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Higher Education Efforts in Curbing and Preventing the Spread of Covid-19: An Evidence from Indonesia

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Abstract. Pollution and health have emerged in recent years as worldwide concerns. A great deal of information is communicated in order to raise human awareness of this issue. Public signage is one way to obtain this information. The aim of this paper is twofold. Firstly, this article outlines the use of Google Street and Google Maps to locate street signs linked to pollution and health issues. The second is to develop a conceptual approach into creative learning by employing digital technology in discovering and introducing students to information regarding pollution and health signs in the outdoor landscape using a novel technique and approach called Digital Linguistic Landscape Learning. It was revealed that the self-access center is the focal point for the development and use of digital technology, which provides students with the autonomy to investigate or discover solutions to the contestation of socio-cultural phenomena connected to the two key concerns in the public spheres.

Keywords. Digital Technology, Google Street, Linguistic landscape, Pollution and Health

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus outbreak in mid-January 2020 has had severe impacts on all aspects of life, including the education sector [22][25]. The COVID 19 pandemic has influenced the education system all over the world, resulting in the total shut down of schools and universities in various countries. [1][2][4][5][6][7]

In May 2020, globally, around 1.7 billion of students are affected by this COVID-19 pandemic as the result of schools being closed down.[4][15][23] At the time, 156 countries have been in total lockdown, and 29 others placed local lockdown, and this impacted around 98.5 percent of the world's student population [22]. In Indonesia, more than 60 million students from primary to high school and 8 million higher education students are affected by

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INTRODUCTION

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In May 2020, globally, around 1.7 billion of students are affected by this COVID-19 pandemic as the result of schools being closed down.[14][15][23] At the time, 156 countries have been in total lockdown, and 29 others placed local lockdown, and this impacted around 98.5 percent of the world's student population [22]. In Indonesia, more than 60 million students from primary to high school and 8 million higher education students are affected by

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this lockdown of schools and universities [2].

In March-April 2020, the governments all over the world temporarily closed down all educational institutions as an effort to curb the spread of this COVID-19 pandemic, a decision that impacted 91.4% of the total registered students or around 1.6 billion of the total students in the world [14][15][22]. The closing down of schools in many countries have forced almost all, if not all, educational systems to adjust by implementing long-distance learning as a response to the disturbance of the conventional learning system that has never happened before and adds new challenges for the governments to ensure the sustainability of learning, as well as forcing students, parents, and teachers to adjust to this [3][27]-[28].

This COVID-19 pandemic is the first global health crisis. Many countries (have appropriately) decided to close down schools and universities [8]. This crisis has put policy-makers on a dilemma between closing down schools (reducing direct contact and save lives of the school community) and protect them from staying open (enable workers in education sectors to work and protect their livelihood/economy) [26]. A severe short-term disturbance is felt by many families all over the world whose children have to adjust to learning from home. This is putting a shock not only for the productivity of parents but also for social lives and for the ways students learn. Meanwhile, this pandemic is still raging, it is crystal clear that the education itself will be determined by the clarity and a truly different new practices from before this pandemic is happening, and it will determine the success of the next generations' learning [11]-[13].

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

UNG's Responses to The Covid-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 or coronavirus is a pandemic that has spread in many countries in the world, including Indonesia. In its efforts to fight against this pandemic, Indonesian government, both national and regional level, are working hard together on various efforts to curb and minimize the spread of this virus within the society. State University of Gorontalo (UNG), Indonesia, as one of the public universities, also put this fight against COVID-19 as the main priority, especially toward the Gorontalo community and toward the commitment by carrying out various policies against this COVID-19 pandemic. The various policies and activities are highlighted in Table 1.

TABLE 1. UNG's Policies and Activities Highlight in Fighting against COVID-19 Pandemi

No	Policies/ Activities
1	Public Education on how to prevent COVID-19
2	Implementation of study from home and work from home
3	Provide and carry out 1,923 online classes to optimize studying from home
4	Sterilization of buildings and campuses facilities to protect campus community from COVID-19
5	Establish a COVID-19 Crisis Center
6	Provide free Internet subsidy for Students for online class
7	Undertake COVID-19 screening process to all UNG's academicians
8	Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for COVID-19 Referral Hospitals and Health Care Centers in Gorontalo Province
9	Distribute basic food parcels to UNG's students impacted by COVID-19
10	Devote its medical laboratory and the human resources of UNG to assist in the fight against COVID-19 in Gorontalo
11	UNG's Hotel is used to house the medical staff that fights COVID-19 in the frontline
12	UNG releases the modeling of COVID-19 in Gorontalo
13	UNG launches large-scale social restriction (PSBB) monitoring application to anticipate the failure of PSBB implementation in Gorontalo
14	The students utilize prawn-skin waste as ingredients for developing bio hand sanitizer
15	UNG launches <i>Sekolah Rakyat</i> Online/Public online school for primary school students
16	COVID-19 Crisis Center UNG evaluates the implementation of PSBB in Gorontalo province supported with an epidemiology analysis
17	Carry out public education on COVID-19 Talk Series broadcasted through social media platforms
18	Tuition Payment Exemption for Students Impacted by COVID-19

Public Education on how to prevent COVID-19

6 The spread of COVID-19 in China in the beginning of 2020 was quickly responded by the Civitas Academic at UNG by carrying out public education to the community on how to prevent the spread of this coronavirus. On Monday, 29th of January 2020, the students and lecturers from the Faculty of Sports Science and Health, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (UNG) carried out public education on the street and distributed fliers on Corona Virus and how to prevent it. In this event, students distributed 1,500 facemasks and hand sanitizers to community members along the street in front of UNG main campus. In addition, the faculty also distributed 1,000 facemasks and 200 bottles of hand sanitizer to the community members. The budget for this activity is donated by all departments from Health and Medical departments, and the hand sanitizers were donated by the Pharmacy Department of Faculty of Sports and Health, UNG.

Implementing Study from Home and Work from Home

The spread of the Virus Corona (COVID-19) in Indonesia has forced the Rector of UNG to take anticipatory measures to protect UNG community from the spread of this Corona Virus. An anticipatory measure is taken by issuing the Rector Circular on the implementation of learning, academic services, and general services from home. The issuance of this circular has made all academic services implemented through online platforms, either learning process, exams, seminars or workshops, and all other services are now carried out online from home. This study and work from home activities are carried out based on the Rector Circular No. 2408/UN47/PK.01/2020 on Implementation of Learning, Academic Services, and General Services to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. In addition, to extend the work from home time for employees of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, a Rector Circular No. 479/UN47/10/2020 on the extension of Working from Home for all Academic and Students- related Activities, and General Services to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in Universitas Negeri Gorontalo was issued (UNG, 2020).

Provision and conducting of 1,923 online classes to optimize On-Line Learning

To facilitate UNG students and lecturers in on-line learning, UNG has provided 1,923 online classes to optimize the implementation of online learning. The online learning through e-learning features can be accessed through the Integrated Academic Information System/ Sistem Informasi Akademik Terpadu (SIAT) UNG, which has been prepared since 2011. This system was developed based on the result of study on implementation of e-learning of UNG, which was presented on International Symposium on Open, Distance, and e-Learning (ISODEL) in 2012. These online academic services are carried out based on the Rector Circular No. 2408/UN47/PK.01/2020 on Implementation of Learning, Academic Services, and Other General Services to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo [16]-[21]

Sterilization of Campus Buildings to Protect Campus Community from COVID-19

UNG has always been trying to protect the safety of its community from the spread of Corona Virus. In order to protect its lecturers, employees, and students that are about 20 thousand people, sterilization of buildings/facilities is carried out. This sterilization process is carried out by spraying disinfectant liquids to all office buildings and classrooms in all 4 campuses of UNG. The spraying process is started from the Rectorate Building, then the Dean's offices, and then proceeded into all other buildings within the campuses. This activity is within legal basis of the Rector Circular No. 345/UN47/TU/2020 in order to Anticipate and Prevent the Spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) in Campus and its surrounding area [16]-[21]

Establishment of COVID-19 Crisis Center

As response to the spread of COVID-19 Pandemic, the rector of UNG established a COVID-19 Crisis Center to work in harmony with the government and to find ways to contribute to the fight against COVID-19. This Crisis Center COVID-19 UNG is chaired by the Rector, and one of the tasks of this team is to provide education to the community and UNG community in particular on the severity of the COVID-19 and ways to fight it, as well as prepare academic studies as reference for the provincial government of Gorontalo in policymaking in relation to the fight against COVID-19 in Gorontalo [16]-[21]

The establishment of this Crisis Center COVID-19 is one of the efforts and contributions of UNG as an educational institution in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, especially in Gorontalo province. The establishment of UNG Covid-19 Crisis Center is based on the Rector Decree No. 464/UN47/HK.02/2020 on COVID-19 Crisis Center Universitas Negeri Gorontalo [16]-[21]

Provide free Internet subsidy for Students for online class

Cellular operator Telkomsel, a subsidiary of state-owned communications company PT Telkom Indonesia provided free 30 gigabytes (GB) internet free for students of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (UNG). This service is provided as a form of partnership between UNG-Telkomsel to support the online learning activity as the response to government policy in the fight against COVID-19. This free internet quota is applicable for all students who use Telkomsel provider to access Integrated Academic Information System (SIAT), where the online learning services is located. The budget for this internet quota for students is IDR 529,680,000 (\$ 37,442) allocated from the non-taxable state revenue of UNG.

To facilitate students who have trouble when accessing the online learning service, UNG distributed a 20GB free internet quota for students. This internet quota is provided for students to enable them to participate in online learning activities. To obtain this quota, students have to update their cellular phone numbers registered within UNG's online learning (SIAT) UNG data and then verified. Following this verification, the internet data quota is transferred to the registered numbers. This provision of assistance is expected to ease the students in accomplishing their online learning process. The budget for this free internet quota for students is IDR. 400,400,000 (\$ 28,319) and allocated from non-taxable state revenue of the university.

Undertake COVID-19 screening process to all UNG's academicians

As part of the efforts to detect spread of COVID-19 at UNG, the Rapid test is carried out to all civitas academics of UNG. This rapid test is one of the efforts to detect and prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the campus. The rapid test is administered to all lecturers, management, and all employees of UNG. The results showed a negative result or non-reactive results. Previously, UNG has carried out independent rapid test limited to the top management only. To maximize the efforts to prevent the spread of this virus on campus, the rapid test is administered to employees of UNG in collaboration with the COVID-19 Taskforce of Gorontalo Province.

There were 100 lecturers and employees of UNG carried out rapid test. UNG also encourage all its academic community (students, lecturers, and education personnel) to conduct independent screening. The screening aims to see to whom needs to do a test and it can be one of the ways to facilitate the vigilance of COVID-19. The screening for risk protection carried out as an effort to anticipate and assist and provide health services for UNG community members.

Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for COVID-19 Referral Hospitals and Health Care Centers in Gorontalo Province

Recognizing the importance of hospital's role in the fight against Coronavirus, UNG helps in protecting the medical staff of the hospital by providing them with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). These PPE are provided for health care centers in Gorontalo City and 2 hospitals in Gorontalo province, namely Regional Hospital of City Gorontalo – Rumah Sakit Umum Daerah (RSUD) Aloe Saboe Hospital in Gorontalo City and Toto Hospital in Bone Bolango District. This donation is initiated by all the civitas academics of UNG as their appreciation for the medical

staff that fights the COVID-19 at the frontline as well as part of the UNG responsibility and contribution to fight COVID-19 in Gorontalo Province.

Distribute basic food parcels to UNG's students impacted by COVID-19

UNG are highly concerned about the students from outside of Gorontalo province that are impacted by this Coronavirus. In the spirit of supporting UNG's students to survive in this challenging situation, the rector of UNG conducted voluntarily action by distributing daily basic food parcels, consist of rice, noodles, eggs, coffee, tea, condensed milk, sardines, soy sauce milk, cooking oil and facial masks to the students who are directly or indirectly affected by COVID-19. The distributed food packages is designed to the students who from outside of Gorontalo that were not able to return to their hometowns when the lockdown was placed. The students' association helps the rector to visit their dormitories, flats, and housings to distribute the food packages. This distribution of food packages is part of the efforts to ensure that campus exists in the fight against COVID-19, while ensuring the welfare of its students. During this pandemic, there are many students of UNG that were not able to return to their hometowns due to the distance as well as due to having no fund for their home trip. The distribution of food-package is carried out by visiting the students in their residents in order to prevent mass concentration on its distribution process [10]. Distribution of food package for students uses the fund from the donation of UNG employees, and the total value of the donation is IDR. 200,000,000 (\$ 14,133).

Devote its Medical Laboratory⁸ Facilities and Human Resources to Assist in the Fight Against COVID-19 in Gorontalo Province

UNG is committed²⁷ to supporting the efforts to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in Gorontalo. The support is shown by the Rector by converting and supporting the operational of UNG's laboratory to become a laboratory for PCR COVID-19 test in Gorontalo. This support is stated by the rector during the court¹⁴ visit from the representative of Gorontalo provincial government, the Gorontalo COVID-19 taskforce, head of National Food and Drug Agency / Badan Pengawasan Obat dan Makanan (BPOM) Gorontalo to UNG to ask for UNG's collaboration to support the operation of the provincial government Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test laboratory. The UNG's equipment is ready to support the facilities needed by the government, even more, the facilities within the laboratory of UNG will be used to increase the capacity of the government lab to carry out the PCR or swab test of COVID-19. UNG lends the updated PCR facility equipment of Agricultural Faculty and robotic RNA-extraction system for this purpose. In addition, UNG also supports the human resource that manages these facilities to complement the¹¹ man resources needed for the operation of the PCR test laboratory of the provincial government. The increasing number of samples that will be tested for the coronavirus demands the supports, both laboratory tools, and human resources, from UNG to optimize and shorten the time needed to process the result of the swab test.

UNG's Hotel is used to house the medical staff that fights COVID-19 in the frontline

Training Center (TC) Damhil is a hotel asset owned by UNG is prepared to house the medical staffs who work in the frontline of the fight against COVID-19 in C¹¹ntalo province. This temporary conversion of the hotel into housing facility for medical staffs wh⁸ work with patients with COVID-19 at hospitals in Gorontalo province is based on Rector's instruction, which will be effective during the pandemic of COVID-19 in Gorontalo province. UNG sees that it is important to facilitate special housing for medical staffs who fight against COVID-19, so there will be no concern for them to go home after finishing their shift at the hospital. UNG has discussed with the head of COVID-19 taskforce Gorontalo, who is also the Governor of Gorontalo, to temporarily convert the Damhil hotel into housing facility for the medical staff during the pandemic. UNG will prepare 33 rooms in this hotel to house 90 medical staffs that fight in the frontline against the COVID-19. TC Damhil will be equipped with special facilities to protect the medical staffs; each room will be routinely cleaned with COVID-19 protocol. It considers the effort to fight against COVID-19 needs inter-agencies and multidisciplinary collaboration. UNG is fully devoted to assisting all the parties as a collaborative effort to prevent, fight against, and recovery against this disease. The rector of UNG hopes the provision of this facility will help the medical staffs so that they will be strong and safe during their works at the frontline [9]

UNG Releases COVID-19 Modelling in Gorontalo

COVID-19 Crisis Center UNG starts its activities in assisting the local government in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic by releasing modeling and projection of the spread of COVID-19 in Gorontalo. During the release of its modeling, the Crisis Center Team enlightened that the models used by UNG are risk-based models. Thus, they are heavily focused on predicting the spread risks. These projection modelings are expected to be used as a reference in decision-making for mitigation purposes. Thus, the output of these models is true cases prediction and not official cases (confirmed and announced cases). These models are built with three scenarios of Optimist, Moderate, and Pessimistic scenarios. UNG has carried out modelling and projection and the spread of COVID-19, the result of these projections by using optimistic scenario (3% of the monitored people are positive COVID-19), it is estimated that there will be 4,960 positive cases. The projection using moderate scenario (10% of the monitored people are positive COVID-19), it is estimated that there are 22,658 positive cases. Whereas the pessimistic scenario (15% of the monitored people are positive), it is estimated that there will be 48.426 true cases. In addition, he explains that taking into consideration the policies that the local governments have taken¹⁸ other models to predict the peak cases of this pandemic were developed. If no serious interventions are taken to reduce the transmission of this virus, the peak of the cases is expected to happen in the beginning of May 2020, with the total number of 46,629 cases. The model prediction put in that when a simulation is carried out with the assumption that the government carried out intervention that can prevent the transmission of the virus, then: with pessimistic scenario (intervention only reduce 15% of the transmission) the peak of the cases is predicted to happen in medio May 2020 with the total cases of 32,626 cases; using the most optimistic scenario (intervention able to reduce 45% of the transmission) then the peak of the case will happen at the end of May to the beginning of June with the total of 6,409 cases. As part of the higher education contribution, It stated that the important message that UNG wants to emphasize from these various scenarios is that on the number, but¹⁹ on how community and government preparedness in mitigating these various scenarios. UNG believes that the government has carried out various efforts, and as part of the Gorontalo community, UNG will always try²⁸ become a partner for the government, especially in providing recommendations in policy-making to mitigate the impact of this COVID-19.

UNG Launches Application to Monitor the Implementation of Large-Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) to Anticipate Its Implementation Failure in Gorontalo

²³ To maximize the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) in Gorontalo province, UNG launches a special application to monitor its implementation. This application is designed by COVID-19 Crisis Center UNG as higher education contribution to assist the local government in monitoring the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restriction/*Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar* (PSBB). This monitoring application can be used as a monitoring instrument for the implementation of PSBB among the community, which will further used to evaluate the number of violations during the implementation of PSBB. The PSBB monitoring application will be a guideline for policy enforcers like the Army and Police officers, and civil servant in each level of government in Gorontalo province. The user of this application will note the time of the violation, name of the violator, ID card photo, vehicle photo, and the plate of the vehicle, type of the vehicle, and the types of the violation. Further, UNG will assist in data analysis, so this can become a reference for PSBB evaluation. Implementation of PSBB should be supported by all, as the price of this failure is extremely costly for the community [25]

Produce of Bio Hand Sanitizer Utilization from Prawn Shell Waste by the UNG's Students

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the need for hand sanitizer is quite highly. This increase in the demand for hand sanitizer has made scarcity of the goods in the market and a hike in their prices. This condition made the students at Chemistry Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences Faculty of UNG to develop and produce their own hand sanitizer. Through Technopreneurship program, they develop bio hand sanitizer. This bio hand sanitizer is produced based on the waste of prawn shell, through several chemical processes to produce chitosan. In this research, the students admit to having tested the activity of the bacterial activities of their hand sanitizer product. This test is carried out using two types of bacteria, the E. Coli dan Staphylococcus. These two bacteria are selected

as these two types of bacteria are commonly found in human body, especially in hands. The result is that the prevention zone of the produced- hand sanitizer is at 8.32 mm for Staphylococcus and at 8.30 mm for E. Coli 8,30 bacterias. This figure is considered as strong for hand sanitizer. The production process of prawn skin into chitosan and further into hand sanitizer takes three weeks. She ensures that the product is safe to be used as often as possible. In addition, the idea starts from realizing that ordinary hand sanitizers are made from alcohol and has side effects. From that reason, the students comes the idea of hand sanitizer liquid made from shrimp shell waste which has many advantages over existing ones.

UNG Launches *Sekolah Rakyat Online/Online Public School for Primary School Students*

At the celebration of National Education Day 2020, UNGo launches a social effort in increasing the quality of public education. The rector initiates the launching of Sekolah Rakyat Online/Public online school. At this commemoration of Education Day, UNG wants to launch their commitment to increasing the quality of education by launch ²⁴ this Sekolah Rakyat Online/Online Public School, as an effort to support the government program in online teaching and learning process during the pandemic. This online public school is an Education Information system, where through this system, public can access online learning system. The online learning materials are developed for all levels of formal primary schools and can be accessed through the <http://elearning.ung.ac.id> page. This program is inspired by the Public School in Indonesian History. This historical inspiration has made UNG become the front liner in providing the learning space that is accessible to all. The pedagogic format of Sekolah Rakyat is composed in a way for all people to be able to access the education and skill materials. The learning materials and instructions are delivered digitally, thus, distance is not an obstacle in learning. Through this program, UNG is willing to open up to become more accessible for the stakeholders as well as the community to obtain certification of their desired skills.

COVID-19 Crisis Center UNG Evaluates the Implementation of PSBB Supported with Epidemiological Analysis

The Government of Gorontalo Province had started to implement the ¹² Large-Scale Social Restriction/Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar (PSBB) as an effort to curb the spread of COVID- 19 in Gorontalo. To optimize the implementation of this PSBB, the government, in partnership with Crisis Center COVID-19 UNG evaluated the implementation of PSBB both Phase I and II. Led by the Rector of UNG, Crisis Center COVID-19 UNG carried out a critical review on the implementation of PSBB, which later presented in front of the Governor and Vice Governor of Gorontalo Province.

⁸ Based on the evaluation of PSBB carried out by Crisis Center COVID-19 UNG, the COVID-19 positive cases in Gorontalo province is lower than before the implementation of PSBB. "During the implementation of PSBB, there was a decrease of reported positive cases of COVID-19, however, the number is insignificant. Before the PSBB, the effective reproduction in Gorontalo was at the 2.73, and at the end of PSBB, the figure only reduced to 2.12," said Rector of UNG at the Coordination Meeting and Evaluation of PSBB in Gorontalo Province. Regardless of the decrease, the effectiveness of PSBB implementation was not maximized, as not every indicator that shows the success of PSBB implementation is met. The unmet indicators are people mobility using the motored vehicles within the city/regency. In addition, there are business places that were yet to implement working from home due to the nature of the businesses that did not allow workers to work from home. "the relaxation for several types of businesses also lowered the achievement for these indicators," the rector stated. In curbing the spread of COVID-19, Crisis Center COVID-19 UNG recommends several things such as optimizing the implementation of PSBB for achievement of maximum result. The next recommendation is to increase the number of test kits and massive contact tracking, as well as recommendations on the amendment of Governor Regulation. "Optimization of Swab test or PCR and tracking, when there are rapid test kit stocks available, it should be used for the red zone. In addition, increasing the capacity of the laboratory to check the Swab sample also need to be done to support the increase of case findings," state the rector. He further reminds that the government to be vigilant in the relaxation of PSBB implementation. He views that Gorontalo situation is currently worrying, as we have yet to pass the range of 50 to 60 days, which is the peak of the COVID-19 disease. It has only been 36 days from the discovery of the 1st patient. It means that Gorontalo is yet to pass the critical phase, and we should be vigilant about this. Nationally, the relaxation

is carried out due to the national effective reproduction figure that is only 1.7, whereas, in Gorontalo, this figure is currently above 2. Whereas during the evaluation of PSBB II, the RT value on the 29th of May was 1.42, meanwhile the trend of the positive cases during the PSBB II fluctuated and tended to increase compared to the PSBB I. Some Recommendations have been issued by Crisis Center COVID-19 UNG to optimize the implementation of PSBB in order to yield the expected result that is decreasing the positive cases and no new infected zone and no new cluster by increasing the community health literacy and increase contact tracing.

Carry Out Public Education on COVID-19 Talk Series Published through Social Media Platforms

As preventive measures for the community against this COVID-19 pandemic, UNG carries out sustainable public education by utilizing live Facebook channels and broadcasted through official fan page of UNG. This education activity is framed under the COVID-19 Talk Series with UNG lecturers from various disciplines as its resource person to educate the community on this COVID-19 pandemic. The legal basis for this Talk Series on Covid-19 is Rector Circular No. B/595/UN47.1/TU.01.01/2020 on Schedule and Technical Implementation of COVID-19 Education [16]-[21]

Tuition Payment Exemption for Students Impacted by COVID-19

As part of the response toward the students who are impacted by this COVID-19 pandemic, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo will provide exemption in tuition payment for the 2020-2021 semester. This tuition fee dispensation is given by reducing the amount of tuition fee by 25 percent and the tuition fee can be paid in three instalments and also freeing the tuition fee for students from low income groups.

This exemption is part of our concern to lighten the public burden in this pandemic time, especially students whose parents' livelihood that are impacted by this pandemic. UNG is aware that some parents experience economic strain due to this pandemic. UNG takes this initiative to lighten the burden by providing dispensation. This tuition dispensation is only given to students who are directly impacted by this Covid-19 pandemic, especially those whose socio-economic situation changes significantly from before this pandemic. The mechanism for this tuition dispensation is that students have to submit the request for dispensation for tuition payment, which is supported by several documents that will be verified to see whether or not the applicant is eligible for tuition dispensation. In addition, students unable to pay tuition due to financial difficulties resulting from the COVID-19 epidemic qualify for a special scholarship/tuition exemption program offered by UNG. This dispensation will be applicable for payment of tuition fee for the first semester in academic year of 2020-2021, and will be further reviewed.

CONCLUSION

2 UNG fight against COVID-19 is an important tagline for UNG to show their efforts in preventing and fighting against the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. The policies and activities taken by UNG are responses and part of responsibilities of this higher education institution to strengthen the social capital of the community as part of collective efforts by the government and Indonesian people. These policies and activities carried out by Universitas Negeri Gorontalo and all of its collaboration is evidence of UNG devotion to fighting against the common enemy: COVID-19.

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