What a year’s worth of COVID-19 case numbers tells us about how the pandemic affected the UT community.

By KEVIN VU

Spring 2020

For the first time in more than a year, UT saw cleared desks and closed operations on March 13, 2020. But for students, the University has reported 3,632 cases of COVID-19 since March 13, 2020, according to the UT COVID-19 dashboard. On March 13, 2019, then-UT President Greg Fenves announced that spring break would be extended by one week. Fenves and others decided the University would implement social distancing and population reductions after spring break and move some classes online.

"Maybe when the quarantine was implemented, the actions were pretty extreme," business freshman Sashika Kemparaju said. "I thought it would be enough to decrease the cases of COVID-19. I thought it would go on for maybe like a few weeks, but nowhere near this. I thought it would be over in a month. But since we kept extending things, I think the spread has continued to shift in daily life. The Daily Texan took a look back at the UT COVID-19 cases and case counts from the past year. Total cases from March 17, 2020: 3,632

During spring break, 251 UT students traveled to Cape Canaveral, Mexico, according to an April 3, 2020, article from the Daily Texan. Of the 251 students, 49 tested positive for COVID-19 as of April 3, marking the first reported outbreak within the UT community. According to a CDC report published in July 2020, of the 251 Texans tested positive for COVID-19 between March 1 and May 1, 2020, 243 had traveled outside the state. It’s unclear exactly how the spread occurred and if the students brought the virus back to Texas.

Another UT student tested positive for COVID-19, according to an April 3, 2020, article. The University of Houston announced on March 16, 2020, that a student had tested positive for COVID-19. The University of Houston officials told community members to stay vigilant against the spread of COVID-19 and avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth. The virus continues not to be spread through the air, according to the University of Houston. In late April, the Texas Department of State Health Services said that COVID-19 had not been detected in the state.

Summer 2020

"The first month of quarantine, I didn’t mind it that much," said UT Austin student Alex Toles, an economics and fuss theater major. "It really wasn’t until probably August, when I had to start online school, when it really hit me that I’ve been so isolated from other people. I kept thinking I was going to be spending my day, and it became the norm."

The second UT outbreak occurred when 10 custodial staff members tested positive for COVID-19 on May 10, 2020. Total cases from March 17, 2020: 3,632

In June 2020, UT Austin announced that the school approved a plan to return to campus in the fall. The University announced that students would be expected to wear masks and follow social distancing guidelines while on campus. The University also announced that a small number of students would be permitted to return to campus for in-person classes.

Fall 2020

As of Aug. 25, 2020, the UT COVID-19 dashboard reported 3,632 cases of COVID-19 since March 13, 2020. Total cases from March 17, 2020: 3,632

Full fall: UT Austin had a large number of students testing positive for COVID-19 in the fall. The University reported a total of 937 cases of COVID-19 among students and faculty from Sept. 1 to Nov. 6, 2020. The University also announced that the school would be offering in-person classes in the fall semester.

Spring 2021

The University reported a total of 17 COVID-19 cases in the community since March 17, 2020. Total cases from March 17, 2020: 3,632

In March 2021, UT Austin announced that the school would be returning to in-person classes in the fall semester. The University also announced that students would be required to wear masks and follow social distancing guidelines while on campus.

October 2021


In October 2021, the UT Austin Student Health Center announced that the school would be offering in-person classes in the fall semester. The University also announced that students would be required to wear masks and follow social distancing guidelines while on campus.

November 2021

As of Nov. 13, 2021, the UT COVID-19 dashboard reported 3,632 cases of COVID-19 since March 13, 2020. Total cases from March 17, 2020: 3,632

In November 2021, the UT Austin Student Health Center announced that the school would be offering in-person classes in the fall semester. The University also announced that students would be required to wear masks and follow social distancing guidelines while on campus.

December 2021


In December 2021, the UT Austin Student Health Center announced that the school would be offering in-person classes in the fall semester. The University also announced that students would be required to wear masks and follow social distancing guidelines while on campus.