29th March 2020 - Message issued to students from UCD Registrar and Deputy President

Title: New Government restrictions on movement

On Friday 27 March, An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, announced a further intensification in the social distancing measures to be undertaken to combat COVID-19 for the period through to Easter Sunday (12 April). These measures intend to keep everyone in their homes to the greatest extent possible, while continuing the provision of essential services and an effective response to the current health crisis.

Before the trimester reading break, we took the decision to transfer all of our teaching and assessment for the remainder of trimester 2 from campus to at-distance. The scale of this transfer is enormous and I am sure you will join me in recognising the work undertaken by our faculty, support and professional staff so that you can continue your academic progression. I appreciate that this has involved some radical changes to your learning and assessments and I thank you for your patience and cooperation.

The new restrictions on movement and gathering require that everyone remain within their homes, with the following exceptions:

- to travel to and from work, or for purposes of work, only where the work is an essential health, social care or other essential service and cannot be done from home
- to shop for essential food, beverage and household goods or collect a meal
- to attend medical appointments and collect medicines and other health products
- for vital family reasons, such as providing care to children, elderly or vulnerable people
- to take brief individual physical exercise within 2km of your home, which may include children from your household, as long as you adhere to strict 2m physical distancing
- for farming purposes, i.e. food production and/or care of animals

Education is not in the list of essential services for which commuting will be allowed. I am aware that some of you have personal difficulties in relation to access to study space and internet and up to now we had made provision for you on-campus. However, in order to comply with the new Government restrictions, I now ask that you stay at home and if you have continued difficulty, you should contact your College or School Office or your Programme Director so that alternative arrangements can be put in place.

I am aware that some online Medical examinations are to take place on Monday/Tuesday. Associate Dean of Medicine, Suzanne Donnelly has posted details on Brightspace and students are asked to contact Professor Donnelly directly if they have particular access requirements.
If you need to retrieve essential items, the Government has indicated that there will be a grace period until 6pm on Monday 30 March. In such cases you must contact estates@ucd.ie to let them know when you intend to come in and which building you need to access.

The campus residences will remain open, but students may not have external visitors and must follow social distancing protocols. The Estates team, Student Health and Student Advisers will continue to support students who are living here.

Further information on forthcoming assessments will be provided shortly. Our Faculty are aware of the challenges the current situation poses for study and for undertaking examinations and your lecturers and examiners will show flexibility in relation to problems that emerge. We can and will come through this. I ask that you stay safe and take care of yourselves and those close to you, and I thank you for your continued cooperation and contribution during these truly unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Professor Mark Rogers,
Registrar and Deputy President