

Re: Communiqué 7: FEBE update and close out of AY2020

18 December 2020

Dear students of the Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment

I hope that this email finds you and your families well. This communiqué follows the latest announcement of the president on 14 December 2020 and focusses on two aspects: (i) the faculty's completion of the academic year 2020 (AY2020) and (ii) the health and safety (H&S) requirements for all outstanding on-campus activities.

(i) Completion of AY2020

By now most programmes in the faculty are busy completing the final assessments with 85% of the programmes finishing by 22 December 2020 and the outstanding programmes concluding between 11 and 25 Jan 2021.

Due to the nature of some of the Engineering programmes, on-campus invigilated assessments were and are planned where this is required to maintain the integrity and quality of the academic project. In addition, this approach:

- Accommodates the diverse circumstances that students are exposed specifically those students who have indicated that they do not have conducive learning environments at home or have challenges with devices and access to connectivity.
- Accommodates the diverse nature of our programmes that require specific learning outcomes to be assessed. The mode of assessment is determined by the learning outcomes and competencies that need to be assessed, demonstrated and achieved which is not possible in an online environment for all subjects or parts of subjects.
- On-campus invigilated assessments where required, strengthens the confidence in, integrity, and validity of the assessment practices for relevant departments to maintain its professional body accreditation status where this is applicable.

Programmes that fall under professional bodies such as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA), South African Council for the Project and Construction Management Professions (SACPCMP); SA Council for the Quantity Surveying Profession (SACQSP); South African Geomatics Council (SAGC); South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) all have specific requirements to comply with. The decisions taken regarding the delivery of the curriculum and assessment modes and types are to ensure that the departments will be able to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation requirements so that you can graduate with an accredited qualification. Accredited programmes are important for graduates to be able to register as professionals.

As we close out AY2020 we are continuously assessing the situation in line with government regulations and announcements.

(ii) Health and safety while on campus

The faculty takes the H&S of all its staff, students and any person entering its premises seriously. In line with the president's call for adherence to H&S precautions, I want to use this opportunity to assure all students that all on-campus activities were carefully planned, while keeping in mind H&S compliance requirements. All on-campus activities have to comply with the institutional H&S protocols and comply with the Covid-19 regulations. Screening is done at the entrance to all campuses, sanitisers are available at the entrance to all buildings and in all venues; and all venues have been prepared in compliance with the physical distancing measures.

While on campus, students are expected to and must:

- a) Report for screening at least an hour prior to the assessment.
- b) Wear their face masks correctly, and maintain social distancing (1.5m) at all times.
- c) Report, in single file, to the assessment venue, at least 30 minutes prior to the assessment.
- d) Hand sanitize at the entrances to the assessment venue.

I further remind all students of the following faculty protocol that was communicated earlier in the year:

- **Wearing of masks mandatory** – Any person not wearing a mask will be denied entry to the faculty buildings in line with the government regulations. Face masks must be worn covering both the nose and mouth at all times.
- Utilise the sanitisers at the entrance to buildings and venues and when leaving a building and/or venue.
- Only use the dedicated entrance and exit doors to buildings; do not use the emergency doors unless specifically indicated and/or there is an emergency announced and the building needs to be evacuated.
- Adhere to the maximum capacity allocation as indicated outside the venue.
- Use only the seating allocations in venues as indicated. Fill the rows from one side.
- Leave all venues in the condition that it was found in.
- No gatherings, crowding and congregation in or outside any passage, office, laboratory, venue, staircase or building at any time.
- Adhere to the capacity and physical distancing rules when using lifts.
- Avoid sharing of laptops; pens; books; cell phones; etc. as far as possible.
- No consumption of food or drinks in general areas or inside any venue.

In conclusion

AY2020 with all its challenges is progressing and everyone is working hard towards concluding this academic year. I want to urge all students specifically those students that have not yet concluded their final assessments or those students that qualify for deferred/reassessments to persevere and focus their energy and efforts on completing this year successfully. *Remember why you started studying in the first place, know where you want to go, what your end goal is and focus on that. As your Dean I want nothing more than to see you graduate in April 2021 or progress to the next level.* Remember everyone is struggling with something, so please be kind to one another.

I want to wish you all a happy holiday season. While you enjoy this time with family and friends please adhere to the president's call for compliance to the Covid-19 protocols so that you not only protect yourself but those around you as well. Please stay safe and best wishes to you all.

Prof Marshall Sheldon

Dean of Engineering and the Built Environment

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