

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM



PLAN FOR CARRYING OUT OF REMAINING ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES UNDER THE 2019/2020 ALMANAC

BY

THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR-ACADEMIC

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1. INTRODUCTION

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government took several measures to contain its impact including ordering the closure of all schools and higher learning institutions. Consequently, the University of Dar es Salaam partially closed down on 18th March 2020 until further notice.

The closure of the University affected academic activities which were scheduled under the 2019/2020 Almanac of the University of Dar es Salaam including registration for the Second Semester for continuing students, teaching and examinations, long vacation, practical training//field work, teaching practice, supplementary examinations, the three yearly visit by external examiners and graduation ceremonies. These activities were supposed to take place between 23rd March 2020 and 31st October 2020.

On 17th May 2020, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania announced that he was contemplating lifting the closure of academic institutions. On 21st May 2020, the President announced that higher learning institutions should reopen on 1st June 2020.

On announcing the reopening of Universities, the Government directed that these institutions should develop recovery plans which must ensure three things: First, the activities of the Second Semester should not spill over into the next academic year. This means that the activities that were supposed to take place over approximately **seven months** must now be compressed in **five months** between **1st June and 31st October 2020**.

Secondly, the shortening of the Semester notwithstanding, courses must be taught in such a way that the content and substantive learning outcomes are substantially the same as those in the full semester.

Thirdly, the measures directed by the Government for the control of the spread of the coronavirus disease must be observed. These measures include restriction on large gatherings, regular washing and sanitization of hands, observing social distancing, and sanitisation of shared electronic equipment (e.g. computer key boards) after each and every use.

In order to comply with the directives above, the remaining activities at the Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere Main Campus (MJKNMC) under the 2019/2020 Almanac will be carried out within periods and in the manner as specified hereunder:

2. RETURN OF STUDENTS

Students, particularly those who will be residing in residences will return on Saturday **30th May, 2020**.

3. REGISTRATION OF CONTINUING STUDENTS AND SIGNING OF LOAN FORMS

In the past, registration of students and connected activities such as collection of student IDs and disbursement of student loans have tended to attract large crowds of students. In order to ensure that this does not happen this time, the following measures have been, or will be, taken:

- (i) The period for registration of continuing students and signing of loan forms will be extended from one week previously provided for under the Almanac to nearly ten days from **28th May to 7th June 2020**.
- (ii) The University submitted in advance all the paper work for loan disbursements to HESLB before the students have registered. This will ensure that when students arrive the money will be ready and available for collection by students as quickly as possible.
- (iii) Desks for registration and signing forms for loans will be open from **07:00am to 16:00pm**. Thereafter the Loans Office will enter data into the system from **16:00pm to 10:00pm** on daily basis.
- (iv) The registration capacity will be enhanced by adding both equipment and personnel so that the registration exercise can be spread out and thus avoid congestion.
- (v) Beneficiaries of HESLB loans will sign the related forms at their Colleges, Schools and directorates. Each of these units will be required to deploy at least two staff for two weeks for this activity who will work under the supervision of the Loan Officer.
- (vi) University Auxiliary Police officers will be assigned to control the flow of students to desks for collection of student IDs and signing for loans.
- (vii) Electronic gadgets used for fingerprints will be sanitized after each and every single use.

These measures will ensure that registration and related activities are conducted in utmost safety.

4 2ND SEMESTER TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS

As per the 2019/2020 University Almanac, teaching and examination activities for the Second Semester were supposed to take place over a period of 17 weeks, 15 for teaching and 2 for examinations) starting from 23rd March and ending on 18th July 2020. The closure of the University means that 09 of these weeks have been lost.

In order to ensure that courses are taught in such a manner that the content and substantive learning outcomes of the courses taught are the same as those in the full semester without causing the activities for the Second Semester to spill over the next academic year the following measures will be taken:

4.1 Reducing Contact Hours to the Statutory Minimum

The regular teaching contact hours in a Semester are three per week or 45 hours over 15 weeks. However, Regulation 3.1 of the *General University Examination Regulations (GUER)* considers a student to have satisfactorily attended a course, and eligible to sit for examinations, if he or she attends a minimum of 75% of the prescribed contact hours for the course. In terms of weeks and contact hours, 75% translates to 12 weeks and 36 hours respectively.

In light of the lost time the teaching period will be reduced from 15 weeks and 45 hours to 12 weeks and 36 hours respectively. However, each course will be given an extra hour in each week for Tutorial Seminars and Coursework Assessments. This hour may also be used for teaching or any other academic activities at the discretion of the lecturers. Thus, the cumulative contact hours over the 12 weeks will actually be **48 hours**.

4.2 Coronavirus Control Measures and Teaching Arrangements

The following measures will be taken to minimize the spread of coronavirus in the context of teaching and examinations:

- (a) Every lecturer will be required to spend five to ten minutes of the first lecture to explain to students the various measures they need to take to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.
- (b) Water and soap will be placed at entrances to lecture halls and other academic facilities. All students and lecturers will be required to use them every time they enter the facility.
- (c) Students and staff will be required to wear masks during lectures and seminars. However those who for medical or other health reasons cannot

do so will not have to. A sufficiently distanced sitting space will be reserved for such persons.

(d) The class timetable will take into account the need to minimize any contact during lecture sessions.

(e) Whenever possible, students belonging to a particular college/school/institute or department will be scheduled to the nearest venue (s) so as to reduce walking distance between lectures and hence minimize contact between students.

A separate document detailing the broader strategies adopted by the University of Dar es Salaam will be issued by the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration.

These measures will ensure that teaching and other learning processes will be conducted in safety and the risk of students and staff transmitting COVID-19 between each other are minimized.

4.3 Teaching Calendar

The calendar of teaching activities will be as follows:

Begins: Monday 01 June 2020

End of Lecture Sessions: Friday 21 August 2020.

5 2ND SEMESTER UNIVERSITY COURSEWORK ASSESSMENT

There will be no special time blocked for this activity. Each lecturer will find time from the lecture or seminar hours to administer coursework.

6 2ND SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS-EXCEPT FOR MCHAS

Begin Monday 24 August 2020

End Friday 04 September 2020

7 END OF 2019/2020 ACADEMIC YEAR: 29 AUGUST EXCEPT MCHAS

8 MARKING – EXCEPT FOR MCHAS

Begins: Monday 07 September 2020

Ends: Friday 18th September 2020

9 COMPILATION –EXCEPT FOR MCHAS

Begins: Monday 21 September 2020

Ends: Friday 25 September 2020

10 RELEASE OF PROVISIONAL RESULTS FOR SEMESTER 2 EXAMINATIONS – EXCEPT FOR MCHAS

Release Date: Monday 16 October 2020

11 LONG VACATION – EXCEPT FOR MCHAS

Begins: Saturday 05 September 2020

Ends: Late November 2020 (Subject to Government/TCU
confirming start date for the 2020/2021 Academic Year)

12 PRACTICAL TRAINING/FIELD WORK

Under the 2019/2020 Almanac, practical training and field work were scheduled to begin on 20th July 2020 and end on 11th September 2020 which is approximately **eight weeks**. Because of the adjustments of the dates for teaching and examination activities, the dates for these activities will be pushed forward to start immediately after the end of the 2019/2020 Academic Year. Thus the new dates for these activities will be as follows:

Begins: Monday 07 September 2020

Ends: Friday 16 October 2020

This will be a total of **six weeks** which is 75% of the regular period of eight weeks.

13 TEACHING PRACTICE

Under the 2019/2020 Almanac, teaching practice was scheduled to begin on Monday 27th July 2020 and end on Friday 18th September 2020 which is also approximately **eight weeks**. Because of the adjustments of the dates for teaching and examination activities, the dates for these activities will also be pushed forward as follows:

Begins: Monday 07 September 2020

Ends: Friday 16 October 2020

This will be a total of **six weeks** which is **75%** of the regular time of eight weeks.

This plan is subject to the plans by relevant authorities for resumption and conclusion of classes by secondary school students.

14 FIRST SITTING EXAMINATION PROCESSING (2019/2020)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| a) Independent Internal Examiners: | 28 September – 02 October, 2020. |
| b) 3 Yearly External Examiners: | This activity is postponed to 2020/2021* |
| c) College and School Boards | 05 – 09 October, 2020 |
| d) SUSC (Exams) Meeting: | 12 October 2020 |
| e) Senate (Exams) Meeting: | 15 October 2020 |
| f) Release of Examination Results: | 16 October 2020 |
| g) Supplementary Examinations: | Two weeks before the opening of the 2020/2021 academic year |

***The Three Yearly Visit by External Examiners**

This year external examiners are supposed to visit the University for an extended period to conduct a three yearly evaluation and assessment of the University of Dar es Salaam teaching and examination processes in accordance with the *Reviewed Regulations on External and Internal Examination Processes, Jan 2013*. This visit was planned to involve more than 70 persons from various parts of the world and was supposed to take place between 8th and 14th August 2020.

Although the University was ready for this activity, having it at this time appears not to be feasible. First, the currently planned dates are impossible due to the adjustments in calendar for teaching and examination activities proposed above. Second, all the external examiners are academics at various academic institutions in the world. During the coming months, most academic institutions are likely to reopen and restrict travel by academic staff so as to concentrate on catching up. Third and crucially, during the intended period, COVID-19 related moratorium on work-related international travel and stoppage of international flights will most likely still be in place. So, even those available, may still not be able to come.

On the above reasons, it is proposed that this activity be postponed to the academic year 2020/2021.

15: GRADUATION CEREMONIES

According to the Almanac, the 50th UDSM Graduation Ceremonies for MJKNMC were supposed to take place in two clusters one in May 2020 and the other in November 2020. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, the Government, through the Prime Minister, Hon. Majaliwa Kassim Majaliwa, banned all graduation ceremonies until the

Government itself announces otherwise. Even if the temporary closure of academic institutions is lifted in the near future, the ban on large/non-essential gatherings is likely to remain in place. Therefore, there is a need to devise alternative ways of ensuring that those who have already fulfilled all the requirements are conferred with the necessary qualifications and get the related documentation.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19, universities around the have adopted various approaches to graduation ceremonies including graduation in absentia, conduct the traditional graduation ceremony but breaking it into several smaller events with only students allowed to attend, using robots and mounted tablets with the photos of the graduands who can control the avatar robots from their homes and collect their awards, postponement of graduation *sine die*, postponement to next graduation session and holding virtual graduation ceremony.

Based on the above experiences, and taking into account the financial and technological capabilities of the University of Dar es Salaam, the following approaches will be taken in respect of graduation ceremonies for the 2019/2020 academic year:

- (i) The First Cluster of the 50th Graduation Ceremony which would have taken place in May 2020 will be pushed forward to beginning of July 2020 to see if a traditional graduation ceremony can be held.
- (ii) If, by the beginning of July the traditional graduation ceremony will still be impossible to hold, then the ceremony will be cancelled altogether and all qualifying students will be allowed to graduate in absentia. This will enable students who have already fulfilled the requirements to be awarded their degrees and necessary documentation.
- (iii) If, by November it is still not possible to conduct the traditional graduation ceremony, the 50th UDSM should be conducted either in absentia or virtually using software-based video conference such as zoom and/or Skype.

16 START OF ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021

On the date to be announced by the Government.

DVC Academic
27TH May 2020.