

Friday, October 30, 2020

[HOME](#) [CAMPUS](#) ▾ [LIFESTYLE](#) ▾ [OPINION](#) ▾ [MULTIMEDIA](#) ▾[LOCAL](#) [CONTACT](#) [ABOUT US](#) ▾ [GUEST SUBMISSION](#)

STUDENT LIFE

A Letter to My Students... Let's Do This Together!

👤 Guest Submission 📅 October 11, 2020 💬 8 Comments

By Shafizan Mohamed

Assalamaualaikum warahmatullah iwabarakatuh,

To My Dearest Students,

We were supposed to meet tomorrow (12 October 2020). Despite some minor changes, everything was supposed to be like it was before. The registration would be a nightmare. You will be complaining about the whole process and the lecturers would be complaining about you. It was supposed to bring us back the campus life that we dread yet love with all our hearts.

But Allah SWT has better plans, as promised. So it turns out we will not be meeting each other face-to-face. There will be no crowding the department for registration, no *salam*s, no annoying jokes, no smiling faces that would often brighten my morning every time I come to class.

Online classes are the real challenge for me. I am not sure if I have given enough. How can I convince you when I cannot make eye contact? How can I make the class lively when I can't even make jokes about you sleeping in class?

Most of the time, I cannot even see your faces. It is not easy, but I know things could be much worse. So I am learning, as we all are; to be more technically-savvy so that I can give you as much knowledge, if not more.

Hard to admit it, but I guess I miss all of you. And even if you don't want to admit it, I know you miss me too. You miss all your lecturers, even the strictest ones. You miss doing assignment in groups and mostly you miss the *shawarma*, or maybe the *nasi campur*.

I am working very hard so that you can feel that we have no choice, but to take up this hybrid learning arrangement, which is not simply an emergency response, rather a more efficient learning alternative. Despite the pandemic, the world is still fast changing. Technology is the driver, so I guess this is a push for me to get on with the times because online learning is definitely here to stay.

To the new students, I feel for you. This is supposed to be an exciting time. To some of you, this maybe the first time you will stay far from your parents. This should have been your initial step into adulthood. The first semester is when you discover university life, enjoy the adult freedom and own your independence. Everything is new, exciting and somewhat mysterious. The momentum is high. But yet, here you are scrambling. Trying to find out how does this online registration thing works? How to get into a class whatsapp group? How to logon into Ita'leem? So many new kinds of 'hows'.

Well, you are the chosen ones. You are that 'COVID-19 batch'. It may sound depressing at the moment, but think about the stories you will be able to share later on. You were part of a unique time

in history and you were brave and intelligent enough to manoeuvre through it! Actually, you and I are both new to this learning arrangement, so let's do it together. I welcome you to the university. Let's do this batch COVID-19!

To my international students who are mostly children to me, I think about you all the time. I miss the foreign chatter I hear around campus. Or even when you are laughing and speaking Arabic in class, I wonder if you are really making jokes about me. It's okay, I miss being part of your joke. If you are in your home country, I pray that you are safe. If you are here in campus, I pray that you are doing more than just surviving.

One of our most cherished characteristics in this university is that we are international and I am learning how to make that evident in our virtual classes and I hope you can help me. Maybe you can share a glimpse of your home when we meet on zoom? Please do not miss our classes even if it meant that you might need to stay awake and learn about theory at 3.00 am. Just think of it as Allah SWT waking you up for morning *tahajjud* and rewarding you with knowledge. How blessed you are! I hope we meet again and Insya-Allah we will.

To all my students, we will get through this. We will make the best of this circumstance. After all we learned about SWOT analysis in class right? No? If you haven't learned about it, you must have been sleeping in class. So, let's turn this into our strengths and build from it, great opportunities. The university is doing its best to ensure that you and I will be able to continue our education. So let's not waste our time on what is bad and focus on how fortunate we are to still be here and still have the chance to learn from each other.

So please, when we meet in class tomorrow, switch on your camera. Give me a smile, high five your friends, ask questions, share that funny meme. If you are not in my class this semester, text me and say hi! You will make my day.

Let us make the most of this arrangement. Let us write our own story in this special time in history. Most importantly, trust in Allah SWT's bigger plans.

See you in class. And if you sleep, make sure to switch off your microphone.

Wassalam.

Sincerely,

Your Lecturer

Author

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Guest Submission

8 Replies to “A Letter to My Students... Let's Do This Together!”

1.  **Idayu Mumtaz binti Iskandar** says:

October 12, 2020 at 4:58 am

Thank you for the post and its warmth in the midst of this trying time. May Allah be with us.

Sincerely,

A student who misses the shawarmas.

2.  **Nur Fatihah** says:

October 12, 2020 at 3:43 pm

You made my day Madam. May Allah bless us all for our hardwork and never-ending spirit.

Sincerely,

A student who misses her lecturers.

3.  **Unknown** says:

October 13, 2020 at 6:14 am

You made me smile Madam 😊 Feeling good being loved by my lecturers hehe

4.  **Aiman Najiha** says:

October 13, 2020 at 9:34 am

Thank you so much madam for the letter. I really appreciate it as you make my day bright again!

5.  **Mawar Yudiana Mohamad** says:

October 13, 2020 at 10:18 am

Madam, I always miss u and the jokes u made. I wish everything goes smoothly and may Allah bless all the lecturers. I also miss all my international friends. It is not easy for all of us but I'm sure we can do this together. In syaa Allah..

Stay strong and safe. Love you so much and keep it up. You are amazing.

Sincerely,

Mawar Yudiana Berdurian 😊

6.  **Nas** says:

October 14, 2020 at 12:25 am

This is beautiful! May Allah bless you ma'am. 😊

7.  **Siti Nur Syahirah** says:

October 14, 2020 at 1:59 am

This is a very warm and beautiful message 😊😊😊 May Allah ease every of our affairs allahumma aamiin 🤲

8.  **AA** says:

October 15, 2020 at 4:48 pm

Oh madam, this is such a warm and beautiful message. You make me missed everything in IIUM. I miss your classes. I miss your jokes. I miss the knowwledge that you gave us. I miss your thoughts and advise whenever I am in doubt. Being able to reach you when I am in my happiest and saddest moment really makes me grateful to Allah for sending me such a great lecturer. I might be one of your ex-students, but you will always be my no.1 lecturer. I always pray that may Allah bless you in this learning path. I hope when times come, I get to meet you again.
