



Senate

Policy Name	Academic Implications of a Significant Disruption of Operations
Policy Number	EX 2012-02
Origin	Senate Executive
Authority	Senate
Date of Original Approval	2012-10-29
Supersedes	Policy on the Academic Implications of Hurricane Juan (2003) Policy on the Academic Implications of a Pandemic (2009)
Senate Approval Dates	2024-01-26; 2021-03-26; 2012-10-29
Effective from	2024-01-26
Review/Retirement Date	January 2029
Responsibility for Revision	Vice President Academic and Provost
Responsibility for Implementation	Vice President Academic and Provost

Policy on the Academic Implications of a Significant Disruption of Operations

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to minimize the academic consequences, particularly for students, of a significant disruption of operations.

Scope

University-wide

Definition

Significant disruption of operations: The President or her designate may declare a state of significant disruption of operations, after appropriate consultation, whenever the normal operation of the University is interrupted or reduced for a period of more than three working days, or when it is reasonably expected that a significant interruption or reduction will occur.

Preamble

The operation of the university may be disrupted for a significant period of time by adverse circumstances or events such as severe weather, extensive damage to the campus infrastructure from a disaster, or a pandemic.

Senate Responsibility

Senate is responsible for the academic policy of the University. No other body, organization, or officer of the University may assume such responsibility in the event of a significant disruption of operations, apart from the delegation to the Senate Executive Committee provided for below.

Governing Principles

The following principles will guide Senate action in response to a significant disruption of operations.

1. Academic integrity
The standards normally expected of the university community shall be maintained.
2. Academic activities and services
Normal academic activities and services, including instruction and support for academic activities of the university community, shall be provided insofar as it is safe and reasonable to do so.
3. Fairness
Students, faculty, and academic support staff are to be treated fairly. To this end Senate's decisions and the actions following therefrom, shall be communicated through all appropriate means, and all procedures shall provide for clear and accessible appeal procedures.

4. Right to Appeal

Any member of the university community who believes that actions taken under this policy were unreasonable may have recourse to the standard avenues of appeal.

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

1. Immunity from Penalty

Students who are unable to participate in academic instruction during a period of interrupted or reduced operations shall not be penalized for absence or late submission of work, and shall be given reasonable alternative access to material covered during their absence, and reasonable alternative provision for completing assignments or other requirements.

2. Completion of Course Work

Students remain responsible for fulfilling course requirements.

Procedures

On declaration of a state of significant disruption of operations, Senate shall meet to determine the measures to be taken in accordance with the principles above. If Senate is unable to meet, Senate Executive shall make such immediate decisions as are necessary in accordance with the principles outlined above, and in accordance with ByLaw 14.1. That is, such decisions must not change existing policy or establish new policy in any way, and must be brought to the Senate meeting immediately following for ratification.

The decisions shall be communicated to the University community by all appropriate means.

Guidelines

Decisions to mitigate the academic implications of a significant disruption of operations may include the following: University-wide changes to relevant aspects of course outlines, including deadlines, dates, requirements, and methods of evaluation, and changes to academic dates including final exam periods and exam procedures.

- All such changes are to be in effect only for the period of the declared disruption.

Within the above provisions, and with reasonable notice, instructors may make individual decisions regarding the making up of class time, the rescheduling of quizzes and tests, and other changes required to give students the opportunity to complete their courses successfully.

- Instructors are encouraged to show flexibility for individual students' circumstances.