General

UMP suspends T&L until 14 April

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Following the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO) across the country and the order to close all institutions of higher learning, Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) has postponed all service operations and no teaching and learning (T&L) activities including online are allowed during the MCO from 18 March until 14 April 2020.

The decision also referred to the proposal of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) in the management of academic programmes in every institution in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak.

According to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & International), Professor Ts. Dr. Mohd Rosli Hainin, the decision was made considering most of the students are now with their respective families at their hometowns and in the interest of their safety and wellbeing.

“The nearly 4-week MCO period to curb the Covid-19 outbreak certainly affects the academic calendar at all institutions including UMP.

“Therefore, the university will be making amendments to the academic calendar for Semester II of 2019/2020 Session which will be presented at the next university’s senate meeting.

“In facing of the situation, the university is ready to activate the online T&L mode (e-learning), and the Centre of Instructional Resources & e-Learning (CIReL) had organised a series of online training sessions for its academic staff,” he said.

He said the training covers a variety of platforms, applications, T&L methods and online assessment that suit the programmes enrolled by students.

“Each faculty has prepared material for online T&L activities by adopting appropriate strategies to continue the classes.

“The UMP’s Learning Management System (LMS) or KALAM has been tested since early February to check for internet access during peak hours when most students access KALAM simultaneously.

“To date, 65% of the courses offered by UMP has reached blended learning status that includes the online T&L sessions.

“Apart from being experienced with this system, students are IT savvy and can adapt the use of educational technology for their T&L activities,” he said.

A recent survey to gather feedback from the students revealed that more than 80% are ready with e-learning and the remaining almost 20% are not prepared as they live in areas with a poor internet connection.

Lecturers are given the options to conduct synchronous or asynchronous T&L sessions or specific task-based T&L sessions.

He also advised the students to take the opportunity during the MCO period to study after going through the 5-week lectures and interact with lecturers and friends to strengthen their understanding.

The university also ensures the safety and welfare of more than 800 students who stay on campus, including providing food, hygiene kits, and monitoring their wellbeing as well as maintaining the social distance to avoid gathering.

For the staff, he advised them to remain steadfast in working from home, apart from standing by to carry out duties to preserve the academic quality toward the university excellence.

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