

Information on Teaching in the 2021 Summer Semester (6)

Dear colleagues,

At the end of this challenging summer semester lecture period, I can once again deliver some new information:

Mask requirements:

As before, wearing an FFP2 mask is mandatory in all university buildings. However, wearing a mask outdoors on university premises is no longer required.

In-person office hours:

In addition to online consultations, in-person office hours are in principle also possible again. The prerequisite for the latter is that such meetings are deemed necessary by participants and take place in rooms where meeting infection protection requirements is ensured.

In-person teaching with incidence rates above 50:

Since the 13th regulation on infection prevention and control measures (*Infektionsschutzmaßnahmenverordnung*) came into force, testing has been compulsory two days after all in-person courses (including the practical courses previously permitted as an exception) if the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) publishes a 7-day incidence rate exceeding 50 on three consecutive days. In this case, participants in in-person courses must submit a written or electronic negative result of a PCR or antigen test carried out under medical supervision (e.g. in a pharmacy or testing centre) twice a week. Where necessary, (e.g. in the case of certain practical courses including phases where the minimum distancing requirement cannot be met, or in the case of field trips) more frequent testing can also be advisable and arranged accordingly. Only vaccinated or recovered persons without typical symptoms of a coronavirus infection are exempt from the testing requirement. In such cases, proof of full vaccination or recovery from prior illness must be presented. According to current information, those responsible for the course in question must verify the corresponding confirmation documents. All Bavarian universities are currently discussing whether IT-supported status monitoring concerning vaccination, recovery and testing can be implemented practically and at a reasonable cost.

Field trips:

In addition to the applicable regulations for field trips, there is currently a general requirement to notify the University Executive Board of planned field trips. Under the premise that these are courses necessary to the curriculum, the Executive Board has no general objections to informal applications – even for trips abroad. One decisive factor, however, is that the field trip leader has submitted an up-to-date declaration on the implementation of in-person courses and examinations. This declaration explicitly acknowledges the assumption of responsibility to comply with all guidelines set out in the university's updated handbook on infection protection measures. Secondly, care must be taken to ensure the specific infection prevention measures applicable at the field trip location and during the trip there are also observed and the greatest possible safety is ensured for the students.

In-person examinations:

As was the case for the repeat examinations in April, a security service will again be deployed in the upcoming examination cycle for the examinations with the highest attendance. In the case of

examinations with 120 or more registered candidates (usually approx. 80-100 candidates present), this means invigilators and the Examinations Office staff will be supported in ensuring that the relevant infection control regulations are observed before and after examinations in Kapellenstraße 13 and the Brose Arena.

For the autumn 2021 state examination, the Ministry of Education has lifted the requirement to wear a mask while taking the examinations and has left the decision to wear a mask up to the candidates. As a result, additional time for the written examinations will no longer be granted. At the University of Bamberg, this regulation is being addressed such that the wearing of medical masks continues to be considered the minimum standard for our university examinations - compulsory for university examinations and strongly recommended for state examinations. For all university and state examinations, wearing FFP2 masks remains compulsory for the candidate's way to their assigned seat in closed examination rooms. It is also still possible to wear these masks while completing the examination. For written university examinations, the previously established additional time allowances will remain in effect due to the continued mask requirement.

As concerns doctoral examinations, the wearing of masks may be dispensed with during a dissertation defence if all persons present are vaccinated, recovered or tested, a minimum distance of 1.5 m between persons is maintained, sufficient room ventilation is ensured, and all persons present agree to the removal of the masks.

Information on remote examinations:

Since the last newsletter, a German-language website providing information on tools for online teaching, legal bases, data protection and formats for remote examinations has been created (<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/rz/dienstleistungen/webdienste/fernpruefungen/>). The University Executive Board hopes that this will make relevant information practically available to all instructors interested in utilising remote examinations. Additionally, the VC course “Werkstatt: Werkzeuge in der Online-Lehre nutzen” can also serve as an internal exchange forum for examiners.

Teaching in the 2021/22 winter semester:

On the one hand, the Bavarian Ministry of Science and Arts is aiming to open up the universities to more in-person teaching in the coming winter semester. On the other hand, a necessary change in the framework conditions – particularly a modification of distancing rules for vaccinated, recovered or tested persons – is not yet in sight. In light of this, maintaining our previous planning model with various options for the use of online or in-person formats still appears favourable. In principle, it currently seems possible to cautiously expand in-person teaching in such a way that, in addition to practical courses and courses for new students and examination candidates, courses with fewer participants will also be practicable. For the latter, the limiting factor is the size of the room in conjunction with the applicable distancing regulations.

Extension of the Corona Statutes for the 2021/22 winter semester:

Under the assumption that the coming winter semester will again be largely characterised by online teaching, a further extension of the Corona Statutes in an adapted form is currently under consideration. In particular, this would mean that the options for choosing alternative examination formats and for individual flexibility in examinations (see Information on studies in the 2021 summer semester (3) of 20 May 2021) would remain in place. If, in the meantime, special alternative examination formats have proved to be a generally favourable option in particular cases, their official incorporation into the study and examination regulations at the

earliest possible date should be considered. I will inform you as soon as relevant decisions have been made.

Support in dealing with students' psychological problems:

Especially during the coronavirus pandemic, teaching staff are increasingly being confronted with students' mental health problems. The following advisory services can provide support in assisting students affected by these problems:

Advanced training:

- The Training Centre for University Teaching (FBZHL) offers courses on dealing with students showing signs of psychological distress
www.uni-bamberg.de/fbzh/

Questions from teaching staff regarding disadvantage compensation and other issues relating to disability and chronic (also mental) illnesses:

- Office for Students with Disabilities (Ms Sabina Haselbek and Dr. Janina Dillig)
<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/bafbs/>
Email: bafbs@uni-bamberg.de
- Officer for students with disabilities
Email: joerg.wolstein@uni-bamberg.de

Recommendations for students:

- University website on counselling and advisory services
<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/studium/im-studium/beratung-fuer-studierende/>
- Studentenwerk Würzburg, Psychotherapeutic Counselling Centre
Bamberg office, Frau Dipl.-Psych. Elisabeth Landgraf
Email: pbs-bamberg@studentenwerk-wuerzburg.de
<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/studium/im-studium/beratungsangebote-der-universitaet/psychotherapeutische-beratung/>
- Self-help website
<https://www.dein-masterplan.de>

Psychological crisis situations:

- Krisendienst Oberfranken Tel. 0800 655 3000 (daily from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.)
<https://www.bezirk-oberfranken.de/gesundheit/krisendienst-oberfranken/>
- University of Bamberg Crisis Handbook (*Krisenhandbuch*, available in the university intranet)
- Emergency medical services 116 117

A letter with similar content is also being sent to the students. Like all previous newsletters for students and teaching staff, it is available on the coronavirus website (<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/en/health-management/coronavirus/>).

Once again, I would like to thank you for all have done this past semester to ensure an excellent teaching environment. I wish you all the best and a relaxing semester break.

Sincerely,

Stefan Hörmann