

MEMORANDUM 052

FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNER UNIVERSITIES, REGARDING THE HEALTH CONTINGENCY OF COVID19 IN MEXICO

Dear partners,

I would like to let you know about new measures adopted by the Universidad del Valle de Atemajac (UNIVA University), regarding the health contingency by COVID19.

1. As reported to you since March 18 of this year -through Memorandum 044- UNIVA has followed the instructions of the Mexican authorities, both federal and local, to suspend face-to-face activities since March 17th, 2020 until further notice.
2. The suspension of face-to-face activities in several areas of economic and social life, helped the authorities to reinforce the capacity for health care in different parts of our country. This allowed for the state of Jalisco –where our headquarters and main campus are located-, at least during the first three months since the start of the contingency was decreed, to have had a reasonably low rate of infection and death, in contrast to other areas of Mexico that have either a similar or a larger population.
3. However, in recent days, the contagion and death rate has increased, so the authorities have mentioned to educational institutions that face-to-face activities could also be suspended during the first part of the Fall 2020 academic period (September to December).
4. UNIVA has taken the necessary measures to guarantee the delivery of its programs and subjects under the virtual modality, through the reinforcement of its solid technological infrastructure, the commitment of its academic and teaching bodies, and the dedicated and enthusiastic participation of the students.
5. As opposed to what happens in other destinations in Asia and Europe, where the number of infections and deaths shows a gradual decrease, the American continent seems to be facing the highest peak of contagions and deaths from the pandemic at the moment. Given that situation, the current scenario in Mexico, as in other countries on our continent, is one of uncertainty regarding an expected return to classroom activities in educational institutions.

6. Therefore, UNIVA has decided to suspend, temporarily, our Incoming face-to-face exchange program, as well as other face-to-face Incoming international collaboration programs, for the second half of the year 2020. To do so, the following measures will be adopted:
 - a) All mobility spaces for external students that will not be used in 2020, will be transferred to the year 2021, without affecting the number of spaces applicable the following year.
 - b) The procedures that had already started, by external students, to come to UNIVA in Autumn 2020 (September to December), will be transferred to the Spring 2021 term (January to April), or to the Summer 2021 period (May to August), or Fall 2021 (September to December).
 - c) In the case of external students participating in virtual exchanges in courses offered by UNIVA, these exchanges will not affect the number of spaces agreed in international bilateral agreements, nor in the number of spaces set by UNIVA in the framework of global networks of face-to-face mobility in which the institution participates.

7. Even under the circumstances imposed by the health contingency, UNIVA has arranged various measures to maintain and increase collaboration with our partner institutions:
 - a) **UNIVA GOAL Program:** it is an initiative inspired by COIL programs, in which more than 60 international professors from partner universities have committed themselves, together with their own students and from their countries, to create joint initiatives for online collaboration with UNIVA professors and their students, during the month of October 2020.
 - b) **Virtual Exchanges:** the University has opened a considerable number of programs and subjects, to be taught virtually, which represent around 70 new places that add to the offer already present in the face-to-face setting. This virtual exchange possibility is available to national and international students.
 - c) **Americarum Mobilitas Virtual Program:** as part of its role as the coordinating institution of this program, within the Organization of Catholic Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (ODUCAL), UNIVA launched the online modality in June 2020, to carry out virtual (asynchronous) and remote (synchronous) exchanges This has allowed the program to offer more than 320 courses and 2,650 student places in its beginning phase.
 - d) UNIVA also participates in other educational networks to foster distance academic exchanges, and research assistantships as well, along with other types of initiatives carried out during the health contingency and that will continue even after the pandemic is overcome.

We appreciate your kind understanding of this situation. Please feel free to contact me at andres.barba@univa.mx and at +52 (33) 3134-0800 ext 1869. We will keep you informed as the situation regarding the contingency progresses in Mexico.

Sincerely

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