



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, WEST INDIES

INTERNAL COMMUNIQUÉ

March 15, 2020

Update on Operations at The UWI St. Augustine Campus

Dear Colleagues,

Subsequent to our Internal Communiqué last Friday, March 13, there has been a revision to the Campus decisions taken at that time. The revisions are motivated by the following:

1. Updates provided by the GORTT and clarification from them that the announcement regarding closure of all schools and Universities was a measure to allow for containment of the spread of COVID-19. That measure should not compromise business continuity.
2. The guidance from the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development with respect to the development of pandemic, and application of sick leave provisions, as outlined in today's Press Conference. We will provide an update to employees, by separate communiqué, after discussions with the respective stakeholders, including the relevant Union partners.
3. The need for clarity on the immediate responsibilities of Deans and Heads of Department (HODs). This essentially places the onus on the HODs and Deans to determine which staff are required in office and who would be relegated or rostered for remote access. Included in this, is the need to ensure that maximum safety protocols are in place for all who inhabit the campus.
4. Plans to train Teaching Staff for a move to online course delivery are going quite well.

In summary, our discussions to date have focused on ensuring that The UWI can still operate to achieve its mandate and its responsibilities to students and other stakeholders and, by extension, sustain employment of staff after we have put the COVID challenge behind us. There will be a future and it is one that we have to prepare for even as we take care of our immediate responsibilities.

Even as we go about the above, please rest assured that the health, wellness and safety of all students and staff and our families remain the priority. Kindly, therefore,

note the following updates as it relates to my expectations of our continued operations:

- Many of you would have already heard from your respective Dean, Director or Head of Department regarding work arrangements for tomorrow – Monday, March 16. The expectation is for **virtual /online/by phone reporting** by all members of staff to allow for critical planning. In addition to the suspension of classes, the Campus will also be closed.
- Critical essential services will be maintained, inclusive of Campus IT Services (CITS), the Occupational, Health, Safety and the Environment (OSHE) Unit, Health Services Unit (HSU), Halls of Residence staff (inclusive of Hall Supervisors, Assistants and Cleaners), Estate Police Services, and the Division of Facilities Management (DFM). I have asked for particular attention be paid to the Halls of Residences, to provide security and support to students who cannot return to their homes. The designated staff in these departments are the only staff members expected to report in-person on Campus tomorrow. However, I am mindful that there may be some critical essential activities (ongoing experiments, attendance to livestock etc. in some Departments as well. Deans, Heads and Directors of Academic Units are asked to discuss this with staff and advise Campus Executive of any changes required in terms of staff required to physically report to work.
- Business continuity requires that we move some or all courses online. In this regard, Teaching staff are expected to use this week to allow for training and for virtual teaching/blended delivery. The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) will be offering a webinar entitled “Moving From Face-To-Face To Online Teaching (In A Hurry)” on Tuesday, March 17. I ask that all Teaching Staff make every attempt to register at <https://cetl-workshops.corsizio.com/c/5e6be91edb98e05f2de2caf7>

I understand this is an uncertain time, but we are already seeing our community pull together to keep each other safe, healthy and calm and I thank you for this. As we monitor COVID-19 nationally, I urge you all to heed the recommendations from the Ministry of Health. The Campus Incident Management Team (IMT) is working with the new developments and implementing COVID-19 Response Plan for the Campus.

I will continue to provide regular updates.

Marketing and Communications
on behalf of

Professor Brian Copeland

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal