
GUIDELINES FOR SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS OR CLOSURE DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

1.0 Guidelines

- 1.1 When adverse weather conditions are occurring or forecasted and normal campus operations would pose a significant threat to the safety of students and academic and nonacademic staff, or would prevent large numbers of them from coming to a University of Lethbridge campus or returning safely to their homes, the University will normally follow these guidelines in deciding whether to suspend operations or close a campus, and in communicating that decision to members of the University community and the public.
- 1.2 Decisions and actions relating to these guidelines will at all times be made in accordance with the Crisis Management Plan, communicated in accordance with the Crisis Communication Plan, and be subject to any specific circumstances that exist. Those plans will be referred to for any scenarios not addressed in these guidelines.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of these guidelines is to guide the decision-making process that may lead to suspension of operations or closure due to adverse weather conditions. This process functions in agreement with the Crisis Management Plan and the Crisis Communication Plan to communicate that decision to academic and non-academic staff, students, and the public.

3.0 Scope

- 3.1 These guidelines are applicable University-wide, including contractors working on campus.

4.0 Authority

- 4.1 Only the President (or designate) has the authority to make the decision to suspend operations on or close a University campus.
- 4.2 Reaching this decision may include consideration of all relevant information available as per attached Procedures and activation of the Crisis Management Team.
- 4.3 The Assistant Dean, North Campuses and/or the Campus Managers for the Calgary and Edmonton Campuses may make recommendations to the President (or designate) regarding the decision to suspend operations or close their respective campuses in consultation with the appropriate host institution.

AUTHORITY:

Joint Council

**EFFECTIVE
DATE:**

April 30, 2014

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5.0 Closure or Suspension of Operations

- 5.1 Closing a University campus means that
- All classes are cancelled;
 - Scheduled meetings and other events, including external user events, are not held;
 - Staff, other than those needed for required services (see Section 7), are not expected to be on campus;
 - All normal business and services on campus are ceased, and individuals not designated as "required" are discouraged from coming to campus or staying on campus; and,
 - Examinations are cancelled and rescheduled in accordance with Academic Policies.
- 5.2 Suspension of operations means that the University remains open in whole or in part, but some or all of the following operations may be suspended:
- Classes, including examinations, which will be rescheduled in accordance with Academic Policies;
 - Library;
 - Scheduled meetings and other events, including external user events; and,
 - Academic and non-academic staff, other than those needed for required services, should check with their supervisors using whatever prearranged methods have been arranged regarding the need to attend at work. Alternatives requiring supervisory approval include working from home, using vacation time, or changing hours of work.
- 5.3 In the case of suspension of operations/campus closure, Faculties are responsible for determining and communicating decisions regarding student assignments and other submission deadlines that were scheduled for the day(s) of the suspension of operations/closure.

6.0 Timing

- 6.1 It is preferable that a decision regarding suspension of operations/closure be made before academic and non-academic staff and students would normally start their days. However, in the event of deteriorating weather conditions during the day, the President (or designate) may choose to suspend operations or close a University campus at any time.

7.0 Required Services

- 7.1 Depending on the circumstances, the University may need to maintain certain services during a suspension of operations or campus closure and/or take appropriate measures to resume required services prior to re-opening.
- 7.2 Each particular situation will dictate the types of services required and the number of required personnel to be on campus.
- 7.3 Occupations designated as required for the purposes of these guidelines will be determined by the Crisis Management Team and through departments' Operational Continuity Plans.
- 7.4 In general, the following departments have required services, with some or all positions required to work:

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- i. Campus Safety
- ii. Health Centre
- iii. Facilities
- iv. Human Resources & Payroll
- v. Student Services
- vi. Counseling Services
- vii. Financial Services (including Materials Management)
- viii. Information Technology Services
- ix. Ancillary Services (including Food Services and Housing Services)
- x. Public Affairs and Government Relations

8.0 Employee Compensation

- 8.1 When a University campus is closed or operations are suspended due to adverse weather, regular full time, regular part time, casual, and sessional employees whose work sites are affected, and who were scheduled for work, and who would have been at work but for the suspension of operations/closure, will be compensated in accordance with the appropriate employment agreement/manual. These closures or times of suspended operations shall not be considered University holidays.
- 8.2 Employees who were not intending to be at work and who had scheduled vacation, sick leave, compensating time off for overtime, days off in lieu, normal days off or other approved leave will have their time recorded as scheduled before the suspension of operations/closure was announced.
- 8.3 The University will provide food and shelter for employees who are required to remain on duty or who are asked to report for their regularly scheduled hours of work to provide required services.
- 8.4 Where a University campus is open and an employee is unable to report for work, is late, or makes a request to leave early as a result of weather conditions affecting the individual employee, the employee may, subject to departmental approval, use accumulated time owing or vacation credits, implement a working-from-home arrangement, or make up the hours at a mutually acceptable time.

9.0 Limitations

- 9.1 These guidelines are not intended to cover all eventualities. It is assumed that the decision making and relevant communications will be adapted, as appropriate, to suit the circumstances. Reasonable efforts will be made to communicate class cancellation, suspension of operations, or closure, but it is possible that not all individuals will receive notification despite these efforts.

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APPENDIX I - PROCEDURES

These procedures will at all times be in accordance with the Crisis Management Plan and the Crisis Communication Plan and may be modified as unique circumstances warrant by the Crisis Management Team.

1.0 Decision to Close or Suspend Operations

- 1.1 The Deputy Crisis Leader will gather information from appropriate sources and provide advice to the President (or designate) regarding whether a University campus can operate safely and safe access to and from the campus is possible.
- 1.2 In accordance with Section 4 of the Guidelines, the decision to close or suspend operations on a University campus will be made by the President (or designate). While every effort will be made to conduct thorough consultations before a closing or suspension of operations decision is made, consultations may be limited in the interest of a speedy and efficient decision.

2.0 Determining Factors

- 2.1 The safety of our students and academic and non-academic staff is of paramount importance.
- 2.2 Factors contributing to the decision to close or suspend operations on a University campus include but are not limited to the following:
 - (a) Weather conditions (current and forecasted);
 - (b) Road conditions;
 - (c) Availability of public transit;
 - (d) Ability to access and use the campus safely;
 - (e) Ability to maintain campus roadways, parking lots, paths, stairs and building entrances in safe condition;
 - (f) Ability of emergency services to access the campus;
 - (g) Disadvantages of sending individuals back into the weather once they have arrived on campus; and
 - (h) Anticipation that conditions will worsen or persist such that public transportation may not operate or roads may be closed as a result of storm conditions, which will make travel home unusually difficult or hazardous.

3.0 Communications

- 3.1 The Director, Public Affairs and Government Relations (or designate) is responsible for the coordination of communications concerning closure of or suspension of operations on a University campus.
- 3.2 Based on the decision to close or suspend operations, the Director, Public Affairs and Government Relations (or designate) will undertake communications in a timely manner and provide updates as required in accordance with the Crisis Communication Plan.

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- 3.3 Where campus facilities (including conference facilities and athletic facilities) are rented for functions on the date of closure or suspension of operations, the University department responsible for the rental will notify the event organizer. The renter is responsible for communicating the cancellation to participants.
- 3.4 In the case where the University makes the decision to close or suspend operations on a campus while classes are in session, notifications will be delivered in accordance with the Crisis Communication Plan, and then periodically reinforced or updated with other communication methods as determined by the Crisis Management Team.
- 3.5 In circumstances where a University campus has not closed or suspended operations but it may be impossible for a faculty member to conduct a scheduled class, the faculty member should make every reasonable effort to inform students of the class cancellation. It is strongly recommended that each faculty member make reference to their notification procedure in the course syllabus.
- 3.6 Each faculty is responsible for setting their own procedures in cases where exams (other than final exams scheduled by the Registrar's office) or submission deadlines were scheduled to occur on a day when a campus is closed or has suspended operations.