



Universität Hamburg

DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG

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To all teaching and academic affairs staff at Universität Hamburg,

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Summer Semester 2020

Dear colleagues,

In consultation with the other federal states of Germany, the Federal State of Hamburg decided yesterday that courses for Summer Semester 2020 will begin on **Monday, April 20 2020**. It has not yet been decided when the lecture period will end, but a decision is anticipated soon. Due to the general decree, this means that teaching activities will take place in digital form only until further notice.

Universität Hamburg is obliged to provide its students with the broadest possible curriculum, to allow students to pursue their studies even under the current trying circumstances. This requires us to evaluate every course to determine how it can be partially or completely digitalized. For the last two weeks, the faculties, the Regional Computing Center, and the Digital Teaching and Learning (DLL) department of the Hamburg Center for University Teaching and Learning (HUL) have been working closely together to develop the best possible technical and teaching support for digitalizing the curriculum. Despite their best efforts, not all teaching formats (such as practical exercises or excursions) can be adapted to digital form. We, together with the faculties, are called to find appropriate solutions (for example, offering block courses, postponing classes, etc.) for these.

As a general rule, those students who cannot take advantage of our virtual curriculum should not be put at a disadvantage: in this context, we are still exploring if, and how, the University can best support students who do not have the technical requirements to take part in the digital curriculum.

Many of you will already be familiar with the tools and learning platforms used in **digital teaching** as they are a well-established part of teaching practice at Universität Hamburg. In

addition to subject-specific and teaching considerations, appropriate digital tools must be selected in light of their technical aspects. Of course, most will prefer to use what are known as “synchronous” tools, such as live streaming. However, the extremely high levels of internet usage currently occurring in Germany and internationally must be kept in mind, and we ask you therefore to consider primarily using “asynchronous” tools (e.g., videos and audio which can be downloaded, information exchange using forums, shared document editing, and providing feedback via a range of communication channels) to minimize potential disruptions to your teaching material. The Regional Computing Center is available for technical support, and the Hamburg Center for University Teaching and Learning (HUL) offers assistance in digital teaching design. The following FAQ page offers helpful information on digital teaching: <https://www.uni-hamburg.de/corona/faq-digitale-lehre.html>. We recommend as well that you read the HUL information page on **teaching questions** (currently only available in German) which is being continuously updated: <https://www.hul.uni-hamburg.de/lehre/didaktik-digitale-lehre.html>

The **obligatory teaching load** continues to apply this semester. To enable full crediting of digitally delivered teaching, for the summer semester the Executive University Board has removed or repealed the current crediting of 25 percent of digital teaching from the teaching load regulated in the teaching obligation regulation at institutions of higher education in Hamburg (Lehrverpflichtungsverordnung für die Hamburger Hochschulen, LVVO). Digital teaching will be recognized up to 100 percent. Pursuant to Section 9 LVVO, lessons which require in-person attendance and cannot be carried out this semester are to be offered in the following semesters.

Legal and technical clarification is still to be sought on the matter of **examinations** under digital conditions. While some examination formats, for example, term papers, do not raise any difficulties, written examinations and the like are more challenging, as it is not yet clear how these may be conducted to conform with legal requirements and without technical complications. Registration for examinations will be able to take place from 20 April 2020. Of course, this only applies to those exams which can actually be conducted under the current conditions. Dates have therefore yet to be set for make-up exams for Winter Semester 2019/20.

The **State and University Library** is working intensively on measures to allow access to books and media materials despite the library being closed. State and University Library resources on offer can be found here: <https://www.sub.uni-hamburg.de/service/faq-covid-19.html>. Students may already make comprehensive use of digital journals, etc. In addition, the library campus delivery service (a delivery service for digital articles) will also be available to students from 6 April. An emergency lending service is currently being planned and the provision of electronic textbooks should be expanded in collaboration with faculty and department libraries.

You will find answers to the most important questions in our **Coronavirus FAQs** (<https://www.uni-hamburg.de/corona-faq>). Keep an eye on this page as information is being regularly updated and expanded. I have advised the students that all **counseling and support**

measures offered by Universität Hamburg, Studierendenwerk, and other institutions are still available—albeit in a different form. The FAQs also contain information on this.

The summer semester is now taking shape: we can make this a success if we see these challenges as an opportunity. In the past two weeks, I have seen and experienced how constructive my fellow colleagues have managed this situation and how much commitment and creativity they bring to finding solutions to severe restrictions so that we can provide that which brought us to this University, and that which binds us: the desire for academic community. So let us take this opportunity to get in touch, and to stay in touch!

In the spirit of collaboration, I wish you a good start to Summer Semester 2020.



Prof. Dr. Susanne Rupp
Vice President for Studies and Teaching