

To all Members and Affiliates of  
Schmalkalden University of Applied Sciences

**DER PRÄSIDENT**

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29/04/20

**Information on the Course of the Summer Semester 2020 from 04/05/20**

Dear colleagues,  
dear employees,  
dear students,

First of all, we would like to thank you all so far for your committed cooperation, for your collegial and cooperative behaviour and certainly also for your patient endurance. We took far-reaching decisions at a very early stage and we would like to thank you all for supporting these decisions. To date, all our decisions have proven to be correct and appropriate, so in spite of rare infections and suspected cases among members and affiliates of our university we have been able to maintain unrestrictedly our ability to work and to decide and to maintain effective protection for the others. This is due in particular to the good cooperation and coordination among the actors involved – for this, too, our sincere thanks.

We ceased our university presence on 16/03 and have been running a functioning "emergency operation" in accordance with the pandemic plan ever since. We have put into force a corresponding service agreement in coordination with the Staff Council. For the students, we have made initial stipulations on examination law and other study-related aspects and announced them on 27/03. With the start of the semester on 01/04, all faculties have been running a preliminary digital teaching system. The positive feedback we have received from students from Germany and abroad in this regard prompts us to say "Thank you" once again – to all lecturers, students and the administrative units, above all the University Computer Centre.

The Presidential Board, the Extended Presidential Board including the Deans as well as the Crisis Committee are constantly dealing with developments and the possible courses of action that can be derived from them. A good four weeks have passed since the first circular letter to all lecturers, students and members of the university. During this time and even before that, we have kept you informed on our homepage and kept you up to date. However, the situation has been dynamic and the legal situation has changed in many ways. At present, in particular the *Thuringian Ordinance on the Extension and Amendment of the Necessary Measures to Contain the Spread of the Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2* of 18/04, which has been amended several times, is valid until 06/05. On 24/04 we received information from the Thuringian Ministry of Economy, Science and the Digital Society on the application of the ordinance for the higher education sector. We are working flat out to evaluate the changed legal situation and further circumstances, to sound out the possibilities for action and to create the conditions for implementation. Without affecting the

following specifications and the known Pandemic Plan of the university we just are working out a Hygiene Concept which is considered as framing rule going into legally binding effect. It will be published soon.

Please assume that we are pursuing two priorities, namely on the one hand the protection of the health of all members and relatives of the university and on the other hand the "saving" of the semester for all stakeholders. In the following, I would like to acquaint you with provisions that we consider appropriate and still justifiable under the current conditions and after careful consideration. I am aware that these regulations may appear too far-reaching and brisk to some and too short and timid to others. But this is precisely the tightrope walk that we have to determine and walk every day anew. It goes without saying that – within the framework of the guidelines mentioned below – the sponsors of the study programmes make flanking decisions on their own responsibility with the involvement of the Faculty Councils, the Study Commissions and the Examination Committees, and that the teachers and examiners act within these regulations on their own responsibility.

Our previously announced regulations especially the initial stipulations on examination law and other study-related aspects continue to be valid as far as they are hereby not replaced by more specific regulations. We want to emphasize the higher-level regulations especially the ban of entering the university in case of Covid-19-infection as well as in the case of any indications of a cold.

#### **(a) General Provisions on the Operation of the Summer Semester**

- **Duration:** The summer semester 2020 runs unchanged from 01/04 to 30/09. The examination period is unchanged from 13/07 to 01/08.
- **Teaching:** Since 01/04, lecturers from all faculties have been offering their students access to digital teaching content and alternative courses. Wherever didactically justifiable, this mode is to extend to the entire semester without the need for classroom teaching. Courses which cannot be replaced by digitalised forms due to their didactic concept (in particular laboratory trainings or teaching in computer pools) should be made possible from 11/05 onwards, provided that the necessary prerequisites are met. Further information on this can be found below.
- **Internships:** Internships that are not conducted at the university are permitted under the responsibility of the respective employer.
- **Examinations:** Final exams can take place unchanged in the smallest possible circle under observance of all protective measures. Attendance examinations can be carried out during the examination period if the infection protection regulations and general directives applicable at that time permit this.

#### **(b) General Provisions on the Operation of the University**

- **Catering:** The canteen will remain closed for the time being in agreement with the Students' Union. This decision is valid until 29/05.
- **Access:** The university remains closed for visitors. University buildings and facilities are not open to the public. Only members of the university and university staff are allowed to enter buildings within the scope of their responsibilities. For Students the access to

university buildings is restricted to the participation in the visited classrooms. The rest of the Campus is only to be used as circulation area. The use to other purposes such as staying, resting or doing sports on the campus is not allowed for members or affiliates neither for third parties.

- **Domestic authority:** The responsible managers of facilities and events are officially instructed to monitor compliance with the regulations in their area of responsibility and, by transferring domestic authority, are authorised to expel persons from the university or to cancel events if necessary. Higher ranked responsibility of the President by Thuringian University Law and of the Chancellor by Rules of Procedure of the Presidential Board are not affected.

At the same time, all employees of the university are required to intervene in the event of violations of the regulations that come to their attention, to inform any persons contravening the regulations and, if necessary, to make use of the transferred domiciliary rights.

- **Protection:** It is recommended that all members and relatives of the university wear mouth and nose protection in university buildings, unless it is already obligatory due to special regulations.
- **Information:** All university members and relatives are obliged to inform themselves about the currently valid general regulations and to observe them. This includes in particular the observance of the required behaviour in cases of suspicion and illness as well as when returning from abroad.

### (c) Specific Provisions for Presence Teaching

- **Selection:** The decision as to which courses are allowed to be held as classroom courses is made by the Presidential Board on the recommendation of the teaching units (faculties, center of further education and center of foreign languages). A vote in this regard is already underway and students will be informed of the result by the respective teaching units or teachers.
- **Requirements:** The prerequisites include a risk assessment and the corresponding derivation of measures and their compliance.
- **Location:** Presence courses are initially limited to House H. Exceptions are laboratories or pool rooms in other university buildings.
- **Access:** In principle, all university buildings with the exception of House H are to be kept locked. Only university members and staff have access. Admission to buildings outside House H can only be granted by the persons responsible for the respective events and organised by them. Punctual arrival of the students is required for this purpose. Attendance lists should be kept in all events to support contact tracking.
- **Protection:** When entering the university for teaching events, there is an obligation to wear mouth and nose protection in the buildings and the event rooms. Each individual is responsible for this. Exceptions in rooms can only be granted by those responsible if the required minimum distance is observed. This regulation applies until revoked.
- **Responsibility:** In all forms of classroom teaching, the heads of the respective structural units and those responsible for the respective event are responsible for compliance with the applicable protective rules and regulations.

#### **(d) Specific Provisions on Research Operations**

- **Access:** Experimental work in the laboratories and indispensable research-supporting work in the workshops should be made possible step by step from 04/05 onwards, provided that the necessary prerequisites are met.
- **Requirements:** The prerequisites include a risk assessment as well as the corresponding derivation of measures and their compliance. The personal cooperation in laboratories and workshops is to be limited to groups of up to five people. Wearing of appropriate mouth and nose protection is required, unless a minimum distance of more than 1.5 metres is ensured at all times. It is strongly recommended that attendance be spread over different periods of time.
- **Responsibility:** For all forms of presence in laboratories and workshops, the managers of the respective facilities are responsible for compliance with the applicable protective rules and regulations. In addition, attendance lists should be kept to support potential contact tracing.

#### **(e) Specific Provisions on Library Services**

- **Use in presence:** The reference areas of the university library will remain closed for the time being. All digital services can be used without restriction and will be expanded with additional borrowing options.
- **Borrowing facilities:** As of 04/05 the library will also offer a contactless emergency loan service for urgently needed works (on advance order and by appointment). Details will be communicated by the library. Journal articles can be made available digitally after consultation. This also applies to copy requests from inter-library loan.

#### **(f) Specific Provisions on Conferences, Meetings and Other Events**

- Conferences, meetings and other events are not possible until further notice.

#### **(g) Specific Provisions on Meetings of the administrative body**

- **Meetings of the administrative body** such as Presidential Board, Extended Presidential Board, Faculty Council, Senate, Advisory Boards, Examination Boards etc. are allowed. It is recommended to change over to suitable digital formats and to circulation procedures to the extent that it is permissible.
- **Requirements:** Actions of defence and the hygiene rules are to be respected.

#### **(h) Specific Provisions on Administrative Operation**

- **Continuation:** The principled suspension of the presence of the university administration will be continued on 30/04 and initially extended until 29/05. The corresponding service agreement will be adjusted in consultation with the Staff Council. Separate information on the procedure from June onwards will be provided in calendar week 22.

- **Minimum operation:** The maintenance of minimum operation is ensured by the respective management in close coordination with the Chancellor, the crisis management team and in compliance with the pandemic plan.

**(i) Specific Provisions on Business Trips**

- **Abroad:** Business trips abroad will not be approved until further notice. Approvals that have already been granted will be considered revoked.
- **Domestic:** Domestic business trips can be approved again from 04/05. In principle, business trips are to be limited to the absolutely necessary extent and, wherever possible, alternative forms of communication via telephone and video conferences are to be used. Preferred means of transport are private cars, for which official reasons will be accepted.

This extensive work of specifications, behind which are hidden balanced considerations, regulations and documented concepts, which in turn have to adapt to the constantly changing background of official general decrees at federal, state and district level, shows that we are dealing with a complex field in which the last word has not yet been spoken. We therefore reserve the right to make changes to the above-mentioned provisions at any time.

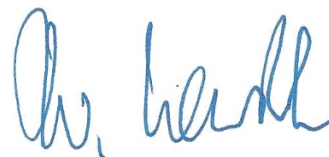
We appeal to all of you, as you have all shown so impressively so far, that we as members and affiliates of Schmalkalden University of Applied Sciences support and live by these regulations in a spirit of solidarity and responsibility. We know that we expect a lot from you and believe us, we would much rather not have to do this. But only if we continue to prove that we are courageous and creative on the one hand, and cautious and responsible on the other, will we be able to reconcile the two priorities that guide our actions: Health protection for all of us and a successful semester under the difficult conditions.

With this in mind, we would like to thank you all very much in advance for your continued commitment and involvement in this exceptional situation.

Yours faithfully



Prof. Dr. Gundolf Baier  
President of Schmalkalden  
University of Applied Sciences



Dr. Wolfgang Ramsteck  
Chancellor of Schmalkalden  
University of Applied Sciences



Prof. Dr. Thomas Seul  
Vice-President Research and Transfer



Prof. Dr. Uwe Hettler  
Vice-President Academic Affairs and  
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