

In view of the extension of the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in Luzon to April 30, 2020, the University shall continue to deliver its classes online effective April 14, 2020 until May 30, 2020, the end of the Second Term AY 2019-2020. The University likewise releases its Institutional Continuity Plan during Extended and Post-Enhanced Community Quarantine, providing general guidelines for online classes and assessments, grading, and conduct of activities, as well as support services, office operations, partial refund of applicable fees, and admission concerns. Specific implementing guidelines shall be released to the academic units for the information of all concerned stakeholders.

While the University recognizes the limitations that come with teaching and learning remotely, including unstable internet access and inability to adequately teach manual skills online, the health and welfare of everyone are of primary concern. Due to the uncertainty of the quarantine period and the health risks of resuming classes while still at the height of the pandemic, the University decided to undertake the most practical step to still facilitate student learning amidst all the challenges that may come our way.

We hope that we can all work together to find context-appropriate means to achieve this common goal. We call for continuing dialogue among concerned stakeholders so we can share good practices and together find solutions to challenges that we may encounter along the way. Now, more than ever, we need to support each other in this time of need.

Stay safe, Thomasians!

- Office of the Secretary-General

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**Key Pandemic Crisis Considerations**

1. There is a **steady increase in COVID-19 cases** in the country (Department of Health, 2020).
2. The President has approved the extension of the enhanced community quarantine period in Luzon to April 30, 2020 (Philippine Star, 2020).
3. There are studies that suggest a modified, location-specific quarantine scenario in light of public healthcare realities on the ground and possibly different peak periods across LGUs throughout the country (UP COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team, 2020). With this recommendation, it is suggested that schools remain closed, and that people maintain physical distancing, avoid mass gatherings, increase detection and isolation, and increase protection and good personal hygiene/etiquette (Garcia, 2020)
4. University personnel and students are currently located in different areas of the country, others even outside of the country, and there may be **variability in quarantine regulations** which may limit their ability to participate in online teaching and learning, or return to campus once class suspension is lifted.
5. There is still a **need to practice physical distancing and other precautionary measures even after class suspensions are lifted.**

**Classes for the Second Term AY 2019-2020**

1. The Second Term AY 2019-2020 will end on **May 30, 2020.**
2. **All classes shall continue to be delivered online until the end of the Second Term**, whether synchronous or asynchronous, using Cloud Campus and whatever other means possible for the teacher and the students. **All gradable assessments** shall likewise be done remotely, through online or other means. The timelines for implementation shall be as follows:
  - a. **April 13-18, 2020** will be reserved for the following activities.
    - Students will continue utilizing the materials and working on the assessments that have been provided by faculty members in the previous weeks; and
    - Faculty members and academic unit officials will engage in the revision of the course plans and grading policies to prioritize content to be covered and outcomes to be developed. They shall enumerate realistic requirements and set deadlines. Alternative activities and assessments for laboratory classes, practicum, internships, and on-the-job training activities shall be determined. Once approved, these shall be disseminated to students.
  - b. Online classes, including discussions and consultations with the faculty and gradable assessments, shall be conducted on the following dates:
    - Graduating students
      - **April 20-May 16, 2020** – Online classes
      - **May 18-23, 2020** – Final exams

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- Non-graduating students
  - **April 20-May 23, 2020** – Online classes
  - **May 25-30, 2020** – Final exams
- c. Academic units shall determine the schedule of thesis defense or its equivalent assessment.
- 3. **Online resources** of the Miguel de Benavides Library (MdbL) shall remain available to all students and faculty members until the end of the term.
- 4. **Monitoring schemes and support systems** shall be put in place by academic units, in collaboration with support offices of the University (e.g., Ed Tech, MdbL, STEPS, etc.) in order to address concerns of faculty members and students with regard to remote teaching and learning.
- 5. **Audit classes** may be offered by academic units as soon as quarantine regulations allow, for bridging of knowledge and skills that may not have been sufficiently covered during the quarantine period, including skills development in laboratory courses. These shall be offered at no cost to the students.

**Grades for the Second Term AY 2019-2020**

1. All **grades** for the Second Term AY 2019-2020 should be encoded **on or before June 8 for graduating students** and **June 15, 2020 for non-graduating students**. Academic units shall determine the schedule for submission of grades and/or student grade consultation, giving priority to graduating students.
2. **Final numerical grades** for this term shall range from 1.0 to 3.0 only for the undergraduate levels; the applicable passing grade range will be used for the graduate levels. A grade of INP shall be given to students who:
  - a. By reasons of limited access to electronic equipment and/or internet, health, or other quarantine-related concerns, are **unable to submit one or more of the requirements within the term extension**; or
  - b. **Are at risk of failing and were given additional interventions**, the completion of which shall exceed the deadline for submission of grades.
3. Students with **INP** shall be:
  - a. allowed to enroll succeeding courses, even if the course with INP is a pre-requisite; and
  - b. given one term, **or until the end of the First Term AY 2020-2021**, to complete the requirements for the course, without need to re-enroll. Failure to complete the requirements in the course with INP by December 2020 shall merit a grade of **WP** (Dropped), require re-enrollment, and may preclude enrollment in succeeding courses.
4. Graduating students with **INP** shall not be eligible for graduation this term.

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5. Grades such as 5.0 (and the applicable failing mark for graduate levels), WP, WF, FA, and INC shall not be used for this term, except if the dropping of courses has already been processed before the ECQ. Likewise, policies on probation and debarment, clearing of INC incurred in the previous term, penalties on maximum residency, and policies for continuation of scholarship for the next term shall be waived for this term. Retention policies specific to certain academic programs may be implemented considering only student performance before the ECQ period.
6. Basic education programs (EHS, JHS, and SHS) shall likewise be guided by DepEd Memo No. 042 s. 2020, “Guidelines for the Remainder of SY 2019-2020 in light of COVID-19” to determine measures that may be undertaken in the adjustment of assessments that will constitute the final grade.

### **Support Services**

The University understands the mental stress brought about by this pandemic and quarantine regulations, on top of the academic workload of the students and faculty members. For this, the following support services are available:

1. Academic units shall continue to monitor student needs throughout the term.
2. Students who will need counseling may contact their respective guidance counselors through their official UST email address (name@ust.edu.ph). The Counseling and Career Center (CCC) is working with the Educational Technology Center (Ed Tech) to set up a system for online counseling sessions.
3. CCC regularly releases infographics to provide tips to the Thomasian community on how to manage their mental health at this time of crisis.
4. The CCC and the Health Service have established protocols in addressing mental health concerns which may arise within the quarantine period, including appropriate referral, evaluation, and interventions.
5. The Thomasian Mental Health Responders also provide mental health psychosocial support and telecounseling for members of the Thomasian community.

### **Research**

1. The following research-related activities shall be suspended until the end of the Second Term AY 2019-2020:
  - a. In-campus research seminars/conferences;
  - b. Participation in national and international seminars/conferences; and
  - c. National and international research fellowships and trainings.
2. Faculty and research assistants shall be allowed access to their respective research centers and laboratories upon resumption of work in the University.

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**Commencement Exercises and Moving-Up Ceremonies**

Details of the Baccalaureate Mass, Commencement Exercises and Moving-Up Ceremonies shall be announced as soon as office operations resume and plans are finalized.

**In-Campus and Off-Campus Student Activities**

1. All **in-campus non-curricular student activities** are hereby **suspended for the rest of the Second Term** to implement physical distancing measures and allow students to focus on completing academic requirements.
2. All **local and international (inbound and outbound) off-campus activities**, including **internships, practicum, immersions, and fieldwork** are **suspended until the end of the Second Term**.
3. **Curricular off-campus activities**, including **internships, practicum, immersions, and fieldwork**, shall be replaced with **alternative activities** to be delivered online.

**Year-End Activities and Requirements for Student Organizations**

The Office for Student Affairs shall release an advisory to University-wide and College-wide student organizations regarding Student Awards, CSC and LSC elections, recognition of student organizations, and other activities.

**Other In-Campus and Off-Campus University Activities**

In-campus activities for administrators, faculty, and support staff (i.e. Awarding of Professorial Chair, Dangal ng UST Awards, Hiyas Awards, Testimonial for Retirees) and off-campus activities (i.e., Planning, Teambuilding) shall be revisited and rescheduled later, subject to compliance with government quarantine regulations and health precautions.

**Refund of Applicable Fees**

In consideration of the current financial needs of students, guidelines for partial refund of laboratory fees, miscellaneous, and other fees, as well as the conduct of other transactions, shall be released by the Office of the Vice-Rector for Finance.

**Work Arrangements in the University**

1. Administrative and academic officials shall continue to observe work-from-home arrangement.
2. Further to the Memorandum issued by the Human Resource Department dated 14 March 2020 entitled, "Update on the Work Arrangement Amid the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency", all support staff are enjoined to observe work-from-home arrangement as may be applicable, and as directed by their unit heads, to maintain productivity. As such, all support

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staff are expected to submit online their deliverables as may be required by their immediate superior.

3. As soon as quarantine regulations allow, **work in the University shall resume**, beginning with maintenance staff for **cleaning and disinfection** of work and learning spaces. They shall be followed by administrative officials, academic officials, and support staff to resume office operations. Details of operations shall be released by the Office of the Vice-Rector after the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) ends.

#### **Post-ECQ Health Advisory**

1. The general public is advised to come to campus only if necessary. All transactions and other activities that may be done remotely and do not require physical presence in the University should be completed accordingly.
2. Anyone who enters the campus will have to:
  - a. Make sure that they do not have a history of exposure with a COVID-19 positive patient or a PUI within the last 14 days;
  - b. Ensure that they do not have any flu-like symptoms. Any person who presents with at least one symptom, e.g., cough, colds, fever, shall be referred to the Health Service for evaluation.
  - c. Accomplish the Travel History and Health Declaration Form (guidelines to be issued prior to resumption of office work).
  - d. Wear masks. Multi-layered cloth masks are allowed, so we can reserve surgical masks for frontliners.
  - e. Bring their own hand sanitizers or alcohol consisting of at least 70% isopropyl or ethyl alcohol so they can disinfect regularly even if inside their work or learning spaces.
  - f. Observe physical distancing at all times.
3. Entry to or exit from the University may be done through all the gates except for Lacson gate, which shall be dedicated to USTH personnel, patients and their families.
4. Everyone is encouraged to bring their own “baon” / packed meals when coming to campus in consideration of possible limitations and inconveniences in having to line-up to purchase food from available concessionaires.

#### **Admissions for AY 2020-2021**

The schedules and guidelines for the continuation of reservations, confirmation of enrollment, and enrollment shall be announced once office operations resume.

#### **Classes for the Special Term**

Procedures for petition class applications, registration, and conduct of classes in the Special Term AY 2019-2020 shall be announced before the end of the Second Term AY 2019-2020 to allow time to assess developments.