

Information on Teaching in the 2021/22 Winter Semester (6)

Dear colleagues,

The first and most important concern of my letter today is to explicitly thank you – also on behalf of the University Executive Board – at the end of the year 2021: thanks for your willingness to constructively master the many challenges of the Corona pandemic again and again and to enable our students to study despite all adverse circumstances. This often requires special commitment that cannot be taken for granted. All the more I do hope you that you will find the necessary peace, relaxation and recuperation during the upcoming holidays around the turn of the year and that you will be able to start the New Year with fresh energy.

Nevertheless, I would also like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on the latest developments:

Corona legislation:

At the beginning of December, the Bavarian State Parliament extended the Corona Special Law by another semester, so that it is now also valid for the current winter semester 2021/22. Subject-related semesters and regular study time-bound dates and deadlines, along with the maximum BAföG funding period, are thus automatically postponed or extended by one semester.

Random checks of “G status”:

The random checks of the G status of students and employees by the security service will be continued according to the currently valid infection protection regulations.

Continuation of teaching after Christmas:

After the online study phase, explicitly announced before Christmas, we will return to teaching after the lecture-free days at the turn of the year, with a proportion of attendance appropriate to the pandemic, as has been the case since the end of November/beginning of December. This perspective is decisive for the return of many students to their place of study at the beginning of the New Year. Considering the Omicron variant, short-term adjustments may be necessary, about which I will inform you accordingly.

Notes on the conduct of examinations:

The Examinations Office is currently working on instructions for conducting (especially larger) presence examinations. In order that this valuable information can be used not only for supervisors of centralised examinations but also for examiners of decentralised examinations, it will soon be sent to the deaneries for further distribution to the faculties.

Applying the 3G+ rule for examinations:

Minister Sibler recently referred to the possibility of an exception to applying the 3G+ rule in examinations: "Insofar as candidates cannot obtain PCR test proof in individual cases, universities can, in view of the importance of education, further education and training and the significance of the examinations, allow admission to the examination on the basis of a daily negative rapid antigen test as a substitute. This will be an alternative for those few students who are not yet fully vaccinated and cannot obtain PCR test proof due to busy laboratory capacities." In relation to the situation in Bamberg, this option is unlikely to be relevant, now that PCR testing facilities are available every day and at weekends, and testing capacities are organised specifically for students. Students who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons or who have not yet been fully vaccinated after an initial vaccination do not have to bear the costs for PCR tests themselves. More information on PCR tests and reimbursement options will soon be available at <https://www.uni-bamberg.de/en/health-management/coronavirus/covid-19-testing-for-students/>. Should problems arise with PCR testing in individual cases, students are asked to contact the examination office or the relevant chairs or professors immediately.

Disadvantage Compensation During Examinations:

According to the information available, some students are currently unable to claim disadvantage compensation because doctor's appointments for the issuing of certificates are too late for a corresponding application. In such cases, I will ask students to contact the examination boards in confidence to discuss how to proceed and to generally make an early effort to obtain disadvantage compensation.

Access to Libraries and Practical Courses in Presence:

The state government continues to adhere to the 2G rule for students' access to libraries and practical courses in presence. The resulting problems of severely restricted study opportunities are communicated continuously to the Ministry of Education. With regard to obtaining literature from the library, persons who do not fulfil the 2G criterion unfortunately currently only have the option of obtaining literature through fellow students or, in urgent cases, contacting the branch libraries by telephone or e-mail.

Planning the Summer Semester:

As previously communicated, in association with all Bavarian universities we are currently planning the summer semester 2022 as an attendance semester. Even though the corona-related developments cannot be foreseen, we very much hope that, with a high degree of immunisation of students, teachers and the entire population and under certain G and mask rules, a high degree of classroom teaching will be possible again in a few months without extended intervals. Room bookings should be made accordingly. Should the infection situation be less favourable in the summer, we would, if necessary, return to former restriction options (reduction of attendance teaching while maintaining larger distances in small to medium-sized events or – in the case of even greater restriction – to practical events).

Open Consultation Hour for Lecturers:

In order to give lecturers the opportunity to address their concerns directly to the university management, I would like to offer an open consultation hour on Tuesday, 15 February 2022 at 3:00 pm. To attend, please register by writing an e-mail to the President's Office (buero.vp@uni-bamberg.de) before Tuesday, 08 February 2022. I will then send you the dial-in data for a video conference in due course.

Kind regards