Tulane in Houston weathers the storm

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The Freeman School’s Houston campus reopened on Sept. 5, nearly two weeks after closing in anticipation of Hurricane Harvey.

Assistant Dean for Executive Education Alex Sleptsov, who oversees the Freeman School’s Houston programs, says the facility weathered the storm in good shape,

suffering no wind or flooding damage.

“We’ve been getting reports from the facility manager who told us that everything should be fine,” Sleptsov says of the campus, located at 1700 West Loop South in the Galleria area. “The building is fine, our servers are fine, the classrooms are fine, so everything seems in order.”

The Houston campus serves about 100 working professional students with Executive MBA, Professional MBA, Master of Finance and Master of Management programs offered on alternate weekend schedules.

In consultation with Sleptsov, Associate Dean John Clarke and Tulane’s central administration, Dean Ira Solomon decided to close the campus on Friday, Aug. 25, as Hurricane Irma slowly made its way toward the Texas coast. The effects of the storm wouldn’t begin to be felt for another 24 hours, but after experiencing Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Sleptsov wasn’t about to take the threat lightly.

“We made the decision to close the campus on Friday to give our students more time to prepare for the disaster,” says Sleptsov. “I’m very glad we decided to cancel the classes because it would have been impossible for our faculty to fly out and we needed to give sufficient time for all of our staff members and students to prepare.”

As of right now, Sleptsov says he knows of one student whose home was damaged by flooding, another who experienced flooding in his apartment, and a third whose spouse lost a car, but apart from those reports, most students and staff appear to have escaped the worst of the storm.

“We haven’t heard anybody reporting personal injury, so we’re relieved to know that,” Sleptsov says, “but we know there is definitely some property damage.”

Members of the Tulane community who wish to contribute to relief efforts in Houston should visit Tulane University’s Center for Public Service web page for an updated list of non-profit organizations with Harvey relief funds.