



# THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

MONA CAMPUS, JAMAICA, WEST INDIES

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## GUIDELINES FOR FSS STUDENTS' TRANSITION TO REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING SEMESTER 2, 2019/20

This is a guidance document of some things to expect when the Faculty resumes teaching remotely/online on April 14<sup>th</sup>. There are many things that may impact the experience, some of which will be beyond the Faculty's control (e.g. your access to the internet, download ability, familiarity with online platform, etc.) however for those things that we can control, the Faculty is trying to make the experience the best it can for all involved given the circumstances. Patience and commitment to learning will be key. However, together we will make it through the remainder of the semester.

The ensuing guidelines are merely suggestion which are subject to change as our circumstances evolve. Please bear this in mind as we negotiate the new normal in the Faculty.

### A. Things to note from now

1. OurVLE and Blackboard Collaborate<sup>1</sup> will be the official mechanism for delivering all course content. As such, all lectures, assignments, and relevant course documents will be uploaded to OurVLE.
2. Be prepared that asynchronous teaching (non-simultaneous or recorded) will likely be the way many or most classes will be delivered. This will be so for many reasons (limited bandwidth, student access to stable internet for the duration of a class, etc.). This means you must be prepared to download classes and class material when you log on.
3. If your lecturer does hold a synchronous class using another platform than that supported by OurVLE, the recording of that class (or a link to it) will be placed in OurVLE within the 24 hours following the class.
4. Lecturers will strive to ensure that the content that will be covered in a class will be available on OurVLE prior to the class and will remain on OurVLE through to the end of the semester.
5. All lecturers have an official UWI email address or can be reached through OurVLE.
6. When teaching resumes, the Faculty will be following the timetable established prior to our current situation. (See also section C below)
7. Every course will have a **Course Guidance Document** posted by midnight April 13<sup>th</sup> which provides detailed information about how the course will be completed online. This will include, but not limited to, information on:
  - a) Content and assignments remaining to be covered

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<sup>1</sup> Blackboard Collaborate (BBC) is the platform supported by OurVLE for synchronous teaching – simultaneous or 'real-time'

- b) Any changes made to course weightings for coursework, internship/practicums, quizzes, and exams
  - c) The revised mode of teaching and examination
  - d) Projected dates for remaining exams, presentations and coursework
  - e) Tutorial schedule, methodology and expectations.
  - f) Contact information and preferred mode of contact for the lecturers and tutors,
  - g) Office hours for both lecturers and tutors
8. Where a course has an exam it will be facilitated via an online or remote method. As of this moment there will be no face-to-face proctored exam.

#### **B. Things to do the week before April 14**

1. As best as possible determine the method you will use to access the course that will be delivered remotely/online. For example: Think through whether your method of connection will allow you to access a course asynchronously or synchronously. Will it allow you to access OurVLE only once a day to do downloads or uploads or can you access it multiple times per day at the time when your classes would be held?
2. Note that Digicel has zero rated the OurVLE web address. This means you will not pay to access or download data from the website.
3. Make sure you can log on to OurVLE and begin to familiarise yourself with it, especially if you have never used it before. Utilize the resources provided to you through OurVLE and via the UWI App. For example, check out <https://ourvle.mona.uwi.edu>. See available resources in the block entitled: "OurVLE & Blackboard Collaborate Guidelines for Students"
4. Make sure you can see a course container for all your courses on OurVLE. If you can't, check your registration to make sure you are properly registered for the course. Alternatively you may contact the MITS Help Desk or <https://support.mona.uwi.edu/> for assistance. The University has sent out *Revised Guidelines for Registration and Payment of Fees* to your UWI-issued email account. Consult the document for more information.
5. Obtain an email contact for all your lecturers. Try to establish contact, if possible this week prior to teaching. Let them know how you will be able to access their material i.e. one download per day, synchronously and/or asynchronously. This will help them be prepared for when teaching resumes.
6. Ask the lecturer for their online office hours or check the OurVLE page. These will be hours they will be available online outside of the scheduled teaching, lab or tutorial hours.
7. Download your timetable of classes and keep it handy. This will help keep you on track. If you can't find or access it, go to the Department's website for the course.
8. Read through the tips for making the most of the online experience which will be available on the FSS website via <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/socsci/>.
9. If you are a student with a disability and you have not yet registered with the Office of Special Student Services, please do so by contacting (876) 977-1551. It is also advisable that you contact your lecturer so that arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

#### **C. Things to do and expect on April 14**

1. Access OurVLE and for each of your courses, familiarize yourself with the detailed **Course Guidance Document** provided. If you have questions jot them down and be prepared to ask your lecturer on the day and/or time of the first scheduled class for that course during this week. Note that this may not be on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

2. Your lecturer at the first scheduled class will share with you the method of the classes going forward and advise of his/her office hours and any changes to the grade allocation for the course.
3. What happens for the remainder of that day will vastly depend on your access and the teaching options your lecturers are pursuing to meet the needs of the course scheduled for that day.
4. Also on the 14<sup>th</sup>, follow the timetable you have for the day.
5. Lecturers, as best as possible, will avail themselves to you according to the time slot for their course on your timetable. This will mean that at the time you have a course they will be online and in OurVLE teaching you or explaining how the rest of the week will go; or are accessible via OurVLE Forum/Chat features; or are available to connect via another medium which they have sent you a link for; or are available to answer questions via email or using other forms of contact.
6. Some likely scenarios are as follows:
  - a. If you had ECON1012 at 8am then access the OurVLE container at 8am on the 14<sup>th</sup> if you are able. If you have a synchronous lecture, then attend the lecture. If the lecture has been uploaded prior, then watch the lecture. If instructions have been uploaded for material to be covered in that time, then attempt to cover the material during the period.
  - b. If you can only access OurVLE once or twice per day, then try to access the material for the classes you have on April 14 beforehand (at the beginning of the day or the night prior if possible). Discipline yourself to go through the material according to the timetable if possible. So, if possible, go through the material for ECON1012 at 8am on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Prepare all the questions you may have to either ask the teacher during online office hours he/she may set or during the tutorial time scheduled for your course. Alternatively email the questions to the lecturer so they are aware of what issues you may be having and be prepared to address them at the most convenient opportunity.
7. If there is a course you have that is not on the timetable for April 14<sup>th</sup>, try to wait for the day and time that the course is scheduled during that week to establish contact and/or do all of the above.
8. Remember that your lecturers will have other classes on April 14 besides yours. Try as best as possible to use online office hours or scheduled class times to communicate or use the established means of contact.
9. Contact the Department and/or Faculty Office at [fss\\_studentmatters@uwimona.edu.jm](mailto:fss_studentmatters@uwimona.edu.jm) on the 14<sup>th</sup> if you have questions. They may have limited persons present to answer phones between 10am and 2pm (unless things change with the national circumstance). The Faculty is requesting that students do not come to any Department on the 14<sup>th</sup> as we are limiting face-to-face contact. The offices will have limited persons present to answer phones only.

#### **D. Things to do for the remainder of the first week**

1. Follow your timetable with respect to access to your classes or material.
2. Discipline yourself to cover the class material provided using the timetable as a guide.
3. Your lecturers will try to put up material in advance. Read ahead if you can.
4. Expect that there will be challenges as we pursue this new methodology of teaching. Be patient. Make helpful suggestions to your lecturers.

