



ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

St. Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College
ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ ΑΝΔΡΕΟΥ

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Protocol No.: 578

My dear students,

Given the exponentially increasing number of cases of Covid19 in NSW, and equally concerned to play our small part making every effort we can to abate the possible silent transmission phase of this novel virus within the community, **the College has decided that all classes, effective immediately, will be offered purely online until further notice.**

This decision has been taken in a spirit of pastoral responsibility for the wellbeing of our face-to face students, especially those residing on campus.

Furthermore, this pre-emptive decision has been taken in an effort to support the public health efforts instigated by the Australian Government, but also at the advice of immunologists and infectious diseases experts who believe that stricter community isolation—social distancing as it has been called—needs to start immediately in order to blunt the rising number of cases of community transmission.

The Holy and Sacred Synod of our Ecumenical Patriarchate recently issued a Communiqué which said amongst other things that: “The Church has shown and continues to show respect to medical science. Thus, the Church encourages all the faithful to adhere to the official directives of both the World Health Organization and the pertinent pronouncements and legal regulations issued by the civil authorities of their respective countries.”

This will in no way adversely affect your studies as the College is well-placed to manage this situation through its online learning program which it has offered for many years now through Moodle, and with which you are all familiar.

In this way, all students will continue to be able to follow lectures online, contribute to group discussions through the available forums for each unit and continue to be able to contact their respective lecturers through email, telephone or skype.

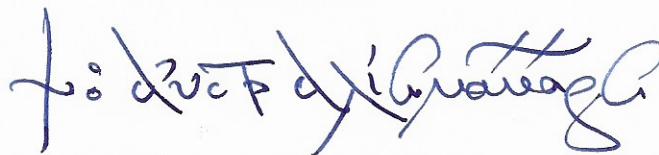
The College believes that these measures are not only sensible in light of this pandemic, but prudent, wise and, in the end, considerate of others—in truth, therefore, an act of love and concern for the ‘other’. We ask all students to take the time to look at the ‘useful links’ below in order to remain informed.

Taking these ‘human’ measures, let us, above all, strengthen our prayers to our loving Lord that He will continue to protect us, “our holy Church, our city and every city and land from [this] pestilence....”

Extending to you my sincere prayers for safety, health, and many years, I remain

In Sydney, the 16th day of March, 2020

Prayerfully yours

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Makarios', written in a cursive style.

† Archbishop MAKARIOS

*Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia
and College Dean*

Useful Links:-

The Department of Health has posted several publications here:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-resources>

NSW Health FAQs:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/coronavirus-faqs.aspx>

Guidance on Home Isolation:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/hubei-contacts-and-travellers.aspx>

Federal Government Guidance:

<https://education.govcms.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19>

The World Health Organisation’s advice for the public can be found here:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

The Australian Government has a dedicated COVID-19 Health Information Line, which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week: 1800 020 080