

Datum/Date: 25 March 2020

Van/From: Bruce Banda
Deputy Registrar



Update on the national lockdown: COVID-19

Dear Students and Faculty

On 23 March 2020, the President of the Republic of South Africa announced a nation-wide lockdown of 21 days across South Africa. This announcement was a critical and necessary measure to mitigate the risk of large-scale exposure and spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), which is now a global pandemic.

Previously, the USB indicated that tuition and assessments will continue via institutional portals and platforms. However, since the announcement of this imminent lockdown, various challenges have made it unreasonable to consider proceeding with synchronous online lectures and assessments. Among these considerations were access to bandwidth, loadshedding, connectivity, personal spaces which may prevent uninterrupted participation in remote learning environments and movement constraints.

Given these considerations, the USB has decided to suspend all academic programmes, as well as all forms of assessment. All remote teaching and assessments will be suspended from 20h00 on 26 March 2020. This suspension will be for the duration of the lockdown, after which the USB will evaluate the situation and revert to you. We remain committed to the completion of the academic programme for this year, and a revised schedule will be communicated in due course. It is important for us to consult widely with all relevant stakeholders and for this reason consultations will be undertaken in order to plot the best way to conclude this academic year. *Kindly note that our sister organisation USB-ED will communicate directly with its students and clients and may propose different arrangements.*

Where possible, the USB staff will work from home and will offer continuous support. Even though we are facing a daunting period, our resilience is an indication that we will meet the challenges.

I urge you to remain positive during this trying time. Please visit the Stellenbosch University (SU's) COVID-19 webpage regularly for institutional updates as well as information on the health protocols and guidelines relating to the pandemic.

We will keep the communication lines open and will keep you informed through timeous and regular communication.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Banda'.

Bruce Banda

Deputy Registrar