

Dear academic staff, dear colleagues,

On this first official day of the summer semester, we all face a host of special challenges. None of us has experience in dealing with a situation like this. This, however, does not relieve us of our responsibility and obligation to ensure that our students can pursue the best possible academic studies, even under these circumstances. This is our mutual and most noble task for the summer semester

In this spirit, State Minister of Science and the Arts Bernd Sibler has also addressed all university instructors. We have attached his message to this email.

The situation's precise ramifications for daily life cannot be generalised or determined for all subject areas equally, but certain things apply to us all:

- This semester's lecture period can only begin on 20 April through the implementation of web-supported teaching. The Computing Centre is therefore systematically establishing the required technical infrastructure and has created a [website](#) that provides information and assistance.
- This alone will certainly not be sufficient and will require colleagues' cooperative support. The university's faculties, institutes and subject groups must find their way in this situation; in the faculties, it will be up to you to support the deans of studies. It would, for instance, be beneficial and mutually supportive if those of you willing and able to do so based on experience in web-supported teaching would offer your assistance to the deans. Conversely, those with no experience in this area should not hesitate to seek and avail themselves of assistance.
- The VC companion course for each regularly scheduled course is the primary tool for communicating with the enrolled students. All pertinent information can be consolidated here. Individual subject groups can of course also create an additional, central VC course with general information on studying that subject under the particular conditions of the 2020 summer semester.
- All questions pertaining to the subject of "examinations" are currently conditional and cannot be answered definitively in all cases. This means that in many cases information on things like examination formats cannot be provided at the outset; if applicable, students are to be informed accordingly; clarification can be provided over the course of the semester.

We are well aware that these hastily established web-based teaching formats for the summer semester can and will not be able to meet the didactic standards of distance learning; in the current situation, it is crucial to find formats that are practicable and that can safeguard our course offering for the students.

We are also aware that the crediting of mandatory summer semester teaching loads cannot occur as in other semesters. The university board of management and the state ministry are working to adapt methods that will accommodate the exceptional circumstances. An adequate solution to this issue will also be found.

Take good care of yourselves and each other.

Best regards,
Godehard Ruppert

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