

Dear Faculty of Education Student

COVID-19 LOCKDOWN – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

I hope this message finds you all well and in good health.

As you are aware the COVID-19 situation has left the whole world in a state of uncertainty and the unpredictability of the virus makes it difficult to forecast and plan for the immediate future.

The Faculty of Education fully appreciates the current uncertainty in respect of your studies which may lead to feelings of hopelessness, anxiety and stress. We realise that if this academic year is not salvaged, it would greatly impact on everyone's lives and, therefore, we have to work together and support each other as best we can, to ensure success at the end of this year. We will all be removed from our comfort zones. However, if we persevere and work hard we will be able to succeed.

Through this message I wish to provide some information that will help you remain calm and focussed during this time:

1. You are not alone in experiencing this uncertainty and loss of control. These sentiments extend to everyone at the University and, indeed, also to our nation. The current circumstances may continue beyond the lockdown as Government monitors the COVID-19 situation. It will take a while to adjust to the "new normal".
2. As a Faculty, we are using this time of lockdown to prepare for the restart of the semester through online teaching and learning (we plan to commence on **16 April 2020** but this date may change). With this process, we are striving to afford every student (contact and distance) a reasonable opportunity to complete Semester 1 of 2020.
3. Your lecturers will communicate with you via eFundi and other means (WhatsApp, SMS, etc.) as to how your modules will be affected, but please take note that this information is subject-specific and also subject to change. There will be **no assessments and new assignments due before 16 April 2020**. I however urge you to continue working on your assignments in order to remove some of the pressure and, to spread your workload more evenly. **Pending the approval of the Senate, there will be no formal written examinations in June 2020.** The Faculty is developing assessment plans which will include continuous and alternative assessments, for approval by University management.
4. We realise that some of you have challenges as far as connectivity (devices, data, etc.) is concerned, and the NWU is addressing this issue with the faculties. Please complete the NWU survey in this regard, if you have not already done so. The University is busy negotiating the provision of zero-rated data access, to students of the NWU, with MTN, Vodacom and Telkom.
5. Also keep a lookout for communication on the NWU platforms regarding important academic developments during this time, as we work and plan with management and the other faculties. Please be wary of fake news and always verify the validity of social media posts.
6. If you have any questions, please contact your lecturers. If they cannot assist, you will be referred to the School Directors or myself. You are also welcome to contact me directly.

Please take care of yourselves and those close to you. We appreciate your positive attitude, support and co-operation during the challenging times we are living in. If we need to alter the arrangements made, due to national developments in terms of the COVID-19 status, in addition to measures instituted by the Government, we will post the relevant notices on the NWU web-pages.

Please be on the lookout for updates!

Kind regards
Prof Lloyd N Conley
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NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY