

Dear partners,

We are all struggling with the outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, we are also trying to take decisions about the present as well as the immediate future of our exchange programmes in these unpredictable times.

At the University of Bologna we have started to figure out the organisation of the 2020 Fall Academic semester after a period of total suspension of Face to Face (FtF) activities which started at the end of February 2020 with the delivery of online classes and exams for the entire 2020 Spring semester.

With this communication we wish to update our partners about the decisions already taken by the Governance of our institution. We want to provide as much information as possible to our prospective students and international partners to allow them to evaluate their options and opportunities here at UNIBO for the next academic year.

The governing bodies of our Alma Mater have established that the Fall semester 2020 will envisage a dual teaching mode for all degree programmes: classes will be delivered online and in face to face mode simultaneously. Students will be able to attend them in both arrangements, as it will be further detailed below.

Regardless of future developments concerning the COVID19 pandemic, all degree programmes will guarantee full online teaching including classes/lectures, training activities and exams sessions till the end of next semester. The University is working to equip all classrooms with the appropriate technology. Furthermore, in the light of the positive experience of the current semester, UNIBO is actively cooperating with its Teaching Innovation Center in order to further improve the quality and accessibility of its online teaching methodologies. Online classes may be followed synchronously but we are taking into consideration the possibility to record and make them available also asynchronously.

This decision has been taken to guarantee that all students may begin, continue and conclude their semester without possible and unpredictable disruptions caused by the current international situation.

The University of Bologna is also planning to resume in-class teaching activities from the 2020 Fall semester, in compliance with the indications of the health authorities that may be effective by Fall 2020. This will be done in compliance with safety protocols which will include limitations on the number of students who can attend classes in face to face modality. A turnover attendance rule will be adopted: within the same course, students will be asked to attend some lectures in FtF modality and some others online. Limited access to FtF lectures may be eased during the semester but it is currently not feasible to establish when in-class teaching will be resumed without any restriction. In addition, international students may be affected by travel bans, quarantine provisions and other restrictions for VISA that do not depend on the University. Finally, please consider that the intensive Italian language courses, which are normally offered to international students in September, will not take place. However, Italian language classes will be still be delivered throughout the semester, both in online and FtF mode. The online placement tests will be open from July 13th to July 31th; a second online placement test session will take place in August. Information about these courses and placement tests will be sent out in due time. Fall semester will start around the end of September - beginning of October according to the calendar of each Department.

According to the scenario described above, we confirm that the University of Bologna will continue to register incoming students from your University.

Incoming students could, therefore, be ascribed to the following cases:

a) Nominated students who are still willing to travel to Bologna and attend UNIBO classes under the conditions described above. These students, after the completion of the acceptance process, will be able to receive a regular invitation letter for their VISA application, if needed according to their citizenship, and the necessary instructions to plan their exchange. Tentatively, the arrival should be planned during the third/fourth week of September 2020.

b) Nominated students who are interested in participating to our 2020 Fall online mobility programme, but do not wish to travel to Italy. After the completion of acceptance process, these nominees will be allowed to select course units, attend online classes, be in touch with our professors and take exams. The University of Bologna will issue a transcript of records at the end of the term. If allowed by the home University regulations, this online exchange programme will not prevent students from taking classes at their home university or any other institution. Further information about the procedure they will have to follow for the online check in will be sent directly to the nominees but also to you in the following weeks.

c) Students who prefer postponing their exchange to the second term (Spring 2021), in the hope that positive developments of the current situation will allow travel to Italy and attendance to classes without the above described restrictions

d) Students who decide to start their mobility online but then decide, during the semester, to travel to Bologna and continue their mobility experience on campus. The limitations on the number of students who can attend classes in face to face modality and the turnover attendance rule will continue for the whole semester at least, but they are welcome to experience our campus anyway, at any time. These students will be requested to perform a physical check in, since we need to chart the different mobility modes.

Internships and similar activities (ex: thesis researches) in hospital or labs could not be guaranteed to all incoming students, due to the limited numbers of students allowed to access the university premises: further communication will be sent in the following weeks directly to the nominees involved.

We ask you to provide this information to each student you have already nominated, in order to let them choose among the three options.

The purpose of this communication is presenting our partners with the arrangements that UNIBO has taken to guarantee exchange mobility for next semester. We hope that this information will help you advice your students correctly about their options at UNIBO for Academic Year 2020/2021.

Best regards,

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