

Organization of the Summer Term 2020 during the Corona-Crisis

03/25/2020

Dear Students,

We hope that you and your families are well, and that you will be spared from the virus! So far, fortunately, there are obviously very few cases of infection at our university, and all of them are well treated. You can be sure that in all cases the necessary measures have been and will be taken immediately to protect everyone as best as possible. Once again, we urgently appeal to you not only to contact the responsible health office but also to contact us as soon as symptoms should appear or if you have been in contact with someone who is infected!

First of all we have to thank you for your patience. In such crisis situations, transparency is very important, but in view of rapidly changing official requirements and constantly changing information, we should not announce too quickly what may then have to be revised again and will cause confusion.

But now you will find

- in this mail some general information about the organization of the upcoming semester and some detailed questions as well
- in another mail, which will follow in a moment (outsourced, so that it may be easier to find), important information about our library access.

First the most important thing: We will use **distance learning** methods at the beginning of the summer semester 2020, and possibly also until the end, depending on the course of the crisis. Anyway, we guarantee two things:

- On the one hand, we will make the best possible use of this special semester so that you can achieve your study goal without any loss of essential contents and qualification goals.
- On the other hand, should in individual cases additional semesters become necessary due to the crisis, i.e. through no fault of your own, you will not have to fear any additional financial burdens, i.e. neither additional administration nor tuition fees will be charged.

You will receive concrete information on the use of our 'virtual classrooms' (see below, section B), in which your online lessons will take place as long as physical classroom teaching is not possible due to the crisis, separately (and your timetable will of course contain links to your virtual classrooms instead of physical room numbers).

A SEMESTER START: 04/01/2020

1) Start Date

The summer term 2020 will start unalteredly in April 01st, 2020.

- So please remember to regulate all insurance-related, if applicable BAföG-related and other things that have to be regulated unchanged with regard to this key date: 01. of April, 2020.

2) Study certificates

- You can print out your regular study certificates via TraiNex from 04/01/2020.
- If you would like to have a certificate immediately, in advance, that you will be enrolled in the summer semester, you can request this informally in our secretariats. You will then receive a letter with the following wording: "The student [first name, last name] is bindingly registered and enrolled for the summer term 2020 beginning on 04/01/2020".

3) Semester tickets

If there should be any delays in receiving the semester ticket for the summer semester 2020 by post (Berlin, Frankfurt am Main) or online (Cologne), after you have transferred the respective fee for it, please contact us immediately.

- Berlin: The VBB semester tickets of the winter term 2019/20 remain valid until 04/30/2020, if you carry with you an enrolment certificate for the summer semester 2020 or the summer semester pass. You can use all public transport services of VBB throughout April with these two documents.
- Please note: HMKW cannot make any decisions of its own regarding semester tickets. We have to carry out what the respective transport companies decide. This applies in particular to all financial regulations. Thus, you have to pay the semester ticket fees for the summer term in full now, even if the transport companies are

currently considering whether a pro-rata refund will be possible if the crisis continues for a longer period of time.

B DISTANCE LEARNING: ab 06.04.2020

Until our return to normal teaching, we have to switch to distance learning methods, starting on 04/06/2020 with introductions to online teaching, first overviews of the contents of your modules etc., so that we do not lose valuable time. Distance learning covers a wide range of different methods – which already stood the test e. g. in our Master's programme "Visual and Media Anthropology". The most important ones are:

a) Virtual Classrooms

Online teaching in 'virtual classrooms' is the didactic backbone of distance learning. Using video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Hangouts, Skype etc., students and their respective teachers are present in a virtual classroom at set times. Lectures, presentations, case studies, practical exercises etc. take place in this digital environment.

b) Webinars vs. webcasts

Unfortunately, the terminology is not always consistent:

- 'Webinars' are often referred to as 'virtual classrooms'. Sometimes (e.g. in Zoom) a 'webinar' is understood in a narrower sense, though, referring only to virtual sessions that are open to the outside world, so that not only a certain study group can participate, often with limited interactivity features.
- 'Webcasts' are in any case not interactive, but rather previously recorded online lectures, either as a 'video preserve' or recorded live.

c) Zoom meetings vs. webinars

The video conferencing tool 'Zoom', which we will use preferably, the conceptual distinction between 'meeting' and 'webinar' is important:

- Zoom 'Meetings' are (depending on the license) limited to manageable groups of participants who can join in via audio or video and participate interactively in online lessons.
- Zoom 'webinars', on the other hand, are designed for up to 10,000 participants, who (due to the unmanageable size of the group alone) cannot be connected via video or audio.

d) Other distance teaching forms

In addition, there are of course many other didactic methods that use digital media, including

- the assignment of tasks for independent learning
- Feedback by e-mail or direct messaging
- Online tests, learning success measurements etc.

So from 04/06/2020 on your teaching will be determined by these methods as long as necessary. We have to beg your understanding that we cannot make any forecasts in this regard; all estimates and predictions must be treated with great caution. We will see whether or not we will be able to reopen to the public in the current term.

C OTHER

1) Digital submission of theses

According to an official notification, all final theses can and should be submitted digitally (as PDF) with immediate effect. The printed versions must, of course, be submitted subsequently whenever this will be possible again without any risk.