

Universität Passau · 94030 Passau

To all members
of the University of Passau

From	PD Dr Rudolf Speth +49 851 509 1004
Fax	+49 851 509 1007
E-mail	president @uni-passau.de
Our reference	Pr I.04-2010/2020
Date	26 October 2020

Dear students, staff and other members of the University; ladies and gentlemen,

Together we have invested a lot of time in the past few months in the preparations for the winter semester. We painstakingly planned face-to-face courses with great circumspection and developed a sound hygiene concept for our campus. This concept is particularly suitable for the *amber* stage of the coronavirus 'traffic lights' indicator, which indicates Covid-19 risk. The lecture period will start on 2nd November.

Meanwhile, since last week, we have had to witness with growing concern the rapidly growing numbers of infections—in the whole of Germany as well as in Passau and neighbouring districts and in Schärding. Presented with this reality, we have no choice but to plan ahead at the *deep red* stage. At the same time, as a border town in the heart of Europe we must accept travel restrictions as a new framework condition that directly affects many of us in our daily lives.

As a university with about 12,500 students and over 1,100 staff in primary employment, we bear a great deal of responsibility to society overall. It is becoming clearer by the day that the joy of teaching and learning on campus and in person must take a back seat to the common goal of reducing all contact with others for the benefit of all.

To discharge this responsibility we are making **virtual courses the default teaching format from 2nd November**. Exceptions are possible, for example, for:

- practical courses and events that require specially equipped rooms at the university and that, therefore, cannot be held online (e.g. laboratory courses, physical education, music and art education practical courses).
- introductory orientation classes and events for first-semester students during the remainder of the Orientation Week from 26th October to 1st November if it is ensured that all participants also have the option of following these classes and events online.
- in-person exams that cannot be made into online exams.

A deep red Covid-19 traffic light means we will orientate ourselves on the 50-persons limit for events, which applies in almost all areas of the city and district.

Should the Covid-19 traffic lights change back to amber in the coming weeks, a new classroom-based, in-person phase can be arranged in joint coordination with lecturers and students for those courses that were initially planned to be taught face to face and now have to be switched over to an online

format; this must be done a way that takes into account the needs of course participants who may not be able to attend in person.

The University will supplement the existing hygiene concept with a phased concept along the Covid-19 traffic light phases to show clearly what is allowed at each phase.

Administrative and research activity on the campus will continue with careful attention paid to the applicable hygiene rules and distance requirements. The University Library and the other facilities and services will also continue to operate to the same extent as before, while adhering to the hygiene concepts that have been developed in each case. We are constantly monitoring and evaluating the situation and will take further measures when necessary.

I would like to say to all students, especially the first-semester students: Please feel welcome at the University of Passau despite the current, unusual situation! We are there for you via the tried and tested digital channels—webinars, Zoom or Skype consultation hours, telephone and e-mail. Together with the student representatives, we all want to use the Orientation Week to give you a cordial welcome whilst acting responsibly. This week we can try out our virtual lifeboats, so to speak, so that we all get through this semester safe and sound.

I would like to thank all university staff for their exceptional commitment in the preparations for the winter semester. I hope that I can continue to count on your dedication to our students and to the research and teaching done at our university, even though the adjustments that are now necessary will unfortunately mean more work and a greater burden for all of us.

Depending on how this pandemic continues to unfold throughout Germany over the coming weeks, as well as the ongoing debates on further restrictions of public life, we at the University of Passau will also react dynamically. Please continue to check our web page, www.uni-passau.de/en/coronavirus, for up-to-date information. We will also keep all students and staff informed in our regular updates sent by e-mail and Stud.IP.

I urgently ask all members of the University, and especially our new members, to think carefully about their lifestyles and determine whether certain behaviours might carry an increased risk of infection. Please do this in consideration of your own risk exposure as well as that of others. I am grateful to you for doing so!



Professor Ulrich Bartosch
President of the University of Passau