

May 1st, 2020

To students

Tokyo University of Agriculture

【Important Notice】 Regarding Start of Online Classes

In response to the Japanese government's declaration of a state of emergency, Tokyo University of Agriculture (Tokyo NODAI) decided to close all three campuses (Setagaya, Atsugi, Okhotsk) from April 10 (Mon.) until it remains in effect and to start first semester classes from May 11th (Mon.) and onwards.

In order to reduce the risk of spreading novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and to protect our students and society, the university has come to the decision that it would be best not to conduct regular (physical) classes. At the same time, Tokyo NODAI is fully committed in providing learning opportunities to our students. Therefore, regardless of whether the state of emergency will be lifted or not, all classes for the entire first semester will be conducted online starting May 11th (Mon.). This method also applies to courses with practical learning experiences. As you can tell, all courses, including experiments and hands-on training, will be conducted quite differently from previous years. If course contents are deemed inadequate, the university is planning to compensate through courses offered in the second semester or the following academic year.

As all classes will be held online, there is absolutely no need for students to come to the campuses for the entire semester for any matter. Meanwhile, please begin preparing an environment in which you can take online classes from home. Please see below for details on how to take online classes and please regularly check your Student Portal Website for any further notice.

Above all, we are fully aware of how anxious graduate students and fourth-year students may be feeling about their research and thesis. However, please kindly understand that the campuses cannot reopen until not only the state of emergency is lifted, but also after carefully taking into consideration each local area's infection situation report (①area with exponential growth of confirmed cases, ②area that has shown improvement and steady decline in number of confirmed cases, ③area with no confirmed cases). For this reason, the decision of reopening each campus will be made after thorough deliberation.

It is everyone's wish that students, faculty, and staff return to the classrooms and laboratories on campuses and go back to enjoying the unique education and research activities offered at Tokyo NODAI. Students, please kindly continue to act responsibly and put your mental and physical health as your utmost priority.

Keiko Natsuaki

Vice President for Education Quality Assurance

***Please see below for details on how to take online classes.**

1. First Semester Courses

(1) How classes will be conducted

In principle, all courses for the first semester starting May 11 (Mon.) will be offered remotely. Depending on the nature of each course, classes will be held in the 3 formats listed below independently or combined.

Please note that if a course is deemed to be too challenging to be conducted online due to its nature or format, then the course may be postponed or the way it is conducted may be significantly changed.

① Remote Learning through Distributed Course Materials

For the month of May (3 weeks from May 11 (Mon.) to 29 (Fri.)), classes will be carried out in the way described below. Download and study the course materials* that will be available on the Student Portal Website and submit any assignments as indicated on the materials. For further information on how to take these courses, see “3. Distribution of Course Materials” and “4. Remote Learning through Online Classes” of this document.

*Course materials include PowerPoint or PDF with voice narration that summarizes their contents.

② Bidirectional Live-Streamed Classes

This format is desirable for exercise-based classes with a small number of students. It is expected to start in June once the system is installed.

Both the professor and students will participate live and be able to communicate through video and audio. “Zoom”* is the application that is expected to be used for all live-streamed classes. More information on this format will be posted later on the Student Portal Website. For students who have limited access to the internet and are unable to participate live, the classes will be recorded and available on demand.

*Zoom: <https://zoom.us/>

③ Pre-recorded Lectures

This format is desirable for lecture-style classes with a large number of students. It is expected to start in June once the system is installed.

Pre-recorded lectures* will be available for download and streaming playback on the Student Portal Website. Review the video and submit any homework as instructed in the video. More information on this format will be posted later on the Student Portal Website.

*Pre-recorded lectures will be available as mp4 file or another format.

(2) Courses with Experiments and Hands-on Training

In order to ensure the safety of students, courses with experiments and hands-on training will also be conducted remotely. Professor of the course will make accommodations to meet the course objectives.

Please note that some courses from certain departments may be offered in a different semester and may have supplementary lectures in the following semester.

(3) Time Period and Format of First Semester Courses (as of April 30th)

Time Period	Distributed Course Materials	Live-streamed Classes	Pre-recorded Lectures
May 11 (Mon.)~29 (Fri.)	○		
June 1 (Mon.)~ July 31 (Fri.)	○	○	○

2. Preparation for Taking Online Classes

Please read the following about recommendable devices and internet connection to take online classes (including writing and submitting assignments) and take any necessary actions to prepare an appropriate learning environment.

(1) Device

Please prepare one of the following types of device with a camera and microphone: ①laptop, ② tablet, and③smartphone. Out of these, laptops and tablets are recommendable considering you will be expected to complete assignments (such as writing essays). Smartphones may not be desirable as screens are too small to see presentations and to write essays. In addition, there have been difficulties with the audio of distributed course materials when using smartphones.

■ Recommended Spec for Windows

Recommended OS : Windows10、 Windows8.1

CPU : Core i3 or up for Intel、 Ryzen 3 or up for AMD

Memory : minimum of 8GB

Internal Storage : minimum of 250GB (SSD is recommended)

Laptop with built-in camera and microphone (you may set up external Web camera and microphone)

■ Recommended Spec for Mac

Recommended OS : macOS10.13.6 or released after

Memory : minimum of 8GB

Internal Storage : minimum of 128GB

*University Support System

Enrolled students will be able to download Microsoft Office to your personal computer. For this reason, there is no need to purchase a laptop with Microsoft Office already installed.

<https://www.nodai.ac.jp/center/shisetu/mslicense/>

In addition, laptops can be purchased from Tokyo University of Agriculture Co-op (seikyo). For more information, please check the [Tokyo University of Agriculture Co-op homepage](#).

(2) Internet Connection

Please prepare one of the followings:①internet network for home, ②Mobile Wi-Fi, ③mobile data for smartphone. Out of these three, “①internet network for home” is recommended as it is most stable. If you use an internet data plan which has a data usage limit, please note that it can cause network lag if you exceed the limit.

The internet network for home is “best-effort type”, so the internet speed will vary depending on the time and from where you access the internet. Please try to secure a high-speed (broadband) internet service with the speed of at least 1Gbps.

*Assistance by Mobile Service Providers

Currently, several mobile service providers (Docomo, KDDI, Softbank, Y-mobile) are offering

discounted unlimited data plans for students (aged 25 or younger) in order to support their education. For more information on how to apply and duration of their offers, please access the website of each provider. In addition, if you use the tethering function on your smartphone, you can connect the internet to your laptop. Currently, all mobile service providers offer the tethering option for free.

3. Distribution of Course Materials

(1) How to obtain course materials

In general, classes (the first 3 classes) from May 11 (Mon.) ~ 29 (Fri.) will be carried out using distributed course materials. Please ease review the [Student Handbook](#) (Japanese), [International Students' Handbook \(English\)](#), [Course Registration Guide](#) (English summary of Course Registration Guide will be uploaded on our [website](#) soon), and Syllabus (available on the Student Portal Website) in order to decide which courses to register for the semester. For details on how to obtain course materials, please first review the "Manual on How to Download Course Materials". Next, log into your Student Portal Website and select the appropriate file from the shared folder of course materials (PowerPoint, PDF, etc.). You may either download files or participate in live-streaming lectures. Furthermore, course materials of all courses will be available regardless of which courses you are registered.

(2) When course materials will be uploaded

Course materials for the week will be uploaded every Monday from May 11 (Mon.) in the shared folder on the Student Portal Website. The shared folder will be organized by Faculty, Number of Class, Department, and Grade Year, so please carefully select the appropriate file.

In addition, please review the course hours and model schedule outlined in the Course Registration Guide and plan your first semester course registration.

*Special Request

Course materials will be uploaded starting May 11 (Mon.) for applicable courses and will be saved in the shared folder that is available for the entire semester. On May 18 (Mon.), course materials for the following week will be uploaded and again saved in the shared folder. For now, there are no live-streamed classes available yet. As the shared folder is available at any time, we ask you to take your time downloading the materials as the server could crash if many people are accessing it all at once.

4. Remote Learning through Online Classes

(1) Regarding taking online classes (learning methods and disclaimers)

The main format of online classes from May 11 (Mon.) ~ 29 (Fri.) will be distributed course materials. The benefit of this format is that once the materials are downloaded on your device, you will be able to look at the materials in your own time. On the other hand, as this format does not require a specific class period, some may study late at night or cram one-week of course materials all at once. For this reason, online classes will require students ①to have self-discipline and ②to study at a similar time frame as your ordinary classes to establish a well-balanced study schedule. Furthermore, bidirectional live-streamed classes are expected to be available starting June, so it is important in getting used to the university class schedule. Information on bidirectional live-streamed classes and pre-recorded lectures that are expected to begin in June will be posted on the Student Portal Website in the near future.

If you have any questions about a class, follow your professor's instruction on how to get in touch

remotely, such as via email. Currently, the university is trying to create a function on the Student Portal Website so that students can easily ask questions to professors.

Most importantly, course materials uploaded online are geared for registered students only. Thus, please do NOT distribute them to a third party and share it on SNS or upload it on another website. Please refrain from taking any action that could be an infringement of image rights of professors or copyrights of study materials.

(2) Submission of Assignments and Attendance

Your professor will indicate assignments within the distributed course materials. Please submit the complete assignment by the given deadline. Submission box is currently being prepared on the Student Portal Website. More information will be later posted on the Student Portal Website.

In addition, attendance will be confirmed based on the submission of assignments for now. Once we have a system installed that can confirm your attendance, we will inform you on the Student Portal Website.

(3) Final exams and grading

As of now, final exams for the first semester are expected to take place from August 3 (Mon.) ~7(Fri.). However, depending on how the COVID-19 situation unfolds, dates and exam method may change. Details about final exams will be posted on the Student Portal Website as the situation becomes clearer.

For information on the grading system and standard for the first semester, please check the syllabus of each class (please note that contents of each syllabus may change due to classes moving to online).

(4) Purchasing textbooks

For May, professors are making accommodations so that you do not need to use textbooks. Later on, you will be informed of how to purchase textbooks on the Student Portal Website (purchasing method will vary by campus). Please buy textbooks for the courses you plan to register. Textbooks required for each course will be written on the syllabus of each course.

5. Course Registration

(1) Course registration period

Please read the “Course Registration Guideline” carefully and register for your courses on the Student Portal Website in the designated period as indicated below.

	Period	Remarks
Course Registration Period	May 11 (Mon.) ~15(Fri.)	You may register for courses at any time during this period (Exceptions: ①First day the site is accessible from 10:30, ②Every day from 8:30~10:30 the website will be under maintenance, ③the site is accessible only until 17:00 on the last day) .
Release of Registration Status	May 20 (Wed.)	Confirm you have correctly registered your courses.
Revision Period	June 1 (Mon.)~5(Fri.)	You may revise your courses at any time during this period (Exceptions: ①First day the site is accessible from 10:30, ② Every day from 8:30~10:30 the website will be under maintenance, ③ the site is accessible only until 17:00 on the last day) .

Registered Courses Confirmed	June 10 (Wed.)	
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“Course Registration Guide” will be available on the Student Portal Website (it has already been separately sent to in-coming students). Please be advised, however, that the first semester’s university academic calendar and course registration period indicated in the guide have significantly changed.

For in-coming students, before registering for courses, please carefully read the “Course Registration Guide” and “Guidance Materials” mentioned in the next section.

(2) Guidance materials for in-coming students on the topics of courses, registration, and student life

As a guidance session for in-coming students, each campus will deliver materials on ①courses and registration, ②student life (considered as first and second freshman seminars) via Students Portal Website. In-coming students should carefully read the materials to have a fulfilling 4-year student life and understand Tokyo NODAI’s unique opportunities for students.

Study materials for ① will be delivered today. ②will be delivered in the near future, so please read it before the semester begins on May 11 (Mon.).

6. To International Students

The Center for Global Initiatives (CGI) is in charge of supporting you in case you need help in taking online classes, such as with using the Student Portal Website, registering for courses, and preparing an environment to take classes. In preparation to understand your current situation and meet your needs, CGI will be conducting a survey. You will receive a survey via Lina, email, and Student Portal Website in the near future, so please respond as swiftly as possible.

[International Students’ Handbook](#) is already available, and in addition, English version of the Course Registration Guide will be also released on [our website](#) as soon as it is ready. on our website. Please make use of them. <https://www.nodai.ac.jp/english/ip/>

7. Inquiries Regarding Courses

This may be the first time to experience online classes for most students. In fact, this is the first time ever for the university to implement online classes for all courses. For this reason, we understand that this may cause anxiety, confusion, and at time inconvenience due to technical difficulties. If you are unsure, please do not hesitate to contact the designated contact department as indicated below. The university is fully committed in supporting you to providing the best learning environment under whatever circumstances.

Setagaya Campus: Academic Affairs kyoumu@nodai.ac.jp

Atsugi Campus: Student and Academic Affairs agri@nodai.ac.jp

Hokkaido Okhotsk Campus : Student and Academic Affairs o-kyomu@nodai.ac.jp

International Students : Center for Global Initiatives tuacip@nodai.ac.jp

※Once the online classes have started, all inquiries should be directed to the administrative office of the appropriate faculty.

Faculty of Agriculture : Student and Academic Affairs agri@nodai.ac.jp

Faculty of Applied Biosciences : Administrative Office ousei@nodai.ac.jp

Faculty of Life Sciences : Administrative Office seimei@nodai.ac.jp

Faculty of Regional Environment Science : Administrative Office chiiki@nodai.ac.jp

Faculty of International Agriculture and Food Studies : Administrative Office kokusai@nodai.ac.jp

Faculty of Bioindustry : Student and Academic Affairs o-kyomu@nodai.ac.jp

International Students : Center for Global Initiatives tuacip@nodai.ac.jp

*In response to the declaration of a state of emergency made by the Japanese government, university staff and faculty are working remotely from home. We apologize for this inconvenience, but please contact us by email for any inquiries.