



6 April 2020

Dear CLM students

I hope you have all found ways to adjust to the lockdown, and that you have spent the break processing the emotional anxiety of this pandemic, and starting to build some kind of routine to prepare you for the next term of studies. On our side the staff of the Faculty have been working continuously to move your lessons to an online platform. You will appreciate for a number of academics this is a new space, so a team from the Faculty has been running daily teaching webinars to guide lecturers into the online space. Most of the CLM courses have been redesigned for online teaching and we are continuously working with all staff to ensure everyone is ready to go live on 20 April 2020. As matters stand we are working on the assumption that staff and students will continue to engage from their homes. This may change, but for now, this is the working assumption. The University protocol that only essential staff are permitted on campus remains in place until further notice.

We realise that not all students are comfortable using technology or are necessarily familiar with the platforms we will be using. To this end we have built in some induction time to ensure everyone is comfortable in this new space. Between 15 -19 April we will provide orientation to help you familiarise yourself with the online learning environment and give you some guidance around strategies for progressing with your studies as effectively as possible under these new circumstances. We have suggested that the initial lectures start with a brief overview of the platform and how to use it. And of course you can always contact your lecturers if you are having difficulties adjusting.

The University has secured agreements with Telkom, Vodacom and MTN to “zero rate” access to a list of Wits websites and other platforms used for teaching and learning. This means data to access these sites is free. Lecturers have been asked to use these sites and platforms as far as possible. This list can be found at <https://www.wits.ac.za/mywits/zero-rated-data-to-students-and-applicants/>. There are currently still some technical issues with some of the providers, and the University is working with them to resolve this. We will keep you updated.

The Faculty is trying to make sure that all resources for online learning will be accessible and usable via a smartphone. However, it will be easier for you to work effectively if you have access to a laptop or desktop computer. We therefore recommend that you try and make arrangements to get access to a computer, if possible.

We are aware that about 10% – 15% of students might not have access to a smart device or computer, and we are putting alternative plans in place to get learning materials to these students. We will update you on the details of this during the orientation week.

In the meantime, those students who anticipate will have intractable problems to access Wits online teaching sites because of a lack of a suitable device and/or lack of reliable internet connectivity please send an email to the Assistant Dean for teaching and learning, Danie De Klerk (Danie.DeKlerk@wits.ac.za) to inform us of your particular circumstance. This is important to enable us to assess your particular needs.



As always, if you have **any problems with course content** (i.e. **not** tech issues) please contact your lecturer or course coordinator as early as possible. Your Head of School is also available for queries that have not been resolved with the lecturer or course coordinator. You are also reminded the **Assistant Dean for undergraduate affairs** is Dr Muriel Mushariwa (Muriel.Mushariwa@wits.ac.za); the **Assistant Dean for postgraduate affairs** is Professor Deeksha Bhana (Deeksha.Bhana@wits.ac.za). If you have problems with academic admissions please contact **the CLM Faculty Registrar**, Marike Bosman (Marike.Bosman@wits.ac.za). *Please do not "email all" with every query – the best way for us to assist you is if queries go directly to the correct person. We strongly request that you work through your lecturers and course coordinators first. They will guide you if there are issues they cannot resolve.*

For **student study support** (including devices, access to lectures and study anxiety) you can continue to contact the Road to Success Programme team who are there to assist you – please send all emails through to Tshepiso Maleswena (tshepiso.maleswena@wits.ac.za). Please note on 15 April 2020 we will launch a RSP Orientation site on Sakai with an orientation programme to which all CLM students will be added. This is an excellent place to start familiarizing yourselves with the new learning tools.

I realise these are challenging times. Please be patient with us as we navigate this new world. We have worked through the past two weeks and will continue doing so for the next few weeks to ensure we are as ready as possible for 20 April 2020. I am sure there will be some glitches, but we do not anticipate any serious problems. Our goal has always been to keep the university open so that you can continue with your studies, and that the Wits standards remain as high as always despite this new method of teaching.

I wish you and your loved ones strength during these difficult times. I hope you use the break wisely to adapt to these new conditions as best as you can. We look forward to meeting you online soon.

#FlattenTheCurve

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Imraan Valodia'.

Professor Imraan Valodia
Dean: Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
Wits University