Institutional guidelines for facilitating Learning amid of COVID-19 pandemic: Case of University of Rwanda

Dr. Florien Nsanganwimana, Ag. Principal, University of Rwanda-College of Education
Contact: principal.ce@ur.ac.rw/ florinsanga@yahoo.fr
University of Rwanda: 6 Colleges since 2013

There are 6 independent, self-governing colleges at The University of Rwanda. The college system is at the heart of the University’s success, giving students and academics the benefits of belonging to both a large, internationally renowned institution and to a smaller, interdisciplinary, academic college community. It enables leading academics and students across subjects and year groups, and from different cultures and countries to come together to share ideas.

All Colleges invest heavily in facilities for extensive library and IT provision, accommodation and welfare support, and sports and social events. The relatively small number of students at each college allows for close and supportive personal attention to be given to the induction, academic development and welfare of individuals. Each college has its own Governing Body etc.
University Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

- Stopped all campus-based teaching and Learning activities since 16 March 2020
- Students given immediate order to vacate the campus
- International students requested to register with the Directorate of students welfare
- Students encouraged to continue their self-learning and take advantage of online resources
- Assess the feasibility of staff to work from home and define deliverables
University Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

- Upload instructional materials on e-Learning platform since 16 March 2020
- Guidelines provided for the uploading exercise
- Task force members nominated
- Intellectual property and copyrights to be observed strictly
- Reporting and monitoring channels well defined and communicated
Announcement to all class representatives to join the training for ODeL Students Champions
Ensuring the quality of online teaching and learning:

1. The university of Rwanda has a centre “Centre for Open, Distance and e-learning-CODEL)
2. We have about 20 years of experience in Distance Training Programme
3. Modules are designed by a course team with assistance of e-learning officers and e-learning champions
4. Main characteristics/features for online module:
   • Module description and storyboard
   • PPT slides, handouts and key readings/OERs
   • Assignment; monitoring of Attendance;
   • Chat; Feedback;
   • Forum; Quiz; Survey;
University Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Support of Government through Ministry of Education in delivering remote and online learning

- HEC (Higher Education Council) urged to set up minimum requirements for remote learning recognition

- HEC also approved the UR implementation plan for blended learning
University preparedness for reopening-19/10 2020

- Establishment of the Campus Committee for Covid-19 and Re-opening
- Establishment of Guidelines and Measures against Covid-19
- Installation of Required Health Facilities
- Plan for Enforcing Social Distancing in Classrooms/Labs
- Students Population and accommodation
Mission

• Re-opening planning
• Organize Staff and students Covid 19 awareness campaigns
• Follow up in the enforcement of measures
• Revision of the timetable as per available space
• Students population and evacuation plan
• Conducive learning and teaching environment

Other Initiatives

• Campus Medical Team: The Campus Medical Team composed of Nurses, Health and Sanitation Officer and Wardens will play a key role in enforcing measures against Covid 19
• Students Volunteers: Volunteers from students Associations have been identified by the Guild Council to work on different shifts and the College will provide them with facilities
• Communication: Printed Posters, Social Media Platforms and Campus Radio for awareness and information sharing
# Awareness of guidelines and measures against COVID-19

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| - Wear Masks  
- Social Distancing  
- Washing Hands | - Avoid Unnecessary gatherings  
- Restrictions on Gym sports  
- Enforce e-payment/services |

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<th>UR Guidelines with</th>
<th>Specific Measures at Rukara</th>
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| - Learning facilities  
- Students Welfare Facilities  
- Entrances  
- Administrative Services  
- Co-curricular activities | - Disinfection of the area  
- Work with Local Authorities |
3. Installation of hand washing facilities

**Entrances/3 Gates**
Fixed/Mobile hand wash stations, infrared Thermometer and Computer

**Administration Blocks**
Automatic Hand sanitizers & Existing restrooms Facilities

**Classrooms and Labs**
Mobile hand wash basins & existing restrooms facilities

**Restaurants and Canteens**
Mobile Hand wash Facilities and Demarcation of Key serving Counters

**Hostels and Clinic**
Restricted areas for Unauthorized persons
Use existing restroom Facilities/Mobile Hand wash stations
4. Physical and Social Distance in Teaching and Learning Facilities

Classrooms

The current plan considers:

- 1.5m*1.5m or 2.25m² sitting space per student in classroom/lecture rooms compared to 1m² as per presidential order no. 51/01 of 13/07/2010 (Total capacity = 2,803 students);

Labs

- 1.6m*1.8m or 2.88m² sitting space per student in computer labs compared to a minimum of 1.5m² as per presidential order no. 51/01 of 13/07/2010 (Total capacity = 147 students).

Garden Benches

50 pieces to be installed in the Campus garden for reading and group work.
In nutshell:

- Re-opening plans have been arranged: start from finalists
- Measures against the spread of Covid 19 are already in place and enforced (Masks, washing hands, social distancing etc)
- COVID-19 task force in place + students volunteers
- Social Distancing in learning and teaching facilities and Evacuation Plan already in place
- Availability of facilities such hand washing facilities, outdoor benches, thermometers, completed on all campuses
- Implementation of blended learning
- Provision of accommodation and resto services on campuses
Response to COVID-19: Lessons learned

What’s a legacy?

- Quick response to save lives of children and young people (youth)
- Supporting learning beyond traditional classroom environment
- Adaptive response towards transformation of teaching delivery
  - Blended learning: mix face-to-face with remote sessions through online learning,
  - More parental and stakeholders’ involvement is expected and required
  - More involvement of private sector and NGOs which are already engaged in education sector
- Hygiene/sanitation and preventive measures against infectious diseases in public areas (here schools and campuses) to be implemented and monitored.
Thank you for listening!

Any questions