



STATEMENT : Towards an online SMCU2020 colloquium

Toulouse, May 18, 2020.

In the past two months, the world pandemic related to COVID-19 has been spreading, which led to important changes in the daily life of many countries. Access to university campus is often forbidden or restricted : both students and university staff (administrative and academic) are locked down or sheltered in place. Some lectures are maintained through distance learning, some exams are cancelled or delayed, the administrative staff is trying to keep working from their homes as well as researchers. As far as the next academic year (September 2020 - July 2021) is concerned, everyone is facing the unknown.

In the meantime, videoconferencing is entering our lives first to keep in touch with those dear to us, and also for teleworking, whenever needed and possible.

These new ways of life, with their constraints, are not without consequences for individuals. Our pluridisciplinary **research object, mental health on university campuses**, is all the more **at the forefront of the news and academic concerns**.

We collectively conceived the SMCU colloquium as a time dedicated to exchange between researchers, doctoral students, experts and institutional bodies from Europe, North and South America : we hoped they would all have gathered in Toulouse around that issue in October 2020.

In the absence of an efficient treatment, and in a context of uncertainty, the actual resumption of a normal university activity seems jeopardized in the near future. Some borders are closed, some quarantine periods are imposed upon the entry in different countries. In such a context, it is impossible yet to foresee how the world health situation will evolve until October 2020, i.e. the planned timeframe for our colloquium. We have to accept that **this major world health crisis will remain for a while** : university populations, among which researchers, will have, like the rest of the society, to **adapt to this new context**.

Therefore, the **Organisation Committee of the SMCU2020 colloquium has unanimously taken** the decision to transform a live colloquium into an “online” event. **The colloquium will finally not take place as a live event in Toulouse, to take into account the above-mentioned constraints, and it will fully be implemented online, on October 26 and 27, 2020.**

The **colloquium title** has also evolved to be **more adapted to the current situation**. It is now **“Mental health on university campuses facing contemporary challenges: from discrimination to COVID-19”**.

This whole new context led to a modification of our registration policy : the colloquium is now free for everyone ! However, the number of participants may be limited for technical reasons. Thus, the Organisation Committee intends to show its solidarity to the people affected by the current crisis.

In the next weeks the members of the Organisation Committee will work towards the necessary **adaptation of the colloquium perimeter** to take into account these **new technical parameters**. We are all going to cooperate, together with the partners of our international consortium, to establish the basis of this redeployment of the SMCU2020 colloquium.

We will soon come back to you with further detailed information.

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