

## **Catalogue of demands of StuRa HTW Dresden regarding Coronavirus from 11<sup>th</sup> April**

Due to the Coronavirus crisis, StuRa HTW Dresden receives a lot of questions regarding studies as well as financial, social and other personal problems of the students.

For this concern, our StuRa developed and conducted a survey in which 1200 students participated, resulting in more than 900 usable data sets. In the following, we want to share the results with you and inform you at the same time about the concrete issues. Naturally, the issues differ in faculty, study course and study year. But in general, we could find significant intersections in all areas.

Furthermore, we, as the totality of student representation, formulated claims concerning lessons and studies against the HTW Dresden which need to be considered by the senate as well. Therefore, we divided our demands in general and specific claims.

Besides, we require a strongly improved policy of disclosure at the university in general and towards the StuRa in specific. During the past few weeks, the spokespersons (executive board of the StuRa) were not provided with any noteworthy information. We weren't invited to any video or telephone conference, too. We know, of course, that this is not usual, but we cannot imagine that the student's interests can be safeguarded in this way in the current situation. Please do not get us wrong. We definitely know that it is hard to overcome the latest issues which is challenging for every one of us, and we see the active and hard work from every teacher and the universities governing board to find solutions. However, please also understand that the current working day in the student self-administration amounts to seven days a week as well, usually from 8:00 to 22:00 o'clock, and that we could improve our work significantly through this.

The evaluation of the survey is also available as a file in the attachment to the email. We expect you to comment on these results.

Above all, we have the following "general" demands on the university. We ask that these be represented and defended by the university vis-à-vis the State Rectors' Conference as well as the State Ministry for Science, Culture and Tourism. Furthermore, we will work in cooperation with the Conference of Saxon Student Organizations to ensure that these demands are heard in the state parliament and that appropriate legislative procedures are initiated, if necessary.

The summer semester 2020 will differ from all semesters before and hopefully afterwards. The many practical problems caused by the COVID 19 pandemic require a decisive rethink and must be solved with the necessary flexibility. So that we can face the problems in this extraordinary situation, the semester can only be shaped through solidarity-based cooperation between all status groups. For a successful design of a solidarity semester 2020, we consider the following points to be essential:

- The lecture period has to be shortened or extended so that the teachers have adequate preparation and post-processing time in order to provide high-quality online study offers.
- For students, the disadvantage compensation and hardship regulations as well as the reasons for the granting of a vacation semester are to be expanded appropriately to include individual crisis-related disadvantages, e.g. to compensate for restricted internet access, parallel custody obligations, etc.
- Students must be given the opportunity to take examinations and study achievements that are adapted to the conditions and content of the lecture. The university must ensure that the acquisition of credit points / ECTS is adapted to the specific situation of the students and that there are no disadvantages for students due to the changed teaching method.
- Expiring study regulations and courses of studies have to be extended for one semester, agreed by all lecturers.

- Compulsory batched events, defined in some study regulations, need to be dropped for the next three semesters.
- De-registrations because of deadlines have to be suspended.
- For compulsory practical semester and practical phases flexible regulations need to be established. In case of cancelled practical semesters, the possibility of practical phases during the semester should be considered.
- The university has to ensure that it is still free of charge to lend books from the library. If that is not the case, it should be re-established as fast as possible.
- Exams from the winter semester, which have to be written again, need to be announced early and should not be compulsory in any case.
- The burden of exams should not be increased against the will of students because of exams from the summer or winter semester, which are currently not taking place.
- Exams which only take place in summer semester have to be offered in winter semester 2020/2021 as well.
- All examination periods and automatic “fail” regulations after a second or third try of taking an exam have to be suspended and need to be extended for at least one semester.
- All exam attempts during summer semester have to be free attempts. That means in case of failing an exam it will not count and in case of passing the student has a chance to improve his or her result by getting the chance to take the exam once more.
- Suspension of compulsory attendance, if it exists or is required.

- The crisis-related adjustments of the university do not have to be uniformly designed nationwide or state-wide. However, having to meet different deadlines in each course leads to confusion and thus to uncertainty among students. Instead, there must be transparent and fair measures everywhere.
- The students who could not start or had to cancel their semester abroad, should have access to all (online) courses for the summer semester 2020.
- There must be opportunities to catch up or to substitute the obligatory study sections in foreign countries.

Furthermore we have “special“ demands towards the HTW Dresden and all faculties:

- General recording of the online courses, especially for students with technical difficulties. These should be uploaded on an internal server for the HTW Dresden. An access for the students should be provided. There should not be an opportunity to download these takes, thereby security for the lecturers is ensured. Legal ambiguities regarding the copyright during the recording of the online courses must be explained by the prorectors of studying and teaching and by the department of legal affairs.
- It must be worked on “Exit-Strategies“ for the exam period in July, thereby we are prepared for all contingencies. If the exams are taking place as planned, then only with strict infection protection conditions. One possibility that can be worked on, that for example all students have to sign themselves up for the exams. In order to make time, room and capacity planning. The electronic process for that has to be created. While doing so, special arrangements should be considered because of students that count under the at-risk group.

- The existence of the possibility for the general expansion or the transition to a flexible examination phase for some years, in order to create the opportunity of “individual” examination schedules is required to be determined. This cannot be considered the responsibility of the students exclusively. Corresponding prevailing conditions are required to be made, which present binding and legally secure possibilities for arrangements for both students and lecturers.
- The reorganization of examination performances, e.g. team works, presentations, lectures, simulation games or similar ought not to occur arbitrarily. Leaving such decisions individually “alone” to the lecturers is not constructive. It is necessary to have integrated prevailing conditions throughout the faculties, which involve the particular study-committees in any case. Furthermore, the accordance of corresponding course contents and methods of examination with the examination regulations has to be guaranteed. Possible alterations of those are not to be carried out without necessary processes and cannot be at the expenses of the students.
- Binding guidelines that do not raise any privacy concerns are to be shared for platforms for online-meetings. Leaking data to online conference tool-suppliers, even in this exceptional situation, is unacceptable, especially not with regard to the availability of sufficient open-source alternatives. This has been taken so far as lecturers demanding real names, matriculation numbers, s-numbers, private mail addresses and phone numbers via GoogleDocs. In case of requirement the StuRa is offering its willingness to cooperate, in order to make according services available in the future.
- Within the individual courses of studies, years and module plannings it has to be at least guaranteed, to put lecturers in the position and to request them to arrange appropriately. The current situation of students not being able to rely on timetables and weekly alterations, have reached expenditures that students are almost unable to cope with. Especially with regard to childcare, side-jobs, and social additional expenditure. It needs to be possible again for students to rely on their daily and weekly schedule, since situations have occurred in which students were informed about unplanned lectures right before their beginning.

- Furthermore, it is necessary that, with the agreement we mentioned earlier, weekly plans are drawn up by the lecturers in order to provide that the self-studies contents can be fulfilled in time by the students. In case the respites overlap or the tasks simply cannot be completed in the given time, the goal-oriented transfer of knowledge during the semester is not possible. This inevitably results in poorer examination results, a remarkably lower quality of the teaching and most likely in significant overruns of standard study periods.
- Regarding the practice-oriented transfer of knowledge for example in the form of laboratory internships or other practice-relevant programmes or practical trainings, especially in the faculty of agriculture/environment/chemistry, it cannot be expected of the students that they will be taught less knowledge than normal before an upcoming practical semester. The usage of software like Lexware, SAP, Matlab, AutoCAD or others must be taught as far as possible in the usual way. Otherwise, it would not only let the teaching at the HTW appear in bad light, but also the students, even if the current situation is a problem all over Germany.
- Seasonal examinations, especially in the faculty of agriculture/environment/chemistry, have to be adjusted adequately to the given circumstances paying regard to the students. It is therefore urgently necessary to examine whether examination performances should and can be demanded from the students from 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020 onwards, as it is customary in the fourth semester in the course of agricultural economy.
- It is imperative to ensure that all students who have sufficient technical equipment are able to attend live online lectures and that this is not restricted by limited capacities. In addition, notes from lecturers to students in the form of “We cannot wait for everyone” are more than out of place in the current situation. At the very least, reference is again made here to the requirement for general lecture recordings, also in view of the fact that several students are expected to contract SARS-Cov-2.

- The students are to be provided with at least detailed solutions to exercises and similar in a suitable electronic form in order to meet the requirements of efficient self-study.
- In general, documents should not be protected with passwords. In our opinion, maximal accessibility is needed.
- In general, maximum accessibility must be ensured when making documents essential for courses. The reference to the OPAL printing service is currently absolutely not appropriate. Moreover, especially in the current situation, this service involves high costs for students, while the cheaper option, the pick-up service, creates unnecessary health risks for students and staff. The StuRa has so far, not without reason, not officially supported this service. Finally, it is currently not possible to print password-protected documents via this service. We could have imagined offering internal alternatives for the students through our own infrastructure.

Thank you for your Attention and Engagement

We wish you all the best and stay healthy.

Sincerely,

StuRa HTW Dresden