



COMSATS University
Islamabad

**ONLINE
TEACHING
SYSTEM**



COMSATS University Islamabad

Online Teaching System

(CUOTS)

COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI)

Preamble

To cope up with pandemic of Covid-19 and to prevent its spread among the students, faculty and staff, COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) has designed its own Online Teaching System in conformity with the HEC guidelines. With the help of its stakeholders and through various internal and external consultations, CUI has devised an approach for implementation of an effective COMSTAS University Online Teaching System (CUOTS) which encompasses standard operating procedures (SOPs), mechanisms, guidelines, etc. for effective online teaching. This is an all-inclusive document covering online and on-campus teaching during an emergency which shall be restructured from time to time based on prevalent and future situation and circumstances

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared by retrieving relevant notes /materials from various documents of national and international repute as well as through HEC guidelines. The document serves as guide for the CUI management and is intended only for purpose of education, spreading awareness and in delivering an effective online teaching system.

COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI)

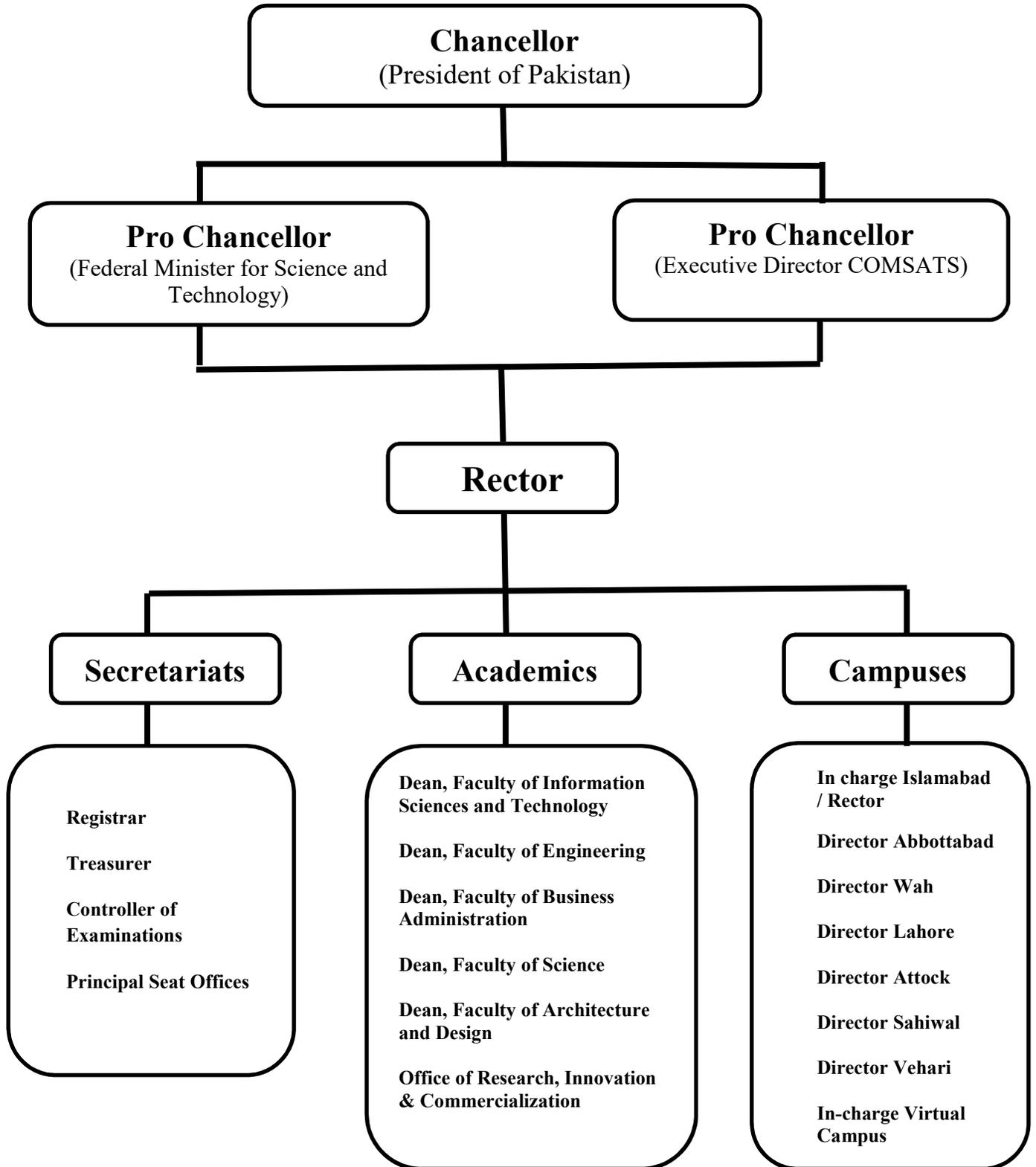
COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) is a fast-growing research-based university in Pakistan, with a wide range of academic programs, ranging from basic sciences to cutting edge emerging technologies and a network of inter-disciplinary research centers making it an ideal place for higher studies leading to MS and PhD degrees. Established in 1998 as COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT) and later granted status of a Degree Awarding Institute (DAI) by Federal Government of Pakistan on August 12, 2000, it has been upgraded to a Federally Chartered University in April 2018 under the COMSATS University Islamabad Act 2018.

The CUI currently comprises of 06 faculties, 22 departments and 08 research centers. Presently about 100-degree programs are on offer to around 36,060 students. CUI has become the first higher education institution in Pakistan to offer hybrid teaching from its Fall 2017 semester. There are 2,700+ faculty members working in CUI with 1000+ faculty members and academic managers having PhD qualification.

Currently, CUI has eight fully functional campuses which are managed by a team of Capable Campus Directors under the visionary leadership of its Rector, Prof. Dr. Muhammad T. Afzal. The list of incumbent directors is as follows:

- **Prof. Dr. Syed Asad Hussain,**
Director, CUI Lahore
- **Dr. Arshid Pervez,**
Director, CUI Abbottabad
- **Dr. M. Abdul Rehman Khan,**
Director, CUI Attock
- **Prof. Dr. Saleem Farooq Shaukat,**
Director, CUI Sahiwal
- **Prof. Dr. Sajjad A. Madani,**
Director, CUI Wah
- **Dr. Khair uz Zaman,**
Director, Vehari Campus
- **Mr. Saadat Iqbal**
Incharge, CUI Virtual Campus

Organizational Administrative Structure of CUI



CUI Online Teaching Committee / Academic Council

The 1st meeting (special) of Academic Council of COMSATS University Islamabad was held on May 07, 2020 at 1400 hours using MS Teams. The agenda of the meeting was ‘Consideration of Academic Matters due to COVID-19’. The forum gave the approvals of the following decisions which lead to the implementation of different notified guidelines of online teaching / e-learning within the CUI system:

- The Academic Council approved the revised and extended Semester Spring 2020 due to COVID-19 with minor changes and corrections.
- The Academic Council approved the e-learning mode of education at CUI system due to COVID-19 and any other emergency situations in future.
- The Academic Council approved the assessment methodologies, as presented, for e-learning at CUI system with minor changes and corrections.
- The Academic Council approved the assessment of Final Year Project (FYP), MS thesis exams and PhD exams through online resources (MS Teams, Zoom, Skype, etc.) at CUI system.
- The Academic Council approved the waiver of NTS test requirement only for Fall 2020 admissions in undergraduate programs of CUI system. Only for Fall 2020 semester, the merit calculation is carried out using Matriculation (20%) and Intermediate (80%) as there will be no NTS test for Fall 2020 semester. However, for Graduate Programs admission, the house resolved that the National Testing Services or Virtual Campus may be approached to develop online system or any other system under the protocols of COVID-19 to conduct GAT tests for MS/MBA/PhD programs.

In addition, the Academic Council of CUI in its 30th (Special) Online Meeting held on September 01, 2020 provided guidelines for continuing both online teaching and on-campus classes during Fall 2020 subject to fulfilling SoPs of COVID-19 issued by Government of Pakistan and Higher Education Commission (HEC).

Contents

1. Guidelines for Online Teaching and Assessment.....	7
1.1 SOPs for Online Teaching	7
1.1.1 Revised Spring 2020 semester	7
1.1.2 Fall 2020 Semester.....	9
1.2 Online Assessment Options	11
1.3 Attendance Policy for Online Course	12
1.4 Roles and Responsibilities	12
1.4.1 Faculty Members	12
1.4.2 Campus Directors.....	13
1.4.3 Deans and Chairpersons.....	13
1.4.4 Heads of Departments.....	13
1.4.5 Campus Management System.....	13
1.5 Student Support and Accessibility	14
1.6 Instructional / Teaching Design	14
2. Guidelines for the Students.....	15
2.1 CMS / Classroom Registration	15
2.2 Security and Privacy	15
2.3 Policy usage of WhatsApp Group /Microsoft Teams / Skype etc.	15
2.4 Online Classes.....	16
2.5 Copyrights/Plagiarism.....	16
2.6 Rules for Online Discussions.....	16
3. Guidelines for Online Student Feedback.....	17

1. Guidelines for Online Teaching and Assessment

1.1 SOPs for Online Teaching

The online teaching was started during Spring 2020 semester when country faced the emergency of COVID-19. It shall be continued during Fall 2020 semester where First sessional will be conducted online, second sessional and terminal exams will be arranged on Campuses for the session Fall-2020. Hence the SoPs issued for online and on-campus teaching for the revised Semester of Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 are presented below.

1.1.1 Revised Spring 2020 semester

In pursuance of a comprehensive HEC policy on COVID-19, following are the standard operating procedures devised by CUI for delivering online courses during revised Spring 2020 semester:

1. Teaching of courses already registered by the students of each program, for Spring 2020 shall be continued/restarted through online classes for all Undergraduate and Graduate Programs being offered at the CUI and its Campuses. This will be done in an asynchronous mode with pre-recorded lectures being provided to the students and discussions continued in a synchronous mode as a flipped classroom to clarify the concepts and address any questions the students might have.
2. Online classes will take place in Spring 2020 semester from Monday April 13, 2020.
3. For each 3 credit hours' theory course, 3 lectures (1.5 hours each) will be held per week at all CUI campuses except Abbottabad Camus. At Abbottabad Campus for each 3 credit hours' theory course, 4 lectures (1.5 hours each) will be held per week until June 5, 2020. Before these classes are conducted the students are to be provided recorded lectures by the faculty at least two days prior to the said material to be discussed during the online discussion. Before the online recorded lectures are provided to the students, they will undergo strict quality check by the Departmental Academic Regulatory Committee (DARC) members to ensure quality of the lecture material.
4. For each undergraduate program, two courses will be offered online during the first phase, excluding any hybrid course already registered by the students during the Spring 2020.
5. Lab work/Practical Sessions of relevant courses shall be conducted later, unless there are online resources which can be used which can explain the concepts clearly, which will be offered only upon the concerned Dean's approval.
6. The instructions/guidelines conveyed by HEC on online courses, from time to time, will be communicated and followed accordingly.
7. All those faculty members who have been allocated courses during Spring 2020 semester and presently are not involved in online teaching during the 1st phase will ensure content

identification from courses available online/recording of their remaining lectures for offering online classes in the 2nd phase as per schedule to be communicated in due course of time.

In addition, the Semester Calendars of Graduate Programs and Undergraduate Programs of CUI for revised Spring 2020 session and Fall 2020 session will be in accordance with option B of HEC proposed calendars.

Hence the **revised semester calendar for Spring 2020** for remaining activities/events (after March 15, 2020) for **Undergraduate Programs** of CUI System was hereby notified vide Notification No. CUI-Reg/Notif/2020/793 dated April 27, 2020 for implementation which also included following details:

Phase I April 13 – June 05, 2020 (Duration 08 weeks)

Exclusively online classes until June 05, 2020 (for two undergraduate courses per program, in addition to any hybrid course being taken)

S.No	Events	Spring 2020 (Phase I) Islamabad, Wah, Attock, Lahore, Sahiwal and Vehari	Spring 2020 Abbottabad
1	Commencement of Online Classes / Availability of online lectures and course material	Monday, April 13, 2020	Monday, April 13, 2020
2	Last Date for Withdrawal of Course(s)	Monday, May 15, 2020	Monday, May 22, 2020
3	Last day for Classes	Friday, June 05, 2020	Friday, June 05, 2020
4	Assessment and Terminal Exams		

Phase II June 08 – August 07, 2020 (Duration 09 weeks)

Regular classes for remaining undergraduate courses. In case of lockdown, Online classes will be held as per below schedule:

S.No	Events	Spring 2020 (Phase II) Islamabad, Wah, Attock, Lahore, Sahiwal and Vehari	Spring 2020 Abbottabad
1	Commencement of classes / Availability of online lectures and course material	Monday, June 08, 2020	Monday, June 22, 2020
2	Last Date for Withdrawal of Course(s)	Friday, July 03, 2020	Friday, July 10, 2020

3	Last day for Classes	Thursday, August 07, 2020	Thursday, August 13, 2020
4	Assessment and Terminal Exams		
5	Declaration of Results at Campuses	Friday, September 18, 2020	Friday October 09, 2020
6	Final Result Notification	Friday, October 08, 2020	Friday, November 06, 2020

Laboratory Practical will be conducted on campus upon resumption of regular academic schedule as allowed by Government of Pakistan.

The **revised semester calendar for Spring 2020** for remaining activities/events (after March 13, 2020) for **Graduate Programs** of CUI System was hereby notified vide Notification No. CUI-Reg/Notif/2020/794 dated April 27, 2020 for implementation which also included following details:

Starting April 13 - August 07, 2020

S.No	Events	Spring 2020 (Phase I) Islamabad, Wah, Attock, Lahore, Sahiwal and Vehari	Spring 2020 Abbottabad
1	Last Date for Withdrawal of Course(s)	Monday, June 08, 2020	Monday, July 06, 2020
2	Leave of Absence during the semester	Thursday, June 11, 2020	Thursday, July 09, 2020
3	Mid Term Assessments as assignments /Quizzes / Project / Paper review	Monday, June 22, 2020	Monday, July 20, 2020
4	Terminal Examination / Assessment as Term Paper / Presentation / Report	Thursday, August 07, 2020	Tuesday, August 13, 2020
5	Declaration of Results at Campuses	Friday, September 18, 2020	Friday, October 9, 2020
6	Final Result Notification	Friday, October 8, 2020	Friday, November 06, 2020

1.1.2 Fall 2020 Semester

Likewise, for Fall 2020 session, following guidelines were provided by Academic Council for implementation within CUI System:

1. The First, Last and Final Semester students of undergraduate programs are being allowed on campus subject to fulfilling SoPs of COVID-19 issued by the Government of Pakistan. The courses that can be taught online shall be conducted as such, and as per guidelines already notified for revised Spring 2020 semester.

2. The Courses with lab / practical work will be held on campuses subject to fulfilling SoPs of COVID-19 issued by the Government of Pakistan.
3. Such students having lab work status “In Progress” in Spring 2020, are allowed to register sequel courses in semester Fall 2020 only.
4. All the students of Graduate Programs, for course work and lab work (if any) will be allowed on campus education subject to SoPs of COVID-19 issued by the Government of Pakistan and CUI. All other graduate programs activities including synopsis/research work/thesis, etc. will be as per practice on the directions of respective supervisor(s), HoD(s), Dean(s), Supervisory Committee(s) and Campus Director(s).
5. The already constituted Task Force by inviting the Campus Directors, therein, will finalize the strategies for examinations, etc. for Fall 2020 semester only before October 07, 2020 and the decision of above said Task Force will be deemed as the decision of the Academic Council, on approval of Rector CUI and will be notified accordingly for implementation at CUI System for Fall 2020 session only.
6. The Semester Calendars of Graduate Programs and Undergraduate programs of CUI for Fall 2020 session is in accordance with option B of HEC proposed calendars.
7. The students, where possible, may be encouraged to do their work at home which needs no physical attendance/presence at campus.
8. The Communal facilities such as kitchens, canteens, meeting rooms, printers and photocopiers will only be in accordance with the designated protocols, as it may be necessary to stagger usage or to continue to hold remote meetings to maintain social distancing.
9. All CUI campuses will ensure the strict implementation of SOPs in consultation and coordination with provincial and local Governments.
10. All students, faculty and staff must adhere to avoid unnecessary movement during their presence on campuses. They should not be allowed to move around the campus too much and should stick to their designated space/places as much as possible.
11. All those faculty members who have been allocated courses for Fall 2020 semester and presently are not involved in online teaching will ensure their presence at their respective campuses.

The **semester calendar Fall 2020 for Undergraduate Programs** of CUI System is hereby notified vide Notification Number CUI-Reg/Notif-1804/20/2119 dated September 08, 2020 for implementation in CUI System.

S.No	Events	Dates
1	Registration Week	Monday, September 07, 2020 – Sunday, September 13, 2020
2	Commencement of Classes	Monday, September 14, 2020
3	Last Date for Drop of Courses	Friday, October 09, 2020

4	1st Sessional	Monday, October 19, 2020
5	Last Date for Withdrawal of Course(s)/Semester	Friday, November 27, 2020
6	2nd Sessional	Monday, November 30, 2020
7	Submission of Final year Project/Internship Reports (With Clearance Form)	Friday, January 01, 2021
8	Last day for Classes/Last Date for attendance Lock	Friday, January 01, 2021
9	Start Date of Terminal Examination	Monday, January 04, 2021- Saturday, January 16, 2021
10	Declaration of Results at Campuses	Monday, January 25, 2021
11	Final Result Notification	Friday, February 19, 2021

The **semester calendar Fall 2020 for Graduate Programs** of CUI System is hereby notified vide Notification Number CUI-Reg/Notif-1805/20/2120 dated September 08, 2020 for implementation.

S.No	Events	Dates
1	Registration Week/Leave of Absence/Re-Admission	Monday, September 07, 2020 - Sunday, September 13, 2020
2	Commencement of Classes	Monday, September 14, 2020
3	Last Date for Drop of Courses	Monday, September 28, 2020
4	Last Date for Withdrawal of Courses	Monday, November 09, 2020
5	Mid Term Examination Start Date	Monday, November 16, 2020
6	Last day for Classes/Last Date for attendance Lock	Friday, January 01, 2021
7	Last Date for Submission of MS Thesis	Friday, January 01, 2021
8	Start Date of Terminal Examination	Monday, January 04, 2021- Saturday, January 16, 2021
9	Declaration of Results at Campuses	Monday, January 25, 2021
10	Submission of PhD Thesis	One week before the commencement of Spring 2021 semester
11	Final Result Notification	Friday, February 19, 2021

1.2 Online Assessment Options

CUI approved the Assessment options for Online Education at CUI system due to COVID-19 for Spring 2020 semester vide Notification Number CUI-Reg/Notif-/20/986 dated May 21, 20. Two options were given each for undergraduate programs and graduate programs. Faculty members

were advised to exercise one of the two options for assessment based on the nature of the course and circumstances in consultation with Head of Department, Chairman and the mandatory approval of concerned Dean. All students will be informed, in advance, of the assessment option for the respective course by the concerned teacher. During Fall 2020 semester, both online and on-campus teaching shall be continued as per notified rules.

1.3 Attendance Policy for Online Course

CUI has a strict attendance policy i.e. a minimum of 80% attendance is required for successful completion of course. Therefore, students are expected to show commitment through attending online classes regularly and actively participate in online discussions as and when required during the e-learning mode of education i.e. revised Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 semesters in order to avoid minimum academic loss.

- In the first instance, Students are anticipated to log into their accounts available on CUI's Campus Management System (CMS), and join the class using their teacher's class-invite link.
- If a student finds difficulty in maintaining minimum requirements for discussion in the online setup then in such case, he/she is advised to contact the faculty members as soon as possible.
- All Students are expected to comply mandatory attendance requirements for each course offered as simply logging into their CMS account for downloading the course material is not enough and shall constitute his/her attendance.

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Following are the roles and responsibilities of the Faculty Members / teachers, Head of Departments (HoDs) and Campus Management System (CMS):

1.4.1 Faculty Members

Faculty members are expected to arrange orientation sessions. They should educate their students regarding online teaching, the usage of third-party tools (if any) e.g. Zoom, Skype, MS Teams, CMS etc. Faculty members are expected to deliver lecture clearly, which is free of distortion and use simple language, easily conceivable to the students. They should also ask for students' feedback at the end of the lecture. The faculty members will be responsible for the preparation of course materials, presentations and uploading them in the intended destination where students can retrieve the link. The faculty members will also motivate students for group discussions and questions and resolve students queries in a timely manner.

1.4.2 Campus Directors

The Campus Director will be responsible to ensure compliance of policy, in an effective manner, by all stake holders and addressing any complaint / problem arising from online education, in coordination with concerned Dean, in a timely manner.

1.4.3 Deans and Chairpersons

Dean of concerned faculty and Chairperson of the concerned Department shall be responsible to ensure that there is no compromise on quality of online lectures. Each course being offered online will need approval of the Dean of the concerned Faculty, for “online readiness” before being offered by the Campus and the Department.

1.4.4 Heads of Departments

Heads of each Department, in consultation with the concerned Campus Director, shall be responsible to decide for each undergraduate program for online teaching and shall ensure the quality of delivery and assessment of online courses being offered in the Department.

Head of Department at the campus shall ensure for the dissemination of Course outlines, relevant course materials and information to all concerned students and concerned officials, for all courses being offered in the Department through CMS and other modes and for Fall 2020 semester. The information shall include the Code and Title of Courses being offered for each program name of course teacher, lecture schedule of each course, internet links/software to be used for lectures/class meetings.

1.4.5 Campus Management System

Campus Management System (CMS), developed by CU-Online team is an integrated educational system which is designed for institutions and Universities and manages all educational and administrative operations smoothly through user friendly Interfaces. It includes the management of general student information, facility for educators to access curriculum resources, and a powerful analytical reporting capability for different types of users. CMS is a product to automate almost all major University processes under one umbrella. It provides pure Web Based solutions and provides easy access to the administrative, transactional, and academic processes. This system enables automation in all major processes including Exam & Registrations, Student Information System, H.R.M, Library, Course Portals, E-Doc (Paperless Environment), Fee & Accounts, Inventory and Online Course & Faculty Feedback. The system functions and access include educational, administration and financial aspects.

The system consisted of following components:

1. Student Information System

2. Account Information Management System
3. Human Resource Management System
4. Inventory Management System
5. Library Information Management System
6. Student Fee Management System

It is a complete system that handles all day to day activities related to student's exams, attendance and their semester progress. It also provides student console and teacher console where they can check their semester progress. It is a Community between Faculty members and Student for a specific course. Student and Teacher can interact Online Using Course Portal.

Students can register courses online through this system as it not only simplifies the course registration process by eliminating timely and costly paperwork, but also helps university to organize and manage course offerings by automating administrative functions. Automatic Course Registration is also available in CMS. In automatic Course Registration whenever Semester Closes and new Courses are Offered, CMS intelligently registers students automatically. There is also an Online Feedback System which is a channel for the students to provide genuine and constructive feedback to improve quality of service rendered.

This Software also resolves the entire problem against managing student fee in a University. The Basic architecture of Student Fee Management System covers two areas i.e., Semester Fee Management and Messing & Boarding Fee Management. This System generates Computerized Challans and manages installments against Student fee.

CMS provides support to faculty members on preparing lectures with audio visual support, and for using third party tools (Zoom, Skype, MS Teams, etc.). It also provides training to both students and faculty members on CMS.

1.5 Student Support and Accessibility

Students who need any assistance while facing any technical matter with respect to online link, Log in problems in the CMS etc. Their faculty member must provide all the available support by referring them to the technical person for necessary assistance. Students may post their queries online or email to the concerned which will be responded through email within 24 hours on weekdays and shall be resolved in a timely fashion.

1.6 Instructional / Teaching Design

The Faculty Members may use any of the third-party tools for online teaching. It is strongly recommended that various third-party software/tools e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype etc.

may be provided to students for easy access by Office of CU-Online. For Live sessions, Zoom or Microsoft Team third party software may be used and for this purpose faculty may provide the links to the students. For the recorded lectures/assignments, faculty may upload their lectures on the specific links, and then share by either a weblink or google drive link so that students can easily access it through the provided link or through their portal. If required WhatsApp group can be utilized by faculty members solely for the purpose of discussion on assignments, quizzes any course related materials and not for sharing of any kind of personal pictures/videos or posting of any irrelevant material either by the faculty member or by the student.

2. Guidelines for the Students

The guidelines for students have been prepared keeping in view HEC instructions regarding online learning for students which are to be observed by the students during the process of enrollment / registration for their online courses.

2.1 CMS / Classroom Registration

- Students must create their individual account in the CUI's Campus Management System Portal, and log into accounts to register courses.

2.2 Security and Privacy

- Students are advised not to share their CMS account password and other important information related to it with anyone at both inside and outside the premises of the University.
- In case of any doubt, students have the provision to change their password.
- Students should always remember to log out from their CMS accounts after uploading their assignments/quizzes etc.
- For their own safety, students should avoid sharing any sort of information which is confidential in nature or in breach of education policy during their online discussions and any other third-party tools.

2.3 Policy usage of WhatsApp Group /Microsoft Teams / Skype etc.

- Faculty members may create a WhatsApp group for each course for the ease and accessibility of students and faculty member.
- Students can post relevant questions pertaining to their course and ask for queries related to their assignment and topic of discussion and furthermore avoid posting irrelevant material.

- Students should avoid baseless conversations with their fellow students and faculty members which could lead to any unfavorable situation.

2.4 Online Classes

- Students shall be engaged in various learning and interactive sessions/activities on weekly basis which will be in the form of lectures, quizzes, assignments, etc. All such activities will be carried out through CMS / third party tool etc.
- Download the material uploaded by the instructor and then read it.
- Students should listen carefully to the audio/video lectures uploaded by the faculty member and in case students missed the session or couldn't understand anything in the lecture. They are advised to consult their teacher accordingly or they can ask for the recorded lecture for their own convenience.
- For the completion of weekly assignments and assessments, students are advised to Log on to their CMS account thrice a week for a course as per the directions of the instructor.
- Students are expected to Log on to their assigned CMS account on daily basis so that important tasks assignments may not get missed.
- In online discussions students are encouraged to post their questions, respond to the comments in the threaded discussions relevant to the topic presented, from the instructor and / or other students.
- Students should finish their task and submit their assignments in a timely way and after that they are advised to upload their assignments/quizzes through CMS.
- In case students have some special needs, which the faculty member needs to know about it, then students should consult their instructor or the HoD accordingly.

2.5 Copyrights/Plagiarism

- CUI has a strict plagiarism policy. Before submitting any material for their projects/ thesis, students should follow the already notified HEC policy for plagiarism.
- Proper references should be provided in case the material is taken from a source or web-link as student's work will be checked for plagiarism and if any student's work is found plagiarized, then penalty will be imposed as per rules.

2.6 Rules for Online Discussions

- It is anticipated that each student will participate in the online discussions.
- Students who are good in communicating online in the discussions and blogs, they are encouraged to take lead during discussions, and they may facilitate other students to learn.

- Students will follow using English as a medium of communication and would not opt to any other language while commenting and responding in the online discussion threads.
- Constructive Criticism will be acceptable during communication/discussions and participations online; however, criticism just for the sake of criticism would be discouraged and not allowed during discussions.
- Students should take care of their moral and ethical considerations during discussions and should not use improper word and language both verbally and in the discussion threads.

3. Guidelines for Online Student Feedback

Regular student feedback mechanism must be shared by the Faculty with HoDs and respective Deans. Frequency of student feedback should be decided in consultation with the respective HoDs and Chairpersons of departments.