infringement, and harmful online behavior are prohibited on all platforms.

Helpful Resources

- **Freedom of Expression:** https://uhd.edu/freedom-of-expression
- **Student Rights and Responsibilities:** https://uhd.public.doctract.com/doctract/documentportal/08DD9FAD7745995F7D88293644BE774B
- **Student Conduct Policies:** https://uhd.edu/sssl/conduct/student-conduct-policies.aspx
- **Information Technology & Computer Use Policies:** https://uhd.edu/hr/policies/hr-information-systems-policy.aspx

Exercising these rights responsibly keeps UHD a place where open dialogue, learning, safety, and mutual respect can coexist.

PART

Appendices

Program director contacts, FAQ, resource links, forms, and a glossary of graduate education terms.

This section is your quick-reference shelf: program contacts, frequently asked questions, resource links, forms, and a glossary of graduate-specific terms you will see throughout your program. Bookmark it, since you will return to it more than once.

Appendix A: Graduate Program Director Contacts

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> Your Graduate Program Director is your single best point of contact for anything specific to your degree: requirements, curriculum, thesis or capstone expectations, registration questions, and progress toward completion. When in doubt about a program-specific question, start here before going anywhere else.

Graduate Program	Primary Contact	Email	Phone
Master of Business Administration (MBA)	MBA Graduate Programs Office	MBA@uhd.edu	(713) 221-8252
Master of Professional Accountancy (MPAC)	Dr. Marilyn Dement, Associate Director of Graduate Studies	DementM@uhd.edu	(713) 221-8678
Master of Security Management (MSM)	Dr. Marilyn Dement, Associate Director of Graduate Studies	DementM@uhd.edu	(713) 221-8678
Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management (MANPM)	Dr. Hanjin Mao, Program Director	MaoH@uhd.edu	(713) 222-5379
Master of Arts in Strategic Communication (MASC)	Dr. Darius M. Benton, Program Director	BentonD@uhd.edu	Refer to Program Office
Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Composition (MARC)	Dr. Michael Duncan, Program Director	DuncanM@uhd.edu	Refer to Program Office

Graduate Program	Primary Contact	Email	Phone
Master of Science in Technical Communication (MSTC)	Dr. Michael Duncan, Program Director	DuncanM@uhd.edu	Refer to Program Office
Master of Science in Criminal Justice (MSCJ)	Criminal Justice Graduate Program Office	MSCJ@uhd.edu	Refer to Program Office
Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)	MAT Graduate Program Office	UHDMAT@uhd.edu	Refer to Program Office
Master of Educational Leadership (MEDL)	Educational Leadership Program Office	EdLeadership@uhd.edu	Refer to Program Office
Master of Science in Data Analytics (MSDA)	Data Analytics Graduate Program Office	MSDA@uhd.edu	Refer to Program Office

Appendix B: Frequently Asked Questions

Admissions & Enrollment

🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**

How do I register for classes? Through Student e-Services, after meeting with your academic advisor or graduate program director, if your program requires it.

What counts as full-time enrollment? It varies by program; check your program's specific requirements and your financial aid guidelines, since the two do not always align.

Can I take courses at another institution while enrolled here? Only with prior approval from your academic program, if you intend the credits to transfer toward your UHD degree.

How many transfer credits can I apply toward my degree? Limits vary by program; consult your Graduate Program Director and the UHD Graduate Catalog for your specific cap.

Academic Policies

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> **What GPA must I maintain?** The minimum cumulative GPA set by both your program and university policy can differ; check both.
>
> **What happens if my GPA falls below the minimum?** You may be placed on academic probation and face additional program requirements, up to and including dismissal, if it doesn't improve.
>
> **Can I take a leave of absence?** Yes. If life circumstances interrupt your studies, you can request one under university and program policy. See Policies & Procedures earlier in this handbook.

Graduation

> 🗣️ **IN PLAIN TERMS**
>
> **How do I apply for graduation?** Submit a graduation application through Student e-Services to meet both program and university deadlines.
>
> **What if I miss the graduation application deadline?** Contact your academic advisor and the Office of the Registrar immediately; do not wait, since your options narrow the longer you delay.

Appendix C: Additional Campus Resources & Contact Information

Campus Resource Centers

Gator Resource Center (GRC)

Houses Gator Mart (free groceries, S290), Gator Shoppe (clothing and essentials, N210), and the GRC Lounge (quiet study/event space, N298). Staff connects students, including online and working graduate students, to support for food and housing insecurity, financial wellness, and emergency needs, in person or virtually.

Location: N210
Phone: 713-226-5245
Web: www.uhd.edu/sssl/student-life/gator-resource-center/index.aspx

Military Affiliated Resource Center (MARC)

Supports service members, veterans, and military families with federal and state education benefits, VA enrollment certification, degree-plan monitoring, and referrals to military-connected community resources.

Location: GSB, 422
Phone: 713-221-8622
Email: veteranservices@uhd.edu
Web: www.uhd.edu/veterans

Quick Link Directory

Category	Resource	Link
Graduate Studies	Graduate Studies Website	uhd.edu/academics/academic-gradprograms.aspx
Graduate Studies	Graduate Catalog	catalog.uhd.edu
Graduate Studies	Academic Calendar	uhd.edu/academics/calendars
Registration & Records	Office of the Registrar	uhd.edu/registrar
Financial Resources	Financial Aid Office	uhd.edu/financial
Financial Resources	Scholarships	uhd.edu/scholarships
Academic Support	W.I. Dykes Library	uhd.edu/library
Academic Support	Academic Support Center	uhd.edu/asc
Academic Support	Writing and Reading Center	uhd.edu/sssl/.../writing-center
Student Support	Dean of Students Office	uhd.edu/sssl/dean-of-students
Student Support	Counseling Services	uhd.edu/sssl/counseling
Student Support	Accessible Education Center	uhd.edu/sssl/.../aec
Technology	Information Technology Services	uhd.edu/computing
Technology	Canvas	uhd.edu/computing/training-lms
Technology	Microsoft 365	uhd.edu/computing/uss/computing-o365

Appendix D: Forms & Templates

> 💡 **WHY THIS MATTERS**
>
> Forms change more often than almost anything else in this handbook, so always pull the current version from the linked page rather than saving a copy to reuse next term.

Registration & Enrollment

Form	Link
Appeal Request Form	uhd.edu/registrar/.../appeals.aspx
Authorization to Release Student Information	uhsystem.edu/.../ferpa-authorization-form
Confidentiality Request Form	uhd.edu/.../confidentiality-request.pdf

Form	Link
Diploma Order Form	uhd.edu/.../diploma-order-form.pdf
Graduation Application	https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students/records-requests/registrar-graduation.aspx
Permission to Release Credit Hours Form	uhd.edu/.../permission-release-credit-hrs.pdf
Request to Audit Form	uhd.edu/.../audit-form.pdf
Revoke Confidentiality Request Form	uhd.edu/.../confidentiality-request.pdf
Student Information Update Form	uhd.edu/.../change-update-form.pdf
Test Score Release Form	uhd.edu/.../test-score-release.pdf

Appeals

All appeal types below route through the same Registrar's Office appeals page: Appeals and Financial Aid Impact, Grade Appeal, Types of Non-Academic Appeals, Academic Suspension and Appeal Process, Academic Dismissal and Appeal Process, and the Academic Amnesty Form.

Link: uhd.edu/registrar/students/academic-history/appeals.aspx

Financial Aid Forms

Current-year forms: uhd.edu/financial/forms/financial-forms-2026-2027.aspx

> **HEADS UP**
> Always get your forms directly from your Graduate Program, Financial Aid, the Registrar's Office, or your academic advisor, not from a saved copy, a classmate, or a search engine. Forms are updated regularly, and an outdated version can cause your submission to be rejected.

Appendix E: Glossary of Graduate Education Terms

New to graduate-level terminology, or just want a quick refresher? Here's a plain reference for the terms used throughout this handbook.

Term	Definition
Academic Good Standing	The status of a student who meets all academic performance standards established by the university and the graduate program.
Academic Probation	A status assigned to students who fail to maintain the minimum academic standards established by their graduate program or the university.
Capstone Project	A culminating academic experience that allows students to apply knowledge and skills acquired throughout their graduate program.
Cohort	A group of students who progress through a graduate program together.

Term	Definition
Commencement	The official university ceremony that recognizes students who have completed their degree requirements.
Comprehensive Examination	An examination designed to assess a student's mastery of graduate-level knowledge within a discipline.
Continuous Enrollment	A requirement that students remain enrolled during designated semesters while completing degree requirements.
Degree Audit	An evaluation of a student's completed and remaining degree requirements, used to monitor progress toward graduation.
Graduate Assistantship	A paid position that provides professional experience while supporting university operations, research, or instruction.
Graduate Catalog	The official university publication containing graduate academic policies, degree requirements, and institutional regulations.
Graduate Program Director	A faculty member responsible for academic oversight, advising, and administration of a graduate degree program.
Hold	An administrative restriction placed on a student's account that prevents specific actions such as registering for classes, receiving transcripts, graduating, or accessing certain university services.
Institutional Review Board (IRB)	A committee responsible for reviewing research involving human subjects to ensure ethical standards and regulatory compliance.
Leave of Absence	An approved interruption in a student's enrollment that allows temporary withdrawal from academic study while maintaining program eligibility.
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)	The academic standards that students must meet to remain eligible for financial aid programs.
Thesis	A substantial scholarly research project completed under faculty supervision that demonstrates mastery of a subject area and contributes to the discipline.
Transfer Credit	Graduate-level coursework completed at another institution that may be accepted toward a UHD graduate degree, subject to program approval.

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