

## **The European Theological Seminary Daily Operations/Activities**

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

**Date of Issuance: 15 March 2020**



On Friday, 13 March, the minister president (governor) of Baden-Württemberg (our province or state), Germany issued a statement as a result of the Corona Virus (COVID 19) pandemic. Beginning Tuesday morning, all public schools, universities, and Kindergartens will be closed until at least 19 April 2020. Additionally, all events with more than 100 persons attendance in a closed facility (room, church, etc.) have been banned. As a result, many churches have opted to stop holding services until the pandemic crisis is over.

The district (Landkreis / county) of Freudenstadt has gone a step further and demanded that all public meetings, including worship services not be held until at least 19 April. Thus, local churches, including Crossroads International COG – Jivko Jacobs – have suspended their Sunday services and weekly gatherings (i.e., Rangers, youth) in observation of the newly announce local decree. These steps were taken even though there are only two confirmed cases of COVID 19 in the entire Freudenstadt district (county). In the meantime, there are three confirmed cases in the FDS district.

The main purpose of these mandates is to reduce social interactions in hopes of slowing down the spread of COVID 19. We ask your complete cooperation in the areas of suggestion and change as indicated below. Together with God's help we will see victory and success over this pandemic!

Dr. Tom Rosson, Vice President  
European Theological Seminary

### **What this means for ETS**

The essential strategy we will employ is social distancing, isolating the seminary from those who potentially carry the COVID 19 pathogen. We will begin with a measured lock-down.

### **Suspension of Field Ministries**

Even before the new measures were taken by Baden-Württemberg, we announced the suspending of the **Field Ministry** requirement and encouraged all students to remain on campus. Obviously, some of you had obligations over this current weekend. But from here on out, we ask all our students to suspend all Field Ministry requirements / local church activity until at least the Easter Break. In the Academic office, we must yet figure out the solution for the academic credits for the Field Ministry. This will be announced later.

### **Sunday Services and Wednesday Chapel**

As previously stated, the city of Freudenstadt has issued an ordinance for churches not to hold any worship services, because public gatherings are an easy venue for the spreading the viral pathogen. However, as a closed community we will offer a **worship services** only for those living in the dormitory. Please do not invite non-campus visitors to the service(s) until the pandemic is over.

### **Educational Activities**

Although all public schools have been closed, that decree does not impact the operations of ETS since ETS is not a public school. If needed, the decision to cease operations can be made by the ETS e.V. (seminary board). But ETS is more than a school, we also have a dormitory where most of our students reside, in particular our international students. The best way to slow down the spread of the virus is by NOT sending students away from the campus and simultaneously limiting access to the campus from non-residents.

With this line of thought, the current strategy of ETS is continue educational activity – but with a hybrid of delivery methods. Those who live on campus and are in good health will continue to attend classes. These classes will also be offered by video conferencing venues (Zoom, Skype, Facebook live, etc.). For those living off campus, we invite you to join us in these classes in real-time (not time delayed). Any exceptions to this will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

This “hybrid” approach is of course an experiment for all of us. Undoubtedly there will be some hiccups in this transition for which I ask in advance for your understanding and patience. In lieu of actual lecture time, the instructors may give more research/writing assignments. Again, your instructor will determine the best course of action for his/her course.

For the first two-week block, Steffen Schumacher (Hermeneutics) will be in touch with the first level students, Otto Pesel with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level students (Church History) as will Valery Hamilton with the Greek students. Michelle Vallez will teach the English class remotely via Zoom.

Please note: we are cancelling the Spring Break and will have classes during the week after the Easter weekend.

### **Community Life**

Our first priority is the safety and health of our students. We are asking our students who live in the dormitory to remain on campus for the remainder of the pandemic. Please note the following exceptions.

1. The ETS campus is restricted only to residential dormitory students and essential staff. No visitors and family members until the viral pandemic is over. All exceptions must be cleared in advance with the school administration.
2. Off-campus students are asked to remain away from the campus. Any exceptions must be cleared by the administration in advance.
3. Occasional walks in the surrounding forest and open-air areas. We ask all students/staff to maintain a socially responsible distance from others.
4. Shopping for food / snacks. Students are to coordinate such errands with Tamara or Rafael Dragomir in order to reduce the number of students possibly being exposed to pathogens.
5. Students who, for whatever reasons, return from a “high risk area” should self-quarantine themselves for 14 days – away from the seminary. But one should continue to follow their classes online.

### **In case of sickness**

If any student begins to feel possible symptoms of the Corona Virus, they should report this immediate to the dorm supervisors and/or school administration. (see separate sheet)

### **Prayer**

Lastly, I call our community to prayer. Pray that God will bring a halt to this coronavirus outbreak. Healing is needed around the globe and only God can bring a global healing like is needed. Second, pray for our governmental leaders at all levels (national, regional, local) to make wise and sometimes hard decisions to help stem the spreading of the virus. And pray for your school administration – that we may lead with wisdom and hear/discern the will of God for our community.