According to UNESCO, the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented some two billion students around the world from attending school. To date, at least 160 countries have shuttered their entire education systems, from preschool to university. On a global scale, over 90% of learners have been impacted. Moreover, even as some countries are cautiously reopening elementary schools, it is becoming painfully evident that universities will have to restrict themselves to distance learning, at least until January 2021. Schools are adopting new terminology (alternative delivery methods, instructional continuity) as they scramble to transpose habitual classroom teaching practices into digital modes. Like it or not, we are rushing headlong into the distance learning era. It has its advantages, not least being flexibility, but also its challenges. Students may struggle with motivation, engagement, and perseverance, while teachers, many of whom have zero experience in this area, may wrestle with problems of course planning and student supervision. One thing is clear: distance education and hybrid programs will dominate the agenda for months to come, and possibly years. There could not be a more ideal time to bring together research and teaching expertise to help us cope with this unprecedented ordeal.

Call for papers for a special thematic issue in
the International Journal of Technologies in Higher Education

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
AND EDUCATION IN THE
TIME OF COVID-19

Submission deadline: June 10, 2020.
Expected publication date: August 15, 2020.

1 https://fr.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse
It is in this spirit that we are launching a call to submit papers to a special thematic issue of the Revue internationale des technologies en pédagogie universitaire / International Journal of Technologies in Higher Education. Articles should address aspects of higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The relevance of this special issue stems from the urgent need, at this dire time, to learn from studies and first-hand reports of distance education initiatives in diverse settings and circumstances. We must not only understand how to leverage the full educational potential of digital technology, but also, and more importantly, we must be ready to overcome the hurdles that will frustrate learners, teachers, and education actors as they grapple with the new realities of higher education.

Submitted papers should meet the journal’s publication standards and comply with all its editorial policy criteria. Acceptable papers include the following:

- Accounts of experiences, experiments, or practices that integrate digital technology and/or distance learning, viewed through a critical lens: advantages, disadvantages, limitations, etc. (including hyperlinks, screenshots, scientific references, etc.) (1,500–2,500 words);

- Pedagogical reflections on, or critical appraisals of, digital integration in education supported by research-based arguments (3,000–6,000 words);

- Empirical, evidence-based studies (3,000–6,000 words);

- Research overviews or state-of-the-research reports (500–1,200 words).

Papers should be submitted directly to info@ritpu.org