

From the Dean of Engineering and the Built Environment

Communique 1: FEBE update and status to students: 1 – 15 May 2020

Dear faculty students

This communique is my first communication since resuming office on 1 May 2020. I am excited to be back in the faculty, although under very difficult circumstances. There will be a transition and handover period from Prof Moll to myself. During this period, Ms Stringer will remain as the Assistant Dean Teaching and Learning (Acting), Prof Ojumu will remain as the Faculty Research coordinator (acting) while, Mr Cloete will continue as the Faculty manager. As your Dean I look forward to engaging with all of you and your inputs, feedback and suggestions on how to take this faculty forward.

This communication is framed within the current Covid-19 pandemic under lockdown level 4 conditions and what the institution is allowed and permitted to do under these conditions. It further aligns with the institutional updates, the institution's business continuity plan (BCP); the BCP for Teaching and Learning (T&L); the BCP for postgraduate (PG) studies; and the revised academic year 2020 (AY2020) scenario plan all guided by the government regulations, the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation's risk-adjusted strategy for the post-school education and training sector and the national Higher Education sectorial approaches.

The Faculty Management is continuously assessing the situation around the COVID-19 pandemic and will attempt to keep you updated on a weekly basis with regards to the status and plans for the faculty. The purpose of this communication is to provide a faculty status update and way forward on (i) teaching and learning (T&L); (ii) research and innovation (R&I) and other related matters in the context of the revised AY2020.

Revised AY2020

The minister has announced that AY2020 should be reorganised to complete the academic year with the prospect of extending into 2021. The faculty has provided input into the institutional proposal for the revised AY2020 terms and dates through the institutional working group. These revised term dates will be communicated as soon as it has been approved. The faculty BCP towards completing AY2020 will be framed within the revised scenario planning and may change should the circumstances of the pandemic require us to do so.

Autumn graduation

This is one of the highlights in the academic calendar and both staff and students were disappointed when this Autumn Graduation had to be postponed. The Registrar's office responsible for graduations together with the Department of Marketing and Communication is working on an alternative graduation option and once this has been approved further details will be communicated from the Registrar's office.

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- All HDC digital guidelines are available on the CPGS website (<https://www.cput.ac.za/research-technology-and-innovation/postgraduate/digital>).

All campus-based research activities are on hold until we return to campus. Please use this time with the guidance of your supervisor to assess the status of your research, revise your research methodology and experimental plans. All postgraduate students are encouraged to stay in contact with their supervisors as far as possible using appropriate and agreed communication platforms, so that they can provide you with the necessary guidance and support. Under the guidance of your supervisor and where practically possible you are encouraged to continue desktop related activities with the support of your supervisor as far as possible; i.e. writing of proposals, articles, theses/dissertations and other related activities.

All postgraduate students busy with field work should, in conjunction with their supervisors, immediately make an assessment and evaluate when this work will realistically be able to continue with the aim of minimising the spread of the virus, safeguarding the researchers, students and individuals at the research sites.



The upcoming week of 11 – 15 May will be used to:

- Assess the status of PG student HDC digital registration and presence.
- HODs are required to link all registered PG students to supervisors and co-supervisors on the HDC digital system.
- All supervisors in conjunction with their PG students must make an assessment and evaluate the current state of the research, revise research objectives if required and align and revise experimental plans and research methodologies (this might also require changes to existing signed supervisor and student agreements).
- Plan the faculty online proposal, article, theses/dissertation writing support.

Student access to devices and connectivity

As many of you might be aware, the Centre for Innovative Educational Technology (CIET) conducted a student survey and together with Computer and Telecommunications Services (CTS) they are assessing the extent to which students have access to devices and connectivity and are in the process of putting interventions in place to address this.

The CTS plan regarding student access to devices and connectivity can be accessed in the Covid-19 contingency plan booklet made available to all students.

https://issuu.com/cput6/docs/covid_student_contingency_plan_8.5.20

Student queries

A similar but separate faculty communication will be sent to staff wherein staff are requested to please respond to all student queries timeously with care, understanding and flexibility; to establish the most appropriate means of communication; and communicate clear expectations and how learning material will be made available.

Finally, I acknowledge that this is a very challenging time for everyone and the well-being of all our staff and students is of utmost importance. To this end there is institutional support for student wellness through the student affairs unit. Please do not hesitate to contact them should you require personal support.

I urge all staff and students as far as is possible to safeguard themselves from the spread of the Covid-19 virus by exercising physical and social distancing; self-isolation where possible and as required, and adhere to all the COVID-19 and lockdown regulations, guidelines and requirements.

In conclusion

While we all work our way through this uncertain and unfamiliar period, please remember that you are not alone. Your wellbeing is important to us. Please stay safe and we will get through this together.

Covid-19 Emergency Hotline: 0800 029 999 | WhatsApp Support Line: 0600-123456

Prof Marshall Sheldon

8 May 2020