

Unimal Provides Mobile Data during the Covid-19 Outbreak



UNIMALNEWS | Lhokseumawe - Coronavirus pandemic has spread to more than 200 countries in the world. The latest data shows that there have been more than 2.4 million confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the world and Indonesia reported 7,418 confirmed cases on Wednesday (covid19.go.id, 22/04/2020). The Coronavirus cases which were first detected in Wuhan in Hubei Province, China, have impacted the life of so many people, including from the school and university closures intended to enforce social distancing to help stop the spread of Covid-19.

Universitas Malikussaleh (Unimal) has switched the campus-based classes to online learning mode to make the teaching learning process continue amid the coronavirus outbreak. This policy has been in force since March 23, 2020, a week after all campus activities were suspended to curb the spread of novel coronavirus. As the learning and teaching process takes place through internet and online learning, students will need internet connection to make the online learning possible. To assist students with this mode of learning, Unimal provides students with mobile data for the period of two months until June, 2020. This will allow students to access online learning through their phones or use their phones as mobile hotspot in order to connect other devices.

The cellular data is provided to approximately 18 thousand students enrolled this semester. The Rector of Unimal, Dr. Herman Fithra, ASEAN.Eng, stated that this policy was made in order to support students' online learning. This policy has only recently been carried out because the Forum of Rectors of PTN Satker (State university with general state financial management) has just been granted permission by the Ministry of Finance to take this affirmative policy. "But we should revise the budget through the planning department, so the issued budget has its justification," said Herman.

The Covid-19 outbreak has caused all state budgets through activity units to have been revised and cut. According to Herman, Unimal's State University Operational Assistance Funds (BOPTN) has been cut by IDR. 1.67 billion or 11 percent of the total BOPTN. However, this policy of providing mobile data for students must be carried out immediately considering the online learning will continue until May 29. "We should take the steps to be able to ease the burden on students," Herman further added.

The mobile data package will be obtained by students after they register their phone numbers to their study programs. This cellular data is not only provided to undergraduate students, but also to master students. Collaborating with Telkomsel, Indonesia's leading mobile telecommunications and digital data services provider, students will be able to activate 30 GB of cellular data obtained through Cloud-X. Unimal will add another minimum 4 GB that can be used to searching for references on the internet. According to Herman mobile data may be added to 8 GB, depending on agreement with Telkomsel. For Cloud-X, the data has indeed been provided at a very cheap price by Telkomsel which is IDR. 10 for one month. The deadline to register phone number for students is April, 24 2020 until 5.00 pm.[kur]

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