

Office of the Vice President for Academic Administration

24 October 2023

Dear MEU Faculty Members,

Many of us have been following with great concern the tragic events of the last 2 weeks close to the Southern border of Lebanon. The administration is monitoring the situation from a variety of dependable sources. While it is impossible to know with certainty to what extent it may escalate or how soon it will end, MEU wants you to know that we are committed to the well-being of all members of the MEU community and that we desire to continue to support students in their academic progress.

The Academic Affairs Committee has formulated an Academic Continuity Plan (ACP), for the remainder of the current semester, Fall 2023. It recognizes the uncertainty that some members of the MEU community are experiencing. The purpose of the ACP is to enable all students to complete the semester and to mitigate the effects of any disruptions while maintaining the same academic standards.

The ACP includes the following guidelines and procedures that apply to students enrolled in programs on the MEU campus:

- Disruptions that may result in the suspension of classes and/or exams for a short period of time will be communicated promptly by MEU.
- In consultation with their faculty dean, instructors may:
 - provide reasonable accommodations to students on a case-by-case basis;
 - consider adapting their course syllabi with priority given to exploring essential concepts and ensuring the achievement of student learning outcomes; and
 - diversify their modes of assessment.

As students may be affected differently by the situation, we urge you to be as supportive as possible with students seeking reasonable accommodation based on your personal circumstances.

- Students who are compelled to travel abroad before the end of Fall semester (i.e., 14 December 2023) shall submit a written request for academic accommodation to their faculty dean. It must include the reason for travel, intended date of departure, and the destination.

- For students who travel outside the country and receive approval for academic accommodation:
 - Instructors shall make course materials accessible remotely.
 - Instructors must provide opportunities for face-to-face (real time) online contact. Whenever possible, students shall also be given the opportunity to connect synchronously during class time.
 - Students will be responsible for following up on their course progress and requirements.
 - Students may need to drop a course for the semester if it requires a substantial experiential learning component (e.g., labs, community-based projects, etc.), where the nature of the course renders accommodation impossible.
- Final examinations must be in-person for each course according to the requirements of the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). For those outside the country, accommodation may be arranged at another university. Students requesting this possibility will be required to provide relevant information in due time.
- Note that, to date, MEHE has not issued any circulars that would allow universities to switch to online instruction for a substantive duration and/or until the end of the semester. We know that discussions to this effect are taking place, and we will keep faculty and students updated about any new decisions.

MEU remains committed to sustaining its academic mission including offering in-person classes and continuing to host and encourage on campus educational activities. We will maintain regular communication with you as the situation unfolds. For questions or clarifications, contact your relevant department.

Please be assured that your safety and well-being of all members remain our top priorities. We recognize the burden posed by the above accommodations on our faculty since it is not possible to have a one-size-fits-all approach. Thank you for your commitment as we navigate the present challenges.

Yours in Adventist higher education,

Dolf Oberholster, PhD
Vice President for Academic Administration