USM Guidelines for Teaching and Learning
Plan for Contingencies – COVID-19

It has become increasingly clear that social distancing is critical in preventing the spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Social distancing means avoiding mass gatherings and settings with large amounts of people and maintaining distance from others when possible. As the situation continues to change rapidly, our top priority remains the health, safety, and well-being of our community, on- and off-campus.

If there is a need to restricts on-campus class and residential restrictions, academic staff should:

- begin transitioning to online instruction for all graduate and undergraduate classes.
- arrange the online session as per scheduled of the timetable.
- make sure that students are able to access course materials and assignments in elearn@USM and attend class according to regular timetable via WEBEX live sessions.
- follow e-learning Guidelines for Malaysian HEIs (*Appendix 1*) on Blended Learning requirements for extra information on Blended learning implementation options.

When will class shift to online instruction?
USM will announce the effective date of the transition to online instruction if the situation of Covid-19 worsens. For now, academic staffs are advised to familiarise with the elearn@USM platform to ensure that the transition to online instruction will run smoothly.

What kind of online instructions are appropriate to replace face to face lecture/ tutorial/activities?
Unless you already teach or familiar with elearn@USM or other online programs, you will likely use the elearn@USM to maintain your on-campus course instruction online during an emergency. elearn@USM and Webex (via elearn@USM) are the tools supported by USM that can help you maintain your course instruction online. All academic staff and students can access elearn@USM accounts using their Campus Online id. Webex id is also available for all academic staff.

- elearn@USM: USM Learning Management System where course materials are stored and accessed online.
- WEBEX: Online meeting software with video and audio simulating a classroom environment with the ability to show slides and do group work

Steps for Moving Classes Online via elearn@USM in an Emergency

1. Preparing your elearn@USM course

Even if you have never used elearn@USM for your course before, every course in the current semester should be available (listed) in the elearn@USM platform.

The url for elearn@USM is elearning.usm.my

For assistance with elearn@USM please contact elearn@USM admins at elearn@usm.my or ext. 4472.

2. Communicate with your students to inform about online session

Should online instruction become necessary, you should communicate your plan to your students by email. The elearn@USM gives you an easy method to email all of your students. There is a customised announcement in elearn@USM that will automatically send emails to your students to let them know your plan for continuing the course even though the class will no longer meet on campus.

You may want to include:

- resources (documents, videos, etc.) they should review for class
- any assignments they should complete, and the assignment submission deadline
- the dates and times of your Webex online class sessions (**which should match your scheduled course dates and times**)
- the Webex session invitation will be created when you set up your Webex session in elearn@USM (see this video on how to add Webex on elearn and you can also refer to Webex Manual)

3. Plan for synchronous (live) class sessions using Webex

The simplest approach toward offering your class online might be to hold online Webex sessions, which need to be held at the same days and times that the course is scheduled to meet on campus.

Webex is an online platform for conducting online meetings and classes. All USM academic staff can access Webex via elearn@USM. You need to activate your Webex account by sending email to webconference@usm.my or ext. 4274, 4234 or 4266.

APPENDIX

Implementation of Blended Learning
(Source: e-learning Guidelines for Malaysian HEIs)

a. Blended learning implementation options
The online component of a blended learning course MAY be implemented according to one of the following ways

i. **By hours in week**
Example, the traditional course of 3 hours F2F instruction per week for a three credit course is reduced to 2 hours F2F + 1 hour guided online learning.

ii. **By weeks Online learning is designed according to the weeks in the semester**
Example: 10 weeks of fully F2F is followed by 4 weeks of totally online learning.

iii. **By alternate weeksOnline learning is designed into alternate weeks.**
Example: 1 week of F2F is followed by a week of total online learning and so on.

iv. **By topics**
Topics are chosen to be taught online and the hours are estimated based on the length and depth of the topics.

v. **By tasks**
Tasks are chosen to be completed online rather than in-class. The estimated time to complete is calculated equivalent to student learning time in class.

vi. **Case by case**
Technology is integrated into the classroom. Students are assigned technology related tasks (the present F2F hours are maintained).
OR
Utilizing other models of blended learning such as Flipped Learning or wrapping a MOOC is encouraged as long as the instruction and learning tasks are carefully designed and student learning time calculated to meet the credit hour requirement.

b. Credit hours and student learning time (SLT) for blended learning
Blended learning MUST be implemented in accordance with the credit hours specified for each course:

i. Course coordinators and e-Learning instructors MUST plan for the online component to fulfil the student learning time (SLT) necessary for the credit requirement of the course.

- A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes (ILO) and verified by evidence of student achievement.
- MQA: A credit is the total student learning time (SLT) required to achieve the identified learning outcomes for a particular module at the micro level and for the programme at the macro level.
- One credit equals 40 notional hours of SLT.

ii. The online component of a blended learning course comprises activities such as lectures, projects, problem-based tasks and discussion in general. These can be in the form of watching and comprehending instructional videos, playing a learning game, watching and comprehending animations, completing a simulation, readings, forum discussion, MOOC participation, responding and posting one's work with peer evaluation, self-assessment, quizzes etc.

iii. Calculation of online student learning time SHOULD be based on the following activities:

- The time spent in synchronous live instruction. This is equivalent to F2F on location instruction.
- The average time spent on a screen and the number of screens viewed in the course of online instruction. The average time spent on a "screen" is generally calculated as being between 3-5 minutes per screen.
- The run-time for required media based assignments. This must take into account the actual length and the expected multiple viewings of the media (video, audio, animation, simulation) for review and reinforcement of the material.
- The time required to consume content such as by reading an article, watching a self-paced instructional video, playing an instructional game etc.