

WHY IS THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA VIOLATING ITS OWN BAN ON GATHERINGS?

10 Legal and Logical Questions for the Authorities

Just a few days ago, the University of Ghana issued two communiqués: first, on the status of COVID-19 on campus and second, placing a categorical ban on all student gatherings in light of rising concerns. One would have expected that such directives would be implemented consistently and without fear or favour.

Yet, reality on campus paints a very different picture. Lectures continue unabated, church services are being held, student markets are operating, and group activities are ongoing in various corners of the University. This raises serious questions not only about consistency in policy enforcement but also the legal and moral obligations of the University as a public institution.

As a legal practitioner and a concerned father of a Level 400 student, I am compelled to respectfully ask the following:

1. **If gatherings have been banned, on what legal or administrative basis are in-person lectures continuing?** Are lectures exempted under the definition of “gatherings” as per the University's own communique? If so, why was this not clarified?
2. **Why are religious activities, including church services, still permitted on campus?** Does the ban not extend to religious groups, or have exemptions been granted to some?
3. **Have the market activities within the halls and hostels been assessed for compliance with health protocols?** If not, are traders and students not being placed at equal, if not greater, risk of exposure?
4. **Who is responsible for the enforcement of this ban?** What specific mechanism or task force has been put in place, and what level of compliance monitoring is being undertaken?
5. **Does the University appreciate the confusion it creates when it issues a sweeping ban yet tolerates certain gatherings?** This sends contradictory signals to students and undermines respect for institutional rules.
6. **Is there evidence that certain groups are being favoured while others are sanctioned?** If some clubs and associations have had to suspend operations, why are others still functioning with impunity?
7. **What precedent is being set for the broader Ghanaian society?** Are we teaching our future leaders that directives can be ignored if they are inconvenient or inconsistently applied?

8. **Are academic staff and lecturers exempt from the same COVID-19 restrictions imposed on students?** If student meetings are considered high-risk, shouldn't the same standard apply to classroom instruction?
9. **What safety assurances have been provided to vulnerable students and staff who may feel unsafe in this environment?** Is there an established channel for reporting health concerns without fear of academic penalty?
10. **Finally, was this ban implemented in consultation with the Ministry of Health and the Ghana Health Service?** Or was the University's decision solely informed by its internal structures—perhaps due to the presence of Noguchi Memorial Institute on its grounds?

These questions are not meant to undermine the authority of the University, but rather to seek clarity and accountability. Leadership—particularly in an academic institution—must demonstrate consistency, transparency, and responsibility, especially in times of public health uncertainty.

As stakeholders in education and public health, we expect an honest and prompt response from the University. If we are to prepare young minds for leadership, then we must lead by example.

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Concerned Father of a Level 400 Student.

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