

[02.07.2020] Comunicado Vicerrectorado a universidades socias en programas de intercambio europeo y no europeo

Over the past months, the international academic community has been confronted with an unprecedented challenge as a result of the global incidence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Universities are facing this situation with outstanding commitment and professionalism, aiming at minimizing the impact of this health emergency on our academic, research and international activities.

Spain is now in the process of recovering from a severe situation in which all sectors were put on standby and all activities, except essential ones, were suspended. During this daunting period, UC3M put forward all human and technical resources available to minimize the impact on its academic activities and shortly after the declaration of the state of alarm, teaching was resumed through electronic means and all assessment processes were adapted to remote evaluation. At this moment research activities have restarted at the University and we are preparing next semester strictly following the National Health Authorities guidelines to soon and safely have both, our local and international students, back in our campuses.

The Board of the University approved on the 15th of June the new academic framework that will be applied over all academic year and that ensures a face-to-face “in person” component respecting all social distancing measures. This will imply a significantly lower on-campus population density in the classrooms, buildings and libraries.

The University will resume its teaching activities for the first semester of 20/21 on the 14th of September and we will adopt a blended teaching model consisting of online education and in-person education with physical distancing. This model goes under a scheme where each student will have 50% of their class hours on campus. The rest will be taught online in a synchronous way through the *Blackboard Collaborate* platform, in their corresponding time schedules.

Each 6 ECTS subject will have two weekly sessions, taught as follows:

- **Large/aggregate session:** Theoretical content. Synchronous online teaching.
- **Small group session:** Practical content. Face-to-face teaching at classroom.
- **Laboratories:** Face-to-face or online synchronous teaching, depending on the subject taught.

In some specific cases and exceptionally, small groups sessions will be created with online teaching, in addition to those taught in face-to-face. Also, some cross-disciplinary subjects, such as Courses in Humanities will exclusively follow synchronous online teaching. Therefore, the full on line offer in UC3M will be minimal and still evaluation procedures will take place in person by default. For this reason, we will kindly ask all our international students to be present in Madrid over all the academic period taking into account that the following prevention measures will be put in place:

<https://www.uc3m.es/bachelor-degree/measures-campus>

Our international students will be welcome in campus at the beginning of the semester with orientation activities held on line and we will continue to provide support and assessment to international students and partners through the International Relations and Cooperation office in presence and by email:

erasmusplus@uc3m.es

mne@uc3m.es

incoming@uc3m.es

movilidadeps@uc3m.es

movilidadcolme@uc3m.es

Finally, please be advised that at this moment Spain borders are reopened for all international visitors coming from Europe, but there are still some restrictions of which we are not aware for how long they will stand. In this scenario we understand that some international students may find difficulties to arrive at the beginning of the semester due to travel/visa delays. Despite the required in person presence over all the semester, we will make our best effort to try to accommodate all those international students with a delayed arrival at UC3M within a reasonable time window, as long as a smooth resuming of the classes is possible. Also, if you are considering deferring your students to the second semester, please contact us, we will try our best to adapt to your requests. But, please notice that given the strong constraints put in place to enforce social distancing in the classrooms, we may have restrictions on the spots available in the English taught courses and eventually it will be needed to make available Spanish taught courses for our international students.

We are now optimistically looking forward and being proud on our distinctive internationalization programs and international community. We hope to count on you as an esteemed international partner in the future, and we would like to acknowledge the great value of your partnership. We would also like to take this opportunity to convey to you our strong support at this time of crisis. I am sure that in the aftermath of this situation, universities will come out stronger and our partnerships will be reinforced.

Matilde Sánchez Fernández

Vicerrector of Internationalisation and European University