

Dear all,

Surely one of the most characteristic attributes of the University of Girona is its proximity. We are an institution on a human scale, of close relationships. We rely on complicity, empathy, contact. Now, forced as we are to remain confined in our homes, we try to maintain these personal bonds, these invisible threads that are the essence of our way of being and doing.

The response of UdG staff to the immense challenge posed by the current situation has been exceptional. The day following confinement I was sent emails from community members who made themselves available to the institution for whatever was necessary. Within a few days, many Service and Administrative staff had already dedicated their efforts to make the remote operation of the University possible. You have invested your talent and your time to make it possible for the university activity to continue. I'm very grateful to you. The response of the teaching and research staff has also been exemplary. Making a transition from face-to-face teaching to virtual forms in a few days has only been possible thanks to your professionalism and predisposition. I would also like to thank the students for your understanding and your ability to adapt to this new situation; all this allows us to collectively be very proud of our University. And allow me to express an explicit appreciation to the deans and the director of the Polytechnic School: since the days before confinement you have been working to reduce its effects and to anticipate situations before they occurred.

We'll have to get used to this situation for some weeks. We will work so that the teaching and research activity does not stop, so that the students are not prejudiced, or that any prejudice is as slight as possible. And I would like to establish permanent communication with you. Firstly, because I would like to present the situation with maximum transparency and also to devote the utmost attention to your proposals and demands. And secondly, because I think it is important to maintain a bond with all of you, to explain the actions we

are taking, and also to express our doubts and questions to you. Therefore, I undertake to revise the situation every week.

The UdG had prepared a plan to respond to the incidence of covid-19 and that has allowed us to anticipate some of the responses, despite the speed of events. We are now implementing the measures envisaged in Scenario 4, which proposes the country's confinement. In this regard, we have published a resolution to adapt to the new scenario, we have drafted a guide on teaching resources for distance teaching, a manual of use of the Teams Office365, a guide to distance meetings of collegiate bodies, and the safety and health criteria to carry out the essential activities in university facilities. We have also developed communication actions, such as a webpage dedicated to covid-19, a permanent WhatsApp helpline number and an intensification of information on the various official channels of the UdG.

The solidarity response of the University has also been exceptional. The Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Nursing have collaborated from the first moment in order to increase health worker numbers with students and graduates, which are so necessary at the moment. The Faculty of Science and the Polytechnic School, for example, have provided hospitals with scientific and medical research materials, and the faculties of Medicine and Nursing have ceded protective material and respirators. And I know of initiatives from researchers who use 3D printers to produce protective material, scientific and technical PCR analysis teams that are made available to hospitals, and other solidarity proposals that we try to coordinate with the network of Catalan universities and with the Government of the Generalitat, with which I maintain permanent contact.

We're still at an uncertain time. Never before, in the history of the University, have we had to deal with a situation like this. But we are a robust and committed community, firm and supportive, tenacious and sensitive. I am absolutely confident that we will overcome this

scenario, both the country and the institution, and that the lessons from this confinement will have left us much better, as a University and as people.

Complicated days come, but sooner or later, as the poet Narcís Comadira said, "the miracle of light after the storm" will return.

Regards,

Quim Salvi
Rector

Girona, 24 March 2020