

Message from the President of ISA
april 6, 2020

Dear Students and Researchers,

The real driver behind this message, namely for the Students, is to tell you that last Friday brought together the Coordinating Council of the University of Lisbon (CCU) in order to plan the future of this academic year 2019/2020. Our decision was unanimous; we will continue with this model of distant learning and we will have a continuous evaluation model and/or a final examination in remote mode. Therefore, I repeat, except if something very unexpected will occur, there will be no face-to-face classes this semester and the evaluation component will last until the end of July. The final exam methodology will use an existing platform or any other made available soon (but I must tell you, it will not be to relax the rigor at the expense of plagiarism). We know that this 2.0 teaching does not replace the classroom (not to mention the laboratory classes), but we have no alternative. Dear students, in face of this on-going reality, we want to identify the most difficult situations in accessing infrastructure (computers) you may face. We have some tower computers that can be made available, possibly also a few laptops. If this is your case, send an email to covid-19@isa.ulisboa.pt. We will analyze the possibilities we have.

Focusing on this state of exception Covid 19, so far, we have not heard from ISA students and workers affected by this pandemic disease. It is a sign that we are complying with the guidelines of the health authorities, giving time to health services to be prepared for the upcoming crisis. Confination, tele-work, essential services, we all know the rules and we are doing our duty to others.

On the other hand, I can mention other news, examples of ISA's activity that encourage us to remain open to the world. I recall the offer of consumables for hospitals and protective visors, <https://www.isa.ulisboa.pt/vida-no-isa/destaques/noticias/20200331-todos-podemos-ajudar>. Besides, we are defining a working plan to increase the performance of infected detection tests, in collaboration with other ULisboa faculties. Indeed, we have about fifteen colleagues who are experts in molecular biology and who have already offer some of their time. In addition, because the transfer of knowledge at ISA is going-on, from April 13 to 15, an online course organized by GBIF will be promoted (GIBF is an international organization where ISA provides the Portuguese coordination). For those who have data on biodiversity, don't miss it! Moreover, please continue to follow the ISA microsite <https://www.isa.ulisboa.pt/isa-online>

To conclude, in anticipation of the short Easter break that is approaching, in this unexpected “stay.in.home” mode and to ease it, I recommend a book, a film and a song, as well as a game. The book is Metamorphosis, probably everyone has read it, but it is chosen because it can be downloaded at <https://www.livros-digitais.com/franz-kafka/a-metamorfose/sinopse>, the film is “[Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri](#)” by [Martin McDonagh](#) (but I don’t know if you can see it/download) and the music of a group, or band as it is now said, the XX and their first album, also named XX (but the other two most recent ones are fantastic and on YouTube also). These are not the references of my life, they were just the week review. And you? What have you read-seen-heard? Let's do the Top@ISA? Send your list to communication@isa.ulisboa.pt. To students who like games, I leave the great challenge of Easter. Rebuild ISA's university campus with Minecraft! Are we going to accept this challenge? Come on! Encourage yourself seeing here: <https://www.theverge.com/2020/3/31/21200972/college-students-graduation-minecraft-coronavirus-school-closures>

These are my wishes for now, that we will be able to keep the ISA community together, in a good mood and looking forward.

Best regards, stay safe and healthy,

Instituto Superior de Agronomia, april 6, 2020

President of ISA
António Guerreiro de Brito