

2020-06-10

These regulations and guidelines replace those in the document dated 2020-04-14 for teaching and examination during summer and autumn 2020.

Regulations and guidelines regarding teaching at Bachelor and Masters levels during the summer and autumn terms of 2020 (until 2021-01-17), arising because of the new corona virus (which causes the illness Covid-19)

Background

Because of the ongoing spread of the new corona virus (SARS-CoV-2), the university on March 18 moved to online teaching¹. From May 4, it has on the Natural Science Area been possible to apply for an exception from online teaching. This possibility has concerned practical parts. For students in special needs, Student Services has had the right to grant exceptions for access to resource rooms.

May 20, the university leadership announced that the university plans for online teaching (with possibility of exceptions) until August 30 and from the start of the autumn term August 31 to plan for some teaching also on campus.

On May 29, the Public Health Agency announced that the recommendation for universities to perform distance teaching will be lifted from June 15, but that the Public Health Agency's recommendations to minimize the spread of the virus should be followed.

At Stockholm University, the requirement on online teaching will remain until August 30, where exceptions must still be applied for until that date. One can though apply for exceptions also for other activities than practical parts, i.e. group work, seminars and other teaching and examination. From the start of the fall term August 31, the earlier announced planning remains, i.e. that we plan to perform some teaching on campus, but that it is still important to minimize the spread of the virus.

¹ In this document, the term online teaching will be used instead of distance education.



The aims of this document and the associated decision by the Dean of Science are to simplify the decision process in the present situation, to clarify what can be decided on by Departments, and to give recommendations.

Overall goal

Our overall goal is to do everything that we can to continue with teaching and examination for the duration of the pandemic. This requires changes to modes of teaching and examination as well as how obligatory parts of courses are handled.

Ensuring that our teaching and examinations continue to be of high quality will rely on us working together to find creative and flexible solutions for teachers and student.

The guidelines and recommendations in this document are valid while teaching and examination cannot be conducted fully on campus, but no longer than for courses running during the autumn term of 2020 (i.e. until the end of the autumn term January 17, 2021).

In most cases, course plans do not need be revised and new course plans do not need to be created for reasons relating to the new corona virus. Instead, we will accept that course plans cannot be adhered to in their entirety at this time. However, if changes to an existing course plan or if an entirely new course plan needs to be created at short notice, the routines stated below should be followed.

For courses during the summer 2020 (until August 30) the main principle is that teaching and examination occurs online. For courses during the fall term (August 31, 2020 to January 17, 2021) the main principle is that teaching and examination is partly on campus and partly online.

If a change to a course plan or a new course plan is not needed immediately, normal routines should be followed.

Regulations

Decisions which can be made by Departments

Departments can decide on deviations from course plans with regards modes of teaching and examination and on exemptions from obligatory parts of courses. Decisions about deviating from a course plan should be made by the Head of Department or a person to whom the Head of Department has delegated this task (e.g. Vice Head of Department or a Director of Studies, not individual teachers) after consultation with a student representative (see attachment 1). Students who are affected by such changes should be informed in writing. If an obligatory part of a course is removed it should be replaced by an alternative assignment. An exception to this rule is obligatory parts of a course which are only a very small part of a course.

Departments can decide to allow teaching or examination outside of term. Such decisions should be made by the Head of Department or a person to whom the Head of Department has delegated this task after consultation with a student representative (see attachment 1). Teaching and examination should not be delayed longer than necessary. Students who are affected by such changes should be informed in writing.

For courses during the summer of 2020 (until August 30), teaching is online. Departments can apply for exceptions from the requirement on online teaching. Such applications should be done on a special form (see decision from May 4 with addition on June 5). Consultation with student representatives (see attachment 1) should be done before the application is handed in. Applications can be done by the Head of Department or a person to whom the Head of Department has delegated this task to. If possible, applications should be handed in no later than June 26.

For courses during the fall of 2020, the departments decide which activities that take place at the university or other suitable place, and which occur online. If these decisions mean that earlier given information is changed, consultation with student representatives should be held (see attachment 1). Before taking these decisions the department should consider the recommendations later in this document.

Decisions which can be made by Departments after consultation with the Chairperson of the Education Board

Major changes, or changes to expected learning outcomes, can only be made in consultation with the Chairperson of the Education Board who should decide if the change can be handled as a deviation from the course plan or if a new or revised course plan is required.

Decisions which can be made by the Chairperson of the Education Board

The Chairperson of the Education Board can decide on changes to a course plan, e.g. subdivision of examination codes, or changes to expected learning outcomes. Such changes should normally be done by creating a new course plan, which is by definition temporary and will be made inactive after the situation caused by the pandemic has improved and educational activities can return to normal. If a Department wants the change to remain even after the current situation, the course plan should be revised instead.

Note that if a Department request to remove an expected learning outcome (or part of one), an analysis of any potential problems for future courses and/or for examination goals being achieved is required.

Requests to modify an existing course plan or to create a new one should be submitted with a motivation to the Faculty Administration (gb@science.su.se) with a copy to the Chair of the Education Board (edsjo@fysik.su.se). The request should be submitted by the Head of Department or a person to whom the Head of Department has delegated this task (i.e. not individual instructors) using a specific template and after consultation with a student representative (see attachment 1).

Departments can apply for exceptions from the requirement on online teaching for courses until August 30. Such applications should be done on a special form (see decision from May 4 with addition on June 5) and sent to the Faculty Administration (gb@science.su.se) with a copy to the Chair of the Education Board (edsjo@fysik.su.se). Consultation with student representatives (see attachment 1) should be done before the application is handed in. The request should be submitted by the Head of Department or a person to whom the Head of Department has delegated this task to. If possible, applications should be handed in no later than June 26.

Exceptions

We will not deviate from the University's regulations regarding grading scales.

Guidelines

General guidelines

Even if the university opens up more in the autumn of 2020 and exceptions can be applied for the summer 2020, we need to follow the Public Health Agency's recommendations. Specifically this e.g. means that (as the recommendations currently are)

- not to gather more than 50 people
- to make sure social distances can be applied
- to make sure there are good possibilities for hand cleaning

More information and risk assessment tools are available on the Public Health Agency's website.

We further recommend that Departments:

- Decide on a reserve teacher in case the usual teacher of a course becomes ill.
- Decide on a reserve examiner in case the usual examiner of a course becomes ill (this decision needs to be taken by the Head of Department).
- Find solutions for students who do not have the necessary technical equipment to participate in distance teaching and/or examination.
- Ensure that all students including those with special needs are able to participate in teaching and examinations.
- Be flexible with alternative teaching and examination possibilities for student that cannot participate on campus (they might e.g. belong to a risk group)
- Be flexible with providing extra examination opportunities. Note that the number of examination opportunities that is stated in the course plane is a minimum.
- Be restrictive with changing back from online teaching/examination to campus based teaching/examination if the students have already been informed that teaching/examination will take place online.

In general, we advise against replacing lectures with self-study.

Specific guidelines form the summer 2020

We recommend that Departments:

- If possible modify lab exercises to demonstrations which can be filmed or streamed via e.g. Zoom. If this makes it impossible for learning goals to be achieved (e.g. if a learning goal is for students to have acquired practical skills), an alternative is to apply for an exception.
- Hold student presentations, oral student reviews and seminars via e.g. Zoom. Another alternative is to replace oral student reviews with written reviews.
- Allow for exams to be done by distance, e.g. by replacing campus-based exams with home-based exams and hand-in exercises. One option, which is not a requirement, is to supplement a home exam with an oral exam via e.g. Zoom. It is important to make sure that distance exams are performed such that cheating is avoided and one can make sure that the correct student is examined. If it is considered especially important that examination is held on campus, an exception can be applied for.

Specific guidelines for the fall 2020

We recommend that Departments

- Plan for teaching and examination to take place on campus and online. When both options cannot be held open, it is possible to already now decide about online teaching and examination for the fall (or parts of the fall).
- Plan to avoid crowding in public transport and other areas around teaching/examination, it could e.g. be to
 - avoid scheduling start and end times of teaching and examination during rush hours
 - spread out start and end times of teaching and examination
- Think through which courses and student groups one wants to prioritize for being on campus. It could e.g. be more important for new students to be on campus.
- Be clear in the information about which activities that are on campus and not.
- Inform the students about the planning for the fall at the latest on July 15
- Have a holistic view so that the number of students on campus can be held down. Can we have fewer students on campus at any given instance, we reduce the risk of spreading the virus both on campus and on public transport.

Attachment 1.

When decisions are made by the Head of Department, or a person appointed by the Head of Department, student representatives shall be given the opportunity to voice their opinion (Regulations for Student Influence, 7.3). In the first instance, the student representatives at the Department should be contacted when decisions are made by an individual, and in the second instance the Stockholm University Student Union (SUS) can be contacted. To make this more efficient, the student representatives and SUS can be contacted at the same time. Presently, there are active student councils and student representatives at all sections of the Faculty of Science.

Biology Section

Student Council of Biology (BÄR): biologiskaamnesradet.su@gmail.com

Chemistry Section

Student Council of Chemistry (SCC): scc.natfak@protonmail.ch

Mathematics-Physics Section

Student Council of Fysikum (FÄR): far@fysik.su.se

FÄR is active at Fysikum and the Department of Astronomy

Student Council of Mathematics (MSR): msr@math.su.se

MSR is active at the Department of Mathematics

MND's Student Council: mnd.studentrad@gmail.com

MND is active at Department of Mathematics and Science Education

Please note that the Department of Metrology presently lacks an active student council. However, they have active student representatives, whose contact information is known by departmental staff.

Section for Earth and Environmental Sciences

Student Council for Earth and Environmental Sciences (GÄR): gar.amnesrad@gmail.com

Please note that communication with GÄR should be in English, as several council members do not speak Swedish.

Stockholm University Student Union (SUS)

Student Governance Officer for the Faculty of Science: studiebevakare.natfak@sus.su.se