

Cullen College of Engineering and College of Technology Merger

Frequently Asked Questions

2/24/2023

Why are the Cullen College of Engineering and the College of Technology merging?

Aligned with the goals of our strategic plan to become a top 50 public university, the University of Houston seeks to create additional opportunities and benefits for students and faculty through leveraging joint resources, reducing duplication and increasing alignment with the needs of the region.

A review of the top 100 universities ranked by U.S. News & World Report revealed that most of the institutions house these programs within a single academic entity. A merged college is expected to increase access in both undergraduate and graduate programs by providing students with a wide array of degree program options. More course options and pathways to completion will also help enhance retention and graduation rates.

Where is the University in the merger process? Who is guiding the transition process for this merger?

The University of Houston Provost appointed a Transition Committee that included the deans of the Cullen College of Engineering and College of Technology. Four subcommittees were established to ensure a smooth implementation of the proposed merger and realize expected benefits: Governance, Student Success, Faculty and Staff Advancement, and Branding.

The UH System Board of Regents approved the proposed merger on February 23, 2023. With the effective date being March 1, 2023, the merged college will now enter the Transitional Phase with the following outcomes:

- Publish a new college organizational chart
- Finalize Transition Subcommittee recommendations by September 1, 2023
- Move the finance and HR trees for the College of Technology (in PeopleSoft) to the College of Engineering effective September 1, 2023. All finance and HR information will be moved “as is” to maintain the integrity of currently existing departments
- Move the academic degree programs into the College of Engineering in the THECB program inventory and as needed in local systems (PeopleSoft, Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs) by September 1, 2023
- Develop and adopt new college bylaws by September 1, 2023
- Develop and adopt new promotion and tenure guidelines (including provisions for “grandfathering” of faculty hired under previous P&T guidelines) by December 1, 2023
- Implement Transition Subcommittee recommendations by February 2024
- Identify areas of synergies and increased efficiencies ongoing

Provost Diane Chase will continue to guide the transition process.

What is the name of the new college?

The merged college will be named the Cullen College of Engineering.

The College of Technology will reside within the Cullen College of Engineering as the Technology Division, which will house the four departments currently in the College of Technology: Construction Management; Engineering Technology; Human Development and Consumer Sciences; and Information and Logistics Technology.

The seven departments within the current Cullen College of Engineering (Biomedical Engineering, Brookshire Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Petroleum Engineering) will remain in their current form.

What are the benefits of the merger to the students?

A merged college is expected to contribute to increased access for prospective students in both undergraduate and graduate programs by providing students with a wide array of degree program options. Synergies gained by the development of multiple completion pathways and the sharing of common courses will also help enhance retention and graduation rates for students. The merger will also allow for the development of new programs that incorporate both the theoretical and practical views of the discipline. Students will further benefit through access to combined career resources leading to greater employment opportunities for graduates.

Will the merger impact the cost of attendance for students?

The merger will not impact the current [undergraduate](#) tuition and fees for fixed rate plans and per semester credit hour based on major or the current [graduate](#) tuition and incidental fees per semester credit hour based on major.

What are the benefits of the merger to faculty?

Faculty in the merged college will have better access to interdisciplinary grants that require both theoretical and applied approaches, which will lead to more patents, technology transfer and new products. Access to doctoral students by Technology faculty will provide opportunities for more competitive research grant proposals. While many faculty collaborate across college boundaries, it is expected that the merged college will enhance this collaboration.

What are the benefits of the merger on research productivity?

With more than 200 faculty members and more than 2,000 graduate students, the newly merged Cullen College of Engineering will have new opportunities to seek federal and state support and solve societal problems. Faculty and students will be able to engage in substantial research and development activities focused on cyber-physical infrastructure, manufacturing and energy, with the support of federal funding from the [Chips and Science Act](#), [Inflation Reduction Act](#) and the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#). Similarly, the merged college, working in conjunction with the strong health care and allied health programs across the university, will be a powerhouse to engage with the growing health care and biomedical research and translation in the Texas Medical Center.

How will the merger help meet workforce needs in the city, region and state?

Industries such as manufacturing, energy transition, aerospace and health care are demonstrating rapid growth in both the United States and Texas. Career growth and job opportunities in these areas are imminent. Through the seamless engagement of students focused on engineering and technology, UH can support the needs of the workforce and help position Houston as a leader in areas of regional and national importance.

Who made the decision to merge the two colleges?

To explore a potential merger of the Cullen College of Engineering and the College of Technology, President Khator initiated a collaborative review process guided by the following principles: (1) the university's commitment toward student success and national competitiveness must be maintained; (2) the change has to make programs in both colleges stronger; and (3) the process should be transparent and inclusive.

Based on the feedback from both colleges, it was determined the question was worthy of further exploration. An initial cross college task force was formed and charged with gathering input from relevant stakeholders and completing a SWOT analysis. At the conclusion of the analysis, the decision was in favor of a merged entity. Subsequently, a planning committee consisting of members from both colleges was set up. Based on the plan presented by the committees, President Khator made the decision to merge the two colleges.

When will Technology's move to UH at Sugar Land (UHSL) be completed?

Three programs have already moved to UHSL: Digital Media, Organizational Leadership and Supervision, and Technology Leadership and Innovation Management.

The Computer Information System (CIS) program began its transition to UHSL in fall 2022 and is expected to fully transition to Sugar Land by fall 2023. Human Development and Consumer Science (HDCS) has transitioned its Executive Master's in Human Resource Development to UHSL. President Khator has indicated in her communication dated February 24, *"The newly merged Cullen College of Engineering will have access to, and responsibility for, serving three locations: UH, UH at Sugar Land, and UH at Katy. The transition of technology programs to UH at Sugar Land, which started before the merger, will continue except in situations where a program's home needs to be on the main campus. The leadership of the newly merged Cullen College of Engineering will determine how to maximize the use of the three locations to serve students and the region in the most effective way possible."*

How will the connections to the community and industry be maintained?

The College of Technology has strong connections in the community, industry and employers. The merged college is expected to not only maintain but enhance these relationships. Similarly, Cullen College of Engineering has strong research ties at the federal, state and regional levels. It is fully expected that these relationships will multiply as synergies across programs grow.