

Start of the winter semester – Uni-list-e-mail from Prof. Andreas Musil, 23 October 2020

Dear Sir or Madam, dear students, dear colleagues,

I am writing to you at a time when many things seem to have been clarified with regard to the start of the winter semester – the course catalog is ready – and yet, at the same time, there are many questions left unanswered. There currently are many discussions in light of the rising numbers of infection. We, the members of the Executive Board, have also extensively discussed whether or not our plans should be changed and have come to the opposite conclusion. We will start the semester as planned. Over the past few months, it has become clear that the UP hygiene concept is adaptable to changing circumstances. A central issue is the adherence to distance regulations, which can be implemented in line with the established restrictions for on-site courses. Safety is therefore ensured to a sufficient degree. However, we must continue to monitor the situation and prepare for dynamic developments.

For the beginning of the instructional period, we would like to give you some **guidelines for on-site teaching**, which will, however, have to be adapted with regard to the development of COVID-19 infections or the changes made to the SARS-CoV-2 ordinance (SARS-CoV-2-UmgV). As always, we will keep you informed in a timely manner in such cases. The [hygiene and safety regulations for university operations as of November 2, 2020](#) must also be observed.

1. According to Section 4 (2) of the SARS-CoV-2-UmgV, the following measures must be observed for on-site teaching:
 - 1.1 **compliance with the general distance requirements** pursuant to Section 1 (2) Sentence 1 of the SARS-CoV-2-UmgV,
 - 1.2 the **management and restriction of access and on-site presence** of individuals,
 - 1.3 the regular exchange of inside air with fresh air, especially by means of **airing rooms by opening windows for short intervals** or by operating ventilation systems with high amounts of outside air. The HGP (Hochschul - Gebäudemanagement - Potsdam) is responsible for setting up the required technical conditions. Teaching staff will be required to air the rooms whenever possible at their own discretion.
 - 1.4 the recording of first and last name and the telephone number or e-mail address in an attendance list in accordance with Section 3 (2) of the SARS-CoV-2-UmgV for the purpose of **contact tracing**. When collecting this data, data protection requirements must be taken into account. The deans of study can provide you with a data protection declaration.
For students, student ID numbers, which are registered in PULS lists, would suffice. This only applies to degree programs that use PULS for examination administration purposes. However, please also keep in mind that courses with students separated into groups alternating on a weekly basis will also need to be able to identify which students participated on the respective dates.
The attendance records must be kept or stored for a period of four weeks in compliance

with data protection regulations.

The tracing of potential contacts by the health authorities (item 4) must receive our full support at all times. It is therefore important to ensure that access to the lists is always possible via the respective teaching staff member.

2. UP seminar rooms and lecture halls have been assessed with regard to the distance requirements and appropriate **plans** have been drawn up for each room. The plans are displayed at the respective rooms and are also available on the intranet: <http://www.hgp-potsdam.de/SW/corona/gebinform.htm>. Deviations from the proposed furniture arrangements may only be made upon request and with the approval of the Occupational Safety Unit (<https://www.hgp-potsdam.de/sw/>).
3. Teaching staff members may under no circumstances demand that students take a **COVID-19 test** or make it a prerequisite for attending courses. In principle, teaching staff cannot exclude students from participation on the basis of a suspicion of infection with COVID-19. However, an appeal can be made to students' personal responsibility to refrain from participation if symptoms are detected.
4. Community **masks covering mouth and nose** must be worn in the corridors, hallways, elevators and stairwells of the UP until further notice. This also applies when entering or leaving lecture halls and seminar rooms. Inside meeting rooms, lecture halls, seminar rooms or offices, the mask can be removed once the person is at their desk or seat, provided that they can keep a distance of at least 1.5 meters to other people. The Executive Board reserves the right to adapt these regulations depending on the latest developments.
5. Additional cleanings of each room will not be taking place after each course. The equipment of the entrance areas of lecture halls and seminar rooms with **disinfectant** dispensers and disposable towels is currently underway so that the desks can be disinfected as required.

Necessary and helpful **hints and tips for digital teaching** can still be found on the website on [Online Teaching 2020](#). The offers on the website are being updated continuously. In addition to support offers for different formats in terms of teaching and examinations, there is also a broad portfolio of [online continuing education courses](#). A code of conduct for courses that are offered digitally as well as data protection and consent forms for Zoom in German and English can be found on the [Zoom.UP website](#).

Surveys are very important for us especially in these times of limited on-site attendance. Apart from courses, they are the only way for us to contact you directly. We use the results of such surveys to further develop teaching and degree programs, but also for support measures that go beyond this. You will receive invitations for various surveys during the upcoming winter semester. The *PotsBlitz* survey and the student panel are coming up once more. You will also be asked to participate in the preparation of an interests test for prospective students. Within the framework of a survey focusing on internationalization, you will be able to give us specific input in this area. We are also planning to conduct a survey on diversity in 2021. Every single one of you can make a difference. We would already like to thank you for your participation.

Before closing this e-mail, I want to once more point out the [FAQ pages on the consequences of the corona crisis on studies and teaching](#). You will find the most important information here, including the latest developments and related decisions. The introduction of individual standard periods of study in connection with the Pandemic Ordinance for Higher Education of October 13, 2020 must also be mentioned in light of current events. Please refer to the FAQ pages to see how the ordinance is implemented at UP.

Please stay healthy and optimistic, even if it is not always easy under the current circumstances.

Kind regards,
Prof. Dr. Andreas Musil
Vice President for Teaching and Studies