THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

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GUIDELINES FOR FSS LECTURERS' TRANSITION TO REMOTE COURSE DELIVERY SEMESTER 2, 2019/2020

Overview:
As we all seek to prepare ourselves for remote course delivery on April 14, outlined below are some guidelines to ensure a smooth transition.

This is a guidance document for lecturers on how as a Faculty we will approach online/remote teaching as of April 14 and some expectations we have of you in advance and through that first week. There are many things that may impact the student online experience, some of which will be beyond the Faculty's control (e.g. student access to the internet, download ability, familiarity with online platform, etc.) however for those things that we can control of, the Faculty is trying to make the experience the best it can be for all involved given the circumstances. Patience and commitment to learning will be key for both staff and students. Together however we will make it through the remainder of the semester. A similar guidance document is being prepared for our students and will be shared with you.

The ensuing guidelines are merely suggestions 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[1] will be the official mechanism for delivering all course content. All lectures, assignments, and relevant course documents will be uploaded to OurVLE.
2. Consider asynchronous teaching (non-simultaneous or recorded) to be the default mode for delivering content. This, as we have little to no control over the factors that will determine student access (e.g., limited bandwidth, student access to stable internet for the duration of a class, etc.). This means you must be prepared that students may only be able to download classes and class material outside scheduled lecture times, or be able to remain in synchronous contact for only limited periods
3. Synchronous classes are however possible. (See point 8 below). We should anticipate that bandwidth issues may arise since usage of the platform will be across

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[1] Blackboard Collaborate (BBC) is the platform supported by OurVLE for synchronous teaching – simultaneous or 'real-time'

the entire University. **Please ensure that synchronous classes using BBC are recorded and available on OurVLE.**

4. If you do intend to hold a synchronous class using another platform than that supported by OurVLE, **the recording of that class (or a link to it) must also be placed in OurVLE.** Please have all recorded classes (using whichever means) uploaded as soon as possible in the hours immediately following the class. In the worst case try to have it up at least by the end of the same day. Familiarize yourself with how to do so from now.

5. OurVLE has a maximum capacity of 200MB for any one document. It is therefore recommended that you use YouTube or Google channels for large files and share the URLs in the container. It is advisable that you endeavour to keep the files as small as possible, as it not only needs to be uploaded by the tutors but also downloaded or played back by all students in the course, some of whom may not have ideal/optimal connectivity and bandwidth. Here are some practical tips in this regard: (a) To record a slideshow with narration and slide timings, click here: https://bit.ly/34nExaV; and (b) To compress media files in PowerPoint, click here: https://bit.ly/2Vb7umt. *Caution: Be sure to make a copy of the original file first before attempting this manoeuvre.*

6. Try to upload as much content as you can before the 14th. Students will have an expectation that the content to be covered in a class will be available at least on the day of the class on OurVLE. A good practice may be to have it available the day before. Because of limited access some students may choose to download all the day's content at the beginning of the day or the night before. The uploaded content must remain on OurVLE through to the end of the semester.

7. All lecturers must have an official UWI email address at which they can be reached. Please ensure this is available to students.

8. When teaching resumes the Faculty will be following the Semester timetable established prior to our current situation. (See Section C). The expectation is that all lecturers will be available and online during their scheduled class time. This may mean you are attempting a synchronous class at that time; are available for a discussion on the material you would have covered that day and which you asked students to download prior; or are available for discussion via email, etc. The request is being made for lecturers to be available at the scheduled timetabled session even if asynchronous work has been assigned for download and individual work.

9. Every course must have a *Course Guidance Document* posted by latest midnight April 13 which provides detailed information about how the course will be completed online. This should include (but is not limited to) information on:
   a. Content already covered and content remaining to be covered
   b. Any changes made to course weightings/assessment for coursework, internship/ practicums, quizzes, and exams
   c. The revised mode of teaching (asynchronous or synchronous)
   d. Projected dates for remaining exams, presentation, and coursework
   e. Timetable for the course. Though students should already have their timetable.
   f. Tutorial schedule, methodology, assignments, and expectations

g. Contact information including preferred mode of contact and office hours for both lectures and tutors.

10. Every lecturer is asked to set online office hours. These are 1-2 hours outside of scheduled timetable hours when you may be available online or when you will dedicate time to responding to email queries from students about the course.

11. Note that the Digicel has zero rated the OurVLE web address. This means students will not pay to access it when connected or to download data from the website. Try as much then to make use of OurVLE for contact with students.

12. Encourage students with outstanding registration issues to note the UWI advisory on late registration and to settle their registration as promptly as possible so that they will be able to access OurVLE.

13. It is anticipated that we will have 4-5 weeks left of teaching for this semester. The exact end date will be announced soon.

14. If you still have questions re the use of OurVLE and BBC check out the MITS online resources first. Thereafter, contact the IT personnel in your Department then the MITS Helpdesk helpdesk@uwimona.edu.jm or the Faculty Office.

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

1. Finalize the method you will use to conduct teaching. Consider the worst-case scenario of a student who has limited access once or twice a day.

2. Make sure you are familiar with the features of OurVLE. Don't let your first experience be your first class with the students.

3. Upload content for at least the first week (the first two weeks would be ideal). If possible, make clear what will be covered when i.e. if possible, apportion content into what is expected to be covered in each timetable slot for each week.

4. Upload your *Course Guidance Document* no later than the night of April 13th.

5. Try a test class during this week prior to teaching. Where practical, it is advisable that the test class be done with your tutors/graduate assistants playing the role of the students. Their feedback should give you a good idea of the experience the students will have. Point students to materials provided by the UWI and by the Faculty on how they should prepare to navigate the online/remote teaching experience.

6. Post your online office hours and that of your tutors, where applicable, and share this information with the students at the first scheduled class.

7. Remind yourself of your timetable of classes and keep it handy. This will help keep you on track. (Use reminders on your phone if necessary).

8. Read through the guidance note provided to students by the Faculty so you are aware what they are expecting.

9. Where applicable, meet with your tutors/graduate assistants to strategize on the way forward. Ensure also that your tutors submits and shares their online office hours with the students and departmental administrators.

10. Avail yourself of training opportunities such as the Staff Development Session on "Setting Multiple Choice Questions" and "Setting Take-Home Exam Questions scheduled for April 9 at 2pm via Zoom. You may join using the following: Meeting ID: 938-633-474 and Password: 347887.

C. Things to do on or during the week of April 14

1. Be aware that students will attempt to contact you on the 14th even if you did not have a class scheduled with them on the 14th. Be patient and help them where you can. However, point out to them that we will as much as possible be sticking to the Faculty timetable. Some of their questions then may be answered later in the week (especially if they relate to a course that is not scheduled for the 14th). Following the timetable is an attempt to provide structure to the online/remote experience and not to overwhelm the students and lecturers. Encourage them as much as possible to follow the timetable.

2. What happens for the day will vastly depend on access – your access and the access of the student - and the teaching options you have chosen to meet the needs of the course. However, try as best as possible to follow the timetable of the day.

3. On the 14th, be available to your students at the time slot when you would have had your class, tutorial, lab on the Faculty timetable (if you have a session scheduled). This may mean that at this time you are online and in OurVLE teaching or explaining how the rest of the week will go; or are accessible via OurVLE Forum/Chat features; or are available and connected via another medium which you have sent a link for and also posted on OurVLE; or are available to answer questions via email or other forms of contact. See section F below for instructions on configuring mail in OurVLE.

4. In your first scheduled class be prepared that teaching may not occur but you may spend the time answering students' questions and going through the detailed *Course Guidance Document.*

5. You are also expected to share with the students, the format of the classes going forward and any changes that were made to the grade allocation for the course.

6. Some likely scenarios for that first day or for ensuing classes are as follows:
   a. If you had ECON1012 at 8am then expect that students who are able to access the OurVLE container at 8am will do so. If you have a synchronous lecture, then proceed with the lecture. If the lecture was uploaded prior, then allow the students to watch the lecture but be present to answer questions. If you had previously uploaded material which should have been read, then proceed with discussion around the material; etc.
   b. You should also be prepared that students can only access material once per day. After teaching resumes, encourage students in this situation to access the material prior to class and to send you questions they may have. Be prepared to use the time available for your class to answer the questions. Alternatively, you may arrange for students to contact you during your online office hours or during the tutorial time scheduled for your course.

7. If there is a course you have that is not on the timetable for April 14th, try to wait for the day and time that the course is scheduled during that week to establish contact and to explain course details. Remember students will be encouraged to follow the timetable as well.

8. Remember that students will have other classes on April 14 besides yours.

9. Alert the students to the fact that all Departments and the Faculty Office will be open for phone contact to be made on the 14th to answer their questions. Opening hours will be between 10am and 2pm (unless things change with the national circumstance). The Faculty is not encouraging students to come to the Department on the 14th as we are limiting face-to-face contact. The offices will have limited persons present to answer phones

10. Be on the look out for invitations to the FSS Town Hall with students and resource materials related to *Turnitin* – a plagiarism detection software.

D. Things to do for the remainder of the first week
1. Follow the timetable with respect to access to your classes or material.
2. Prepare in advance for your other scheduled classes.
3. Expect that there will be challenges as we pursue this new methodology of teaching. Be patient.

E. Important Dates

April 14   Resumption of Teaching
June 15 – July 3   Proposed exam period

F. Resources

Useful Links:
-Blackboard Collaborate Online Training Session by Kirk Wilson:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfmG2UYBz4o&feature=youtu.be
-UWI Email: https://email.uwimona.edu.jm/
-PeopleSoft: https://psoft.mona.uwi.edu/psp/psprod/?cmd=login&languageCd=ENG
-OurVLE: https://ourvle.mona.uwi.edu/
-OSD101 OurVLE (MOODLE) STAFF TRAINING PORTAL:
https://ourvle.mona.uwi.edu/course/view.php?id=2591 [Access via OurVLE FAQs]
-Past Blackboard Collaborate Workshops:
https://sites.google.com/a/dec.uwi.edu/uwiwebconf/sign-up-for-training/moderator-past-workshops

MITS Technical Assistance:
OurVLE Support, Mr. Kirk Wilson [kirk.wilson@uwimona.edu.jm]
OurVLE Support, Ms. Chris-Ann Gayle [chrisann-gayle@uwimona.edu.jm]
Multimedia Support, Mr. Jovian Thompson [jovian.thompson@uwimona.edu.jm]
MITS Helpdesk [helpdesk@uwimona.edu.jm]
OurVLE Support Contact: ourvlesupport@uwimona.edu.jm
MITS Helpdesk Phone Contact: 876-927-2148
MITS Helpdesk Whatsapp ONLY: 876-455-2103
MITS Helpdesk Email: helpdesk@uwimona.edu.jm

FSS Technical Support:
Mrs. Kiesha Sherman Howell [kiesha.sherman@uwimona.edu.jm] or 876-867-6861
Mr. Joshua Bell [joshua.bell@uwimona.edu.jm] or 876-479-6442 (email is preferred)
Ms. Nicole McKenzie [nicole.mckenzie@uwimona.edu.jm]
FSS Computer Labs [fss.computerlabs@uwimona.edu.jm]

Email Communication Options via OurVLE:

Method 1: The UWI staff email address.

Method 2: The internal messaging system OurVLE provides. [OurVLE does support an internal messaging system, where you can message students and staff or they can message you within the system. These OurVLE messages will go to your UWI email account when you are **offline** by default, however if you are **online**, by default the notifications **will not** be sent to your email. If you desire the message notifications to be sent to your UWI email whilst you are online within OurVLE, you would have to make the changes within your course container profile settings. Some students may indeed use this method to contact you, so it would be useful to keep checks on it. See attached of what the private message page looks like within OurVLE, as well as the profile settings page. It is also recommended that you clearly state in your course container(s) and the guideline document(s) how you should be contacted.]

To set up an email **rule** (**filter**), click link below:
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wChrps_bMzM]
To filter emails by search folders, click link below:
[https://www.laptopmag.com/articles/filter-email-folders-outlook-2013]

The Faculty wishes that you remain safe and well during this period. We look forward to hearing from you and to the successful completion of the semester. A guidance with respect to Summer School or the Summer Semester will follow.

Prepared April 7, 2020