

ADBU - Newsletter - English version Special Covid-19

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Covid-19 : ADBU Letter to the Minister

14 March 2020

The Covid-19 pandemic led the government to take measures as radical as they were unprecedented in their scope to protect the population. It is within this general framework that institutions, universities and university libraries are closed to the public until further notice. Academic Libraries and Documentary Services have for years been offering a growing part of their resources and services in digital form, accessible outside the walls. This is a crucial asset at a time when universities need to organize the continuity of teaching and research in fully digital form.

The ADBU naturally pays particular attention to the security of university library staff.

As soon as the closure measures became known, the ADBU asked the Ministry to clarify the conditions under which our services could make the most useful contribution to maintaining the public service of higher education and research in the collective ordeal we are going through.

Find below the message addressed by Marc Martinez, President of the ADBU, to the Cabinet of Ms. Frédérique Vidal, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, on Saturday, March 14, 2020.

Mr. Director of Cabinet,

I echo the voices of the directors of common documentation services who are being forced - in isolated cases for the moment - to keep university libraries open to student audiences despite the fact that the universities will be closed to the public from Monday 16 March.

The academic libraries are stakeholders and will naturally contribute to the continuity of the teaching and research activities of universities and institutions, in particular by relying on their online resource access and mediation services. However, it seems difficult to understand how students or staff can gather there without risk of contagion for themselves and library staff when public access to universities is prohibited precisely to limit the circulation of COVID-19.

It seems just as problematic to consider welcoming any kind of public in a university library when the number of students and staff will be mechanically reduced due to the closure of schools. All the more so since most of the premises do not easily lend themselves to the limits on gatherings indicated by the Prime Minister.

Please accept, Mr. Director of Cabinet, the expression of my respectful sentiments.

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Marc Martinez

President of the ADBU

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