



Central University of
Technology, Free State

COMMUNIQUÉ TO THE CUT COMMUNITY

FOLLOW-UP: SUPPORT RELATED TO THE 21-DAY LOCKDOWN

2 April 2020

2020 #9

Dear CUT Community

We have just experienced the first week of the national lockdown announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 23 March 2020, which took effect at midnight on 26 March 2020. In many respects, this is a first for South Africa. Not only do we need to adjust to a new “normal”, but we have to anticipate various scenarios of life post-lockdown. Change and uncertainty on such a large scale have a lasting effect on communities. Hence, we want to encourage you to remain connected and informed. Together, we can become resilient for any kind of future.

In this regard, we would like to highlight the following important information, and put some of your concerns at ease:

- ❖ We want to reiterate the importance of adhering to the governmental regulations. Obeying all the measures put in place to maximise the effectiveness of the lockdown is the best way to protect yourself and others, and to minimise the adverse effect of the COVID-19 pandemic physically, mentally, socially and economically.
- ❖ The sooner we succeed in flattening the infection curve, the better for everyone. We are confident that you fully support our government's effort, and continuously encourage those around you to remain compliant with the regulations put in place.
- ❖ As communicated before, all CUT academic activities and lectures will resume on 20 April 2020. Depending on the circumstances, academic projects and activities will either be offered online and/or in face-to-face mode of delivery, respectively. Our designated teams, under the leadership of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Teaching and Learning, are working hard to prepare for 20 April 2020, regardless of the mode in which our academic activities will resume. Further information in this regard will be shared during the week of 13 April 2020. Our academic and support staff should capitalise the lockdown period, and use this time to upskill themselves to prepare for online delivery.
- ❖ We are aware that not all our students are equally equipped to access online learning. Following an agreement entered into by Telkom and CUT to effect zero-rated data on our URLs, you can access *eThuto* via www.cut.ac.za for free. We have submitted similar requests to Vodacom, Cell C and MTN, and are awaiting their feedback. Further free online access support will be communicated soon.
- ❖ Please visit the CUT information hub on the Coronavirus at <https://www.cut.ac.za/coronavirus> for regular updates, and to access all previous communiqués and other related information.

To remain physically and mentally fit during these challenging times, we want to encourage you to do the following:

- ❖ **Connect:** Do not disconnect. Reach out to friends and family with a phone call or message. Greet your neighbour and find out how they are, whilst adhering to safety protocol.

- ❖ **Unplug:** Be selective of your media intake. Follow official platforms, and avoid spreading and/or consuming fake news.
- ❖ **Take one day at a time:** None of us know what tomorrow will bring. Let us focus on doing the best we can today.
- ❖ **Create routine:** Routine makes you feel safe and purposeful. Get up at the same time every morning, get dressed, and complete tasks on your to-do list.
- ❖ **Avoid burnout:** Do not be so busy that you burn out. Remain within your limits. Stress damages your immune system, making you vulnerable to any disease.
- ❖ **Take care of your body:** Stick to your familiar diet, and remain active. You only need a small space to do basic exercises.
- ❖ **Take care of your mind:** Amplify the good news, and look for positives that may come from your situation.
- ❖ **Help others:** Share resources, be kind, call or send a message. Being of service to others, and helping where you can, will help you to regain a sense of purpose. It also keeps negative feelings at bay. Always stay safe while you care.

In addition, CareWays' services are available to our staff and their household dependents for various wellness-related matters, including emotional and psychological well-being, family and social life, work-related matters, and physical well-being. Contact them at 0800 004 770, care@carewaysgroup.com or ewp@carewaysgroup.com, or SMS your name to 31581. Students are encouraged to contact ER24 at 084124 or the Wellness Centre for any emotional support you might require. Please consult the CUT StuComm App for more relevant information.

All people are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in some way. The physical, mental, social and economic impact is felt globally, and will be with us for a long time. We deeply sympathise with those who have lost loved ones, or who have battled the virus themselves. Our heart also goes out to the lonely in lockdown who have no human contact or support, as well as to all entrepreneurs and business owners who have lost their livelihood, or struggle to keep it afloat. As the CUT community, we are committed to being responsible citizens who will play our part to fight this pandemic.

We are privileged to be involved in various solution programmes. The Centre for Rapid Prototyping and Manufacturing (CRPM), the Product Development Technology Station (PDTS), the Centre on Quality of Health and Living (CQHL), CUT Innovation Services (CUTis), and the Centre for Applied Food Security and Biotechnology (CAFSaB) are currently involved with government in different processes related to challenges associated with COVID-19. As a community that thinks beyond, CUT will continue to look for opportunities to assist.

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, we are certain that, similar to CUT, higher education institutions are aware of the opportunities that are presented to us as far as academically engaging our students, who form a cohort of Generation Z and Alpha, is concerned. It is against this background that, as CUT, our highly experienced and qualified staff are working tirelessly and around the clock to make CUT a university of technology of choice by preparing its Generation Z and Alpha for future jobs through innovation and our envisaged different modes of delivery.

May you all be blessed! E se e ka Ramasedi a ka le hlohonolofatsa! Mag julle almal geseënd wees!

Prof. Henk de Jager

Vice-Chancellor and Principal