



Going Remote:  
Lessons from a Private University  
during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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Target Audience:

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ University Staff



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# Flow of the Presentation

- ❖ **Introduction**
- ❖ **Distance Remote Learning (DRL) during COVID-19**
- ❖ **Communicating Through the Coronavirus Crisis**
- ❖ **Developing a Community to deliver DRL**
- ❖ **Roles of Teachers and staff during Crisis**
- ❖ **A Case Study: Some best practices.**
- ❖ **Tips for Stakeholders**
- ❖ **Discussion and Q&A**





## Going Remote: Lessons from a Private University during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

By Dr Irfan Saleem

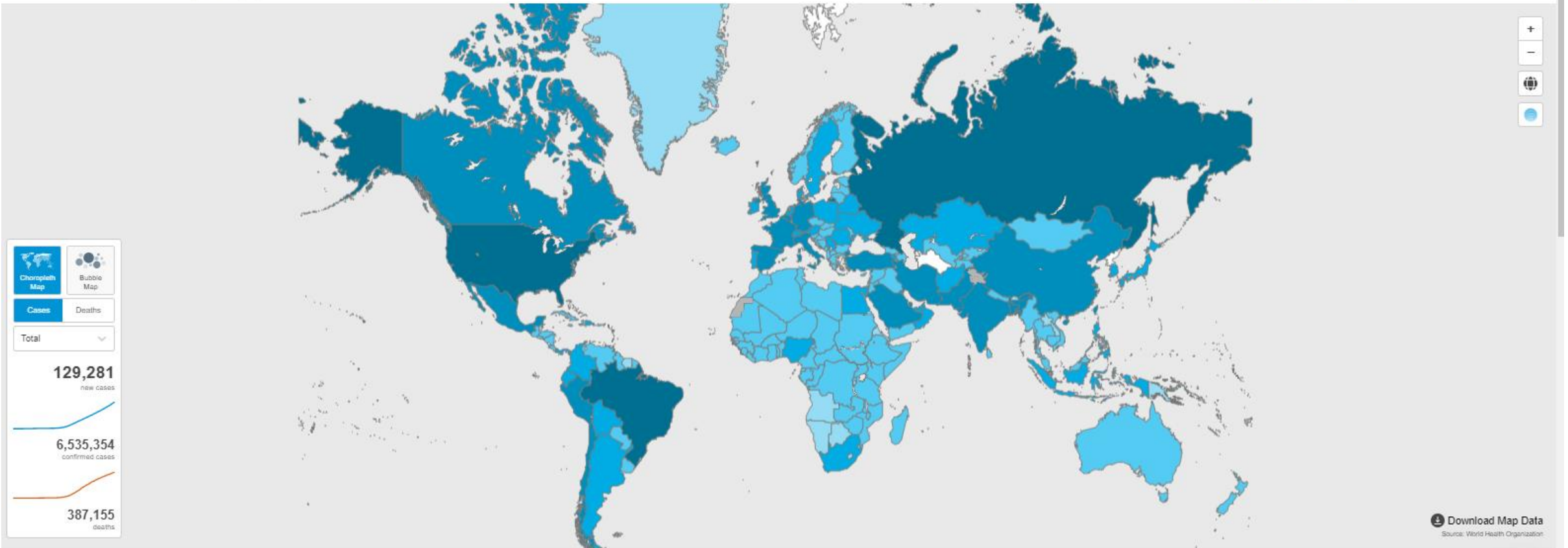




**WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard**

Data last updated: 2020/6/5, 6:44pm CEST

Overview Explorer



Globally, as of 6:44pm CEST, 5 June 2020, there have been 6,535,354 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 387,155 deaths, reported to WHO.

- ❖ Countries are being affected by COVID-19 in the emerging and ever-changing context.
- ❖ Until June 05, 2020, more than 65 Million cases globally and 14,316 cases in Oman.



# Distance Remote Learning during Covid-19 Crisis

- ❖ The officially identified pandemic of COVID-19 is impacting more than 376 million students worldwide (UNESCO, 2020)
- ❖ Students work online at home while the teacher assigns work and checks in digitally is called DRL.
- ❖ Remote Learning occurs when the learner and instructor, or source of information, are separated by time and distance and therefore cannot meet in a traditional classroom setting.
- ❖ Remote learning provides an opportunity for students and teachers to remain connected and engaged with the content while working from their homes.

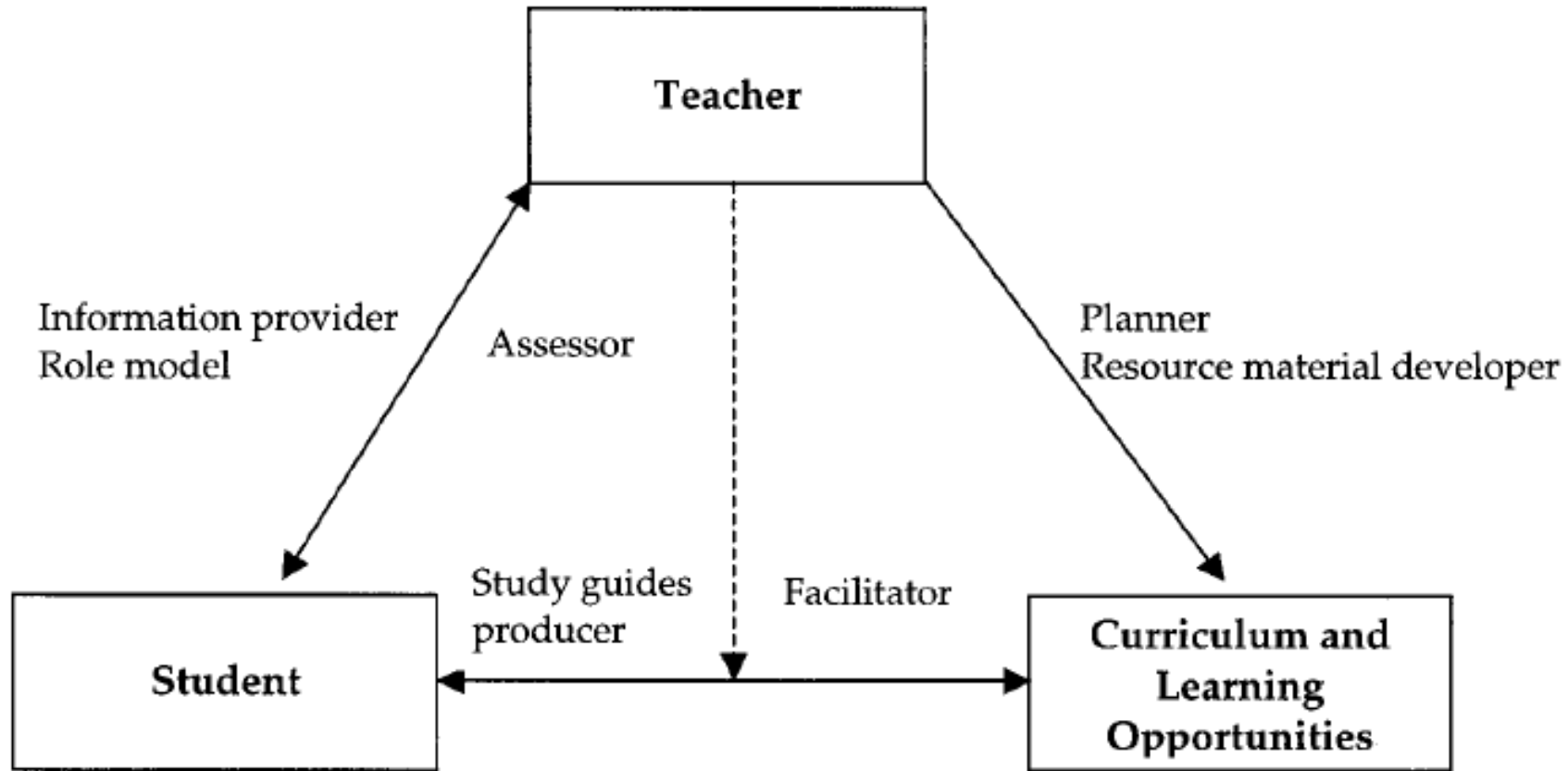


# Critical Questions

- ❖ How to Communicate with stakeholders through the coronavirus crisis?
- ❖ How to use distance remote learning in response to COVID-19 pandemic in a university?
- ❖ What can we learn from Sohar University Oman?
- ❖ What are the Tips for stakeholders?



# A Curriculum Framework for DRL



**Figure 2.** The roles of the teacher in the context of the teacher/student/curriculum framework.



# Communication during the Corona-Crisis

Step 1: Create a Team for Centralized Communication.

Step 2: Communicate with faculty, admin and support IT staff.

Step 3: Communicate Regularly with Students.

Step 4: Top Management Team should reassure shareholders (IT Staff, Faculty and Students)

Step 5: Be Proactive with stakeholders.







# Distance Remote Learning Practices at a Private University

جامعة صحار  
SOHAR UNIVERSITY



# Chronology of Events

Date	Progress
24 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Two citizens tested positive for COVID-19 from Iran reached Oman
9 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Return back to work or study - Coronavirus Policy by University
12 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Cancellation of all events at university
26 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Cancellation of regular classes at university
05 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Introducing Directed Remote Learning
7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Circular to students on Directed Remote Learning
12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Registration on SULMS
16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Guidelines to help SU Students
18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Directed Remote Learning - (Task 1) and Feedback from QA
5 <sup>th</sup> May	Student Feedback on Task 1
7 <sup>th</sup> May	Task 1 Assessment Results
10 <sup>th</sup> May	Starting Task 2
18 <sup>th</sup> May	Student Feedback on Task 2
31 <sup>st</sup> May	Starting Task 3
3 <sup>rd</sup> Jun	Student Feedback on Task 3
3 <sup>rd</sup> Jun	Starting Task 4
20 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Student Feedback from on Task 4
26 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Feedback from QA



# Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

## Deans/ Program Coordinators

- ❖ Develop plan to deliver the Directed Remote Learning (DRL)
- ❖ Communicate the plan to all staff and students
- ❖ Support staff and students during the process of DRL
- ❖ Ensure effective implementation and delivery on the DRL
- ❖ Ensure that communications are all clear with staff and students

## Teaching Staff and TAs

- ❖ Provide support to the Course Coordinators in developing the supporting materials and students' engagement in the DRL
- ❖ Develop required resources to support students learning
- ❖ Remain in contact with students to provide support and responses to their queries
- ❖ Create discussion sessions online/offline to help students
- ❖ Help students to manage their time

## Course Coordinators

- ❖ Provide support to the Program Coordinators in delivering DRL
- ❖ Collaborate with course team to design the DRL materials
- ❖ Develop good quality study tasks combined with additional supporting materials
- ❖ Develop good online/offline support for students
- ❖ Communicate well and in timely manner with students
- ❖ Ensure feedback is made available on time to students
- ❖ Report regularly on the delivery of the DRL to the Dean and PCs
- ❖ Avoid setting and using real-time lecturing
- ❖ Avoid requesting students to print their study tasks
- ❖ Provide students with enough time and support to complete their tasks



# DIRECTED REMOTE LEARNING AT SU

The key to DRL is the **DIRECTED**. By this, we mean guiding and supporting the students through the learning process remotely.

**TASK:** A task is a piece of work to be done. For Directed Remote Learning, the Task means you selecting a key component of the course (**TASK**) the students need to know and preparing some work (**MATERIALS & RESOURCES**) for the students to do remotely (at home) over 2/3 weeks. The student performance with the task is measured by the **ASSESSMENTS** you are developing. Therefore, the task is not the assessment only.

**SULMS:** All of the Task materials, resources and assessments will be provided to students through SULMS. ITS is working on configuring email links to students through SULMS.

## **ASSESSMENT of TASKS**

Assessing the task will vary depending on:

The type of course

The level of the course

Number of students registered in the course

Students previous knowledge of the topic. Etc.

Students skills level (English, Math, IT knowledge etc.)

Level 1 and large courses (400+ students registered) might use Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Level 2 might have more quiz and short essay type assessment.

Level 3 and Level 4 would have assessment focused more on analyse, critical thinking etc.





# DIRECTED REMOTE LEARNING (DRL)

Course Code and Course Title

Semester 2, 2019-2020

## Task:

### Task Objective

The objective of this task is to .....

### Learning Outcomes

- 1.
- 2.

### Assessment

Assessment Type	Insert what type of assessment here
Assessment Weightage	% <b>Do not put 0% - put Formative</b>

### Task Guidelines

Step by step guide to navigate students through your course on the SULMS

### Task Resources (on SULMS)

- All resources to help students complete the task are available in **Task 1 Folder** on SULMS

### Key Dates

- Task start date: Sunday 26 April 2020
- Assessment available from: xxx
- Task submission date: xxx

### Contacts





# Remote Learning Tips by Teachers and Students



# Building Sense of Community at a Distance

Sense of Community: A community is a group of people who are socially interdependent

Accordingly, classroom community can be constitutively defined in terms of four dimensions

1. **Spirit:** Feelings of friendship, cohesion, and bonding that develop among learners
2. **Trust:** Trust consists of two components: credibility and benevolence
  - ❖ Credibility, is an expectation that the word of other learners in the community can be relied on.
  - ❖ Benevolence, is the extent to which learners are genuinely interested in the welfare of the community.
3. **Quantity of Interaction:** task-driven or socio-emotional
  - ❖ Task-driven interaction is under the direct control of the instructor
  - ❖ socio-emotional-driven interaction is largely self-generated.
4. **Learning:** reflects the commitment to a common educational purpose and epitomizes learner attitudes concerning the quality of learning.

During this pandemic university teacher can promote same sense of community by attending to following seven factors:

a) social presence, (b) social equality, (c) small group activities, and facilitation, (f) student learning stage, and (g) online community size.

Rovai, A. P. (2002). Building sense of community at a distance. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 3(1), 1-16.



# General Recommendations

The concerns raised by the World Bank identified in this article needs to be taken into consideration when adopting online and remote learning;

- ❖ Universities need to have basic ICT Infrastructure to effectively roll out online learning;
- ❖ Faculty and staff need ICT tools and should have access to applications and learning platforms e.g. MS Team, Zoom, SULIM etc;
- ❖ Faculty members also need to have the capacity to use the ICT tools effectively to offer lessons in such a mode; and
- ❖ Student readiness needs to be supported accordingly.
- ❖ Effective and timely communication is required during Crisis
- ❖ Develop a Resilient Community.
- ❖ Teachers should be using virtual conferencing to go over each of her lectures virtually, and allows students to take notes and ask questions in real-time.
- ❖ Assignments and exams should be completed using this LMS and an online homework platform.
- ❖ Instead of lectures short guidelines to complete may be recorded and transcribed. Students can re-watch these videos and read the transcript.





# Discussion and Q&A

