

**GUIDELINES FOR  
RE-OPENING THE UNIVERSITY  
POST LOCKDOWN DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**



लक्ष्यं विश्वमानम्

**WEST BENGAL STATE UNIVERSITY  
BARASAT NORTH 24 PARGANAS**

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## **Introduction**

The West Bengal State University has been closed since 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 when the Government of West Bengal announced the closure of educational institutions as one of the measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.

As the administrative offices of the University have begun partial activities and the plans for certain in-campus academic activities are on with the onset of the new academic session the University needs a customized plan, as per the priorities of its local condition to deal with any eventuality arising due to the COVID -19 pandemic.

It is felt that even after the spread of Coronavirus is contained, certain preventive measures will be required to be followed for quite some time to avoid its recurrence. This will be all the more necessary for educational institutions like ours as large numbers of students gather on the campus. Keeping all these factors in view, the COVID-19 Committee has framed the following Guidelines for the University in consonance with the UGC Guidelines for Re-Opening the Universities and Colleges Post Lockdown due to COVID-19 Pandemic dated 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2020, while reopening the campus after lockdown. These Guidelines may be adopted with the concurrence of the University authority.

## **Generic Preventive Measures/COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour**

The following public health measures are to be followed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 by all (faculty members, employees, students and visitors) in the University at all times:

- i. Physical distancing of at least 6 feet to be followed as far as feasible.**
- ii. Use of face covers/masks to be made mandatory.**
- iii. Frequent hand washing with soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) even when hands are not visibly dirty. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (for at least 20 seconds) can be done wherever feasible.**
- iv. Respiratory etiquettes to be strictly followed. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow and disposing of used tissues properly.**
- v. Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest.**
- vi. Spitting shall be strictly prohibited.**
- vii. Installation & use of Aarogya Setu App shall be advised wherever feasible.**

## **Re-Opening the Campus - Issues and Challenges**

Keeping in view the uncertainties of future due to COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the functioning of the University, it may plan to reopen the campus in a phased manner, ensuring safety, health and well-being of all students and staff. The University should be flexible in its plan and should be ready to handle any eventuality arising due to COVID-19. Some of the issues which it may require to handle instantly are given below:

1. To follow the advisories/guidelines/directions issued by the Central/State Government, Ministry of Education and UGC from time to time to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
2. Uncertainty among students regarding admissions, modes of teaching-learning, completion of courses, examinations, evaluation, declaration of results and the academic calendar, etc.
3. Anxiety, mental health and psychological issues of students developed during the lockdown period and fear of infection after the opening of campus.
4. Safety measures including sanitization of premises, thermal screening, ensuring physical distancing, face-cover/mask wearing, respiratory hygiene and hand-hygiene etc.

Besides students, a serious risk of infection will also be faced by the faculty, officers and other technical and non-teaching staff also who face/ interact with the students and also among themselves regularly.

## **Measures Required before and on the Re-Opening of Campus**

1. The University should be ready with a plan for handling the inflow of students, faculty and staff in the campus, monitoring disinfecting measures, safety and health conditions, screening and detecting the infected persons, containment measures to prevent the spread of the virus in the campus, and also alternative plan(s), in case the campus needs to be closed again due to spread of the virus in campus or in the surrounding area(s) in near future.
2. The opening of physical classes is to be done strictly in adherence to the decision of the Government of West Bengal.
3. The University may plan opening the campus in phases, with such activities where social distancing, use of face masks and other protective measures can be strictly adhered to. This may include administrative offices, research laboratories and libraries etc.
4. Thereafter, students of all research programmes and post-graduate students in science & technology programmes may join as the number of such students is comparatively less and norms of physical distancing and preventive measures can be easily enforced. For the programmes, other than the above, online teaching-learning process



may continue to remain the preferred mode of teaching.

5. Further, final year students may also be allowed to join for academic and placement purposes, as per the decision of the University authority.
6. However, if required, students may visit their respective Departments in a small number for consultation with the faculty members, after seeking prior appointments to avoid crowding, while maintaining physical distancing norms and other safety protocols.
7. Students with COVID-related quarantine or medical issues may opt not to attend classes and prefer to study online while staying at home. Concerned Departments of the University shall provide online study material and access to e- resources to such students for teaching-learning.
8. The University shall assist such international students who could not join the programme due to international travel restrictions or visa-related issues. Online teaching-learning arrangements shall also be made for them.

### **Safety concerns**

1. The University shall train their staff and students to assist and undertake the work related to safety and health to prevent an outbreak of the pandemic in their campuses. Each and everyone should be allowed in campus only after thermal scanning, sanitization of their hands, and wearing of face masks.
2. Expertise of the teachers and students of the Department of Psychology may be utilized for addressing the anxiety, stress or fear of the students relating to COVID-19.
3. To avoid the risk of transmission, the students, faculty, staff and visitors must be screened and symptomatic ones be advised to get clinically assessed before allowing them entry into the campus.
4. Faculty, staff and students should be sensitized on self-monitoring of their health. Faculty, Staff and students should submit self-disclosure, if any of their family members have been infected/availed treatment for COVID-19.
5. In case of any emergent medical concern, the University shall communicate with the local government hospitals to address the same.
6. The University shall restrict the outside experts on its campus, study tours, field works etc., keeping in mind the COVID-19 situation. All such programmes and extracurricular activities should be avoided where physical distancing is not possible.
7. Clean and hygienic conditions, as per safety and health advisories of the UGC and the Department of Health, Government of West Bengal, are to be maintained at all places, including washrooms, libraries, laboratories, class rooms, offices etc.
8. Proper signages, symbols, posters etc. should be prominently displayed at appropriate places to remind the students, faculty and staff for maintaining physical distancing. The details of COVID-19 Committee established by the institution be prominently

displayed containing the emergency number, helpline number, email id and contact details of persons to be contacted in case of any emergency in the institution.

9. The norms of physical distancing, sanitization and hygienic conditions for the use of common facilities, viz., Auditorium, Conference/ Seminar halls, Sports, Gymnasium, Canteen, Parking Area etc. should also be ensured.

## **Institutional Planning**

The University shall implement the following plans for the successful reopening of the campus and smooth conduct of the teaching-learning process during these difficult times.

1. Institutions should prepare details of opening the campus in a phased manner with a complete roster for all departments and batches of students in different programmes.
2. The institutions must ensure appropriate sanitization and disinfection process and procedures.
3. It should be made mandatory for the Teachers, Officers, Staff and Students to carry/wear the Id cards.
4. The faculty, student, staff should be screened regularly to protect and avoid infecting one another.
5. The seating arrangement be made keeping in view the requirements of physical distancing.
6. The entry of visitors to the University should be drastically restricted. The entry shall be contingent upon proper screening and health protocols. Contact details of the visitors be maintained along with the names of persons whom he/ she meets.
7. Adequate arrangements of thermal scanners, sanitizers, and face masks should be made available, as and when required, at the University.
8. Crowding must be avoided at entry/ exit gate. Staggered timings of entry and exit with limited strength for different programmes should be followed.
9. For ensuring queue management, inside and outside the premises, specific markings on the floor with a gap of 6 feet may be made and be adhered to.
10. Those having symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty in breathing shall not be allowed to enter.

## **Safety Measures**

1. Proper sanitization at all learning sites should be ensured. Cleaning and regular disinfection of frequently touched surfaces (door knobs, elevator buttons, hand rails, chairs, benches, washroom fixtures, etc.) are to be made mandatory in all class rooms, laboratories, (and also) lockers, parking areas, other common areas etc. before the beginning of classes every day. Teaching materials, computers, laptops, printers, shall be regularly disinfected with 70% alcohol swipe.



2. Sitting places in classes, laboratories, computer labs, libraries etc. should be clearly marked or differently arranged, keeping in view the norms of physical distancing. At least one seat should be left vacant between two seats.
3. Wearing face cover/ mask is a must at all times and at all places inside the campus.
4. Cultural activities, meeting etc. may be avoided. However, such extra- curricular and sports activities may be allowed where physical distancing is feasible and is in accordance with the Ministry of Home Affairs guidelines, issued under Disaster Management Act, 2005 from time to time.
5. Hand washing stations with facilities of liquid soap should be created in and around washrooms so that every student can wash her/ his hands frequently.
6. Regular and sufficient supply of face covers/ masks, heavy duty gloves, disinfecting material, sanitizer, soaps etc. to sanitation workers should be ensured.
7. Wearing of face cover/ mask by all students and staff should be ensured.
8. Proper cleanliness should be maintained inside the entire campus.
9. Adequate arrangements should be made for sanitizing the entire campus, including administrative and academic buildings, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, common rooms, toilets, water stations, furniture, learning material, teaching aids, sports equipment, computers etc.
10. Physical distancing should be maintained at all places and crowding must not be allowed at any place under any circumstances.
11. Proper sanitization of vehicles of the faculties, staff and students and of the official vehicles of the University should be done.
12. Spitting in the campus must be made a punishable offence.
13. Dustbins must be cleaned and covered properly. Dustbin for collection of used facemasks, personal protective equipment, hand gloves and their disposals should be ensured as per safety norms. Provision for proper disposal of used personal protection items and general waste should be followed in accordance with CPCB guidelines (available at: [https://cpcb.nic.in/uploads/Projects/Bio-Medical-Waste/BMW-GUIDELINES- COVID\\_1.pdf](https://cpcb.nic.in/uploads/Projects/Bio-Medical-Waste/BMW-GUIDELINES- COVID_1.pdf)).
14. For air-conditioning/ventilation, the guidelines of CPWD shall be followed, which emphasizes that the temperature setting of all air conditioning devices should be in the range of 24-30°C, relative humidity should be in the range of 40-70%, intake of fresh air should be as much as possible and cross ventilation should be there.
15. The University Gymnasium shall follow MoHFW guidelines (available at: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Guidelinesonyogainstitutesandgymnasiums03082020.pdf>).
16. All employees who are at higher risk, i.e., older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions should take extra precautions. They should preferably not be exposed to any front-line work requiring direct contact with the students. The University authority shall issue relevant instructions for the purpose.

## **Counselling and Guidance for Mental Health**

In order to reassure the students' community to avoid any kind of stress or panic in the prevailing situation *vis-a-vis* their studies, health and related issues, the University shall take the following measures for the mental health, psychological aspects and well-being of the students:

1. All the faculty members, students and staff should be made aware of the Web page named *Manodarpan* – created on the Ministry of Education website to provide psychosocial support for Mental Health & Well-being during the COVID 19 outbreak and beyond. The web page contains advisory, practical tips, posters, videos, do's and don'ts for Psychosocial support, FAQ and online query system. Also, a National Toll Free Helpline (8445440632) for country wide outreach to students from schools, colleges and universities has also been set up which will provide tele-counselling to address their mental health and psychosocial issues.
2. Helplines for mental health, psychological concerns and well-being of students shall be created in the University, which shall be regularly monitored by Counsellors and the COVID-19 Committee.
3. Regular mentoring of students through interactions, and counselling should be done by the teachers through telephones, e-mails, digital and social media platforms to keep them calm and stress-free.
4. All stakeholders of the University are requested to watch and follow the video links of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/> and share the same with students and faculty via e-mail, through social media like Facebook, WhatsApp and twitter etc.
5. Similarly, the following videos are to be watched and shared to negotiate with the present COVID situation:

Practical tips to take care of your Mental Health during the Stay In  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHB3WJsLJ8s&feature=youtu.be>

Minding our minds during the COVID-19  
<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/MindingourmindsduringCoronaeditedat.pdf>

Various Health Experts on how to manage Mental health & Well Being during COVID-19 outbreak  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuKhtSehp24&feature=youtu.be>

Behavioural Health: Psycho-Social toll free helpline - 0804611007

Besides the above, all are requested to consult the **UGC Guidelines for Re-Opening the Universities and Colleges Post Lockdown due to COVID-19 Pandemic dated 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.**

*Notwithstanding the above Guidelines, the University shall follow necessary advisories/guidelines/directions issued by the Central/State Government, Ministry of*



*Education (earlier referred to as MHRD) or UGC from time to time to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in carrying out the academic activities.*