



POLICY STATEMENT

Severe Winter Weather

SU Policy Number: 401-002.0

ORIGINATING OFFICE

Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance

PURPOSE

To prescribe policy and operating procedures for campus operations during periods of severe winter weather.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, and students at Shippensburg University.

OBJECTIVE

It is the obligation of Shippensburg University to offer the full range of instructional, student life and general support services to the campus community and visitors as scheduled without interruption. Accordingly, the University intends to remain open, hold classes, and provide services during periods of severe winter weather. Only in those rare occasions when it becomes impossible to reasonably accommodate students and others on the campus, due to conditions which exist on the campus, or affect travel to or from the campus will consideration be given to adjusting class schedules and/or employee work shifts or authorizing a partial or full day closing. Only the President of the University, or his/her designee if he/she is away from campus, may authorize these adjustments in emergencies.

DEFINITIONS

- I. Essential Functions: Essential Functions include, but are not limited to, snow removal, public safety, steam plant, student housing, health services, telecommunications, and food service.
- II. Essential Employees: Essential Employees are all persons assigned to essential functions. All persons assigned to these functions are considered to be "essential" and will continue to work as scheduled and as required during the emergency. In addition, certain other individual employees may be identified in advance as essential by their respective vice president. These employees will also continue to work their normal schedules and additional time as required during the emergency.
- III. Day Classes: Day classes are those classes that begin prior to 6:30 p.m.
- IV. Evening Classes: Evening classes are those classes that begin at 6:30 p.m. or later.

POLICY

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Attendance: Students, faculty and staff face a wide variety of circumstances and conditions which affect their ability to meet their obligation to report and perform their duties during periods of severe winter weather without taking unnecessary risks regarding their personal safety. Employees covered by the provisions of the Commonwealth or PASSHE leave program (other than those designated in advance as "essential" in such circumstances), who determine that they are unable to report as scheduled, must notify their supervisor of this fact and have their time off charged against annual leave, personal leave or optional

holiday leave as appropriate. Students are required to notify their instructors as soon as possible of the weather related reason for their absence.

A. Essential Functions and Employees: Only the President of the University or his/her designee may authorize schedule changes and partial or full day closing in cases of emergencies. In such cases, essential functions must continue. All essential employees will continue to work as scheduled and as required during the emergency.

B. Other Employees: Other University employees are responsible for ascertaining and adhering to modified work schedules, if any, during the emergency. They may be required by their supervisors to report during the emergency if circumstances dictate.

II. SNOW REMOVAL POLICIES

A. Campus Parking Policy: Overnight parking is permitted only in residential and designated commuter parking lots unless prior approval is granted by the Director of Public Safety and the Director of Facilities Management and Planning. This approval is automatically granted for resident deans and graduate resident directors. All others must personally request, to the University Police desk sergeant, to park in designated areas. When snow emergency is declared, any car parked in Priorities A and B below are subject to towing at the owner's expense. Faculty and staff reporting to work during a snow emergency will park in Priority A lots which will be cleared before any other lots.

B. Parking Lot Priorities

1. Priority A

- a. Access roads to all buildings
- b. Primary faculty/staff parking lots
 - (1) Maintenance/shop vehicle parking lot, gasoline storage tanks and warehouse
 - (2) Reed/Robb Field lots
 - (3) Steam Plant lot
 - (4) Reisner Hall employees lot and front of Etter Health Center
- c. Pedestrian and handicapped accessible walkways
 - (1) From primary parking lots to main buildings
 - (2) From residence halls to food service facilities
- d. All egresses of occupied buildings

2. Priority B

- a. Grace B. Luhrs Elementary School and daycare access lot
- b. Commuter parking lots
- c. Secondary faculty/staff lots
- d. Connecting walkways

3. Priority C

- a. Resident overnight lots
- b. Visitor lot
- e. Other sidewalks

C. Resources

1. Human

- a. Grounds crew – roads, parking lots, and walkways
- b. Custodial workers – building egresses
- c. Automotive section – equipment repair
- d. Staff volunteers
- e. Maintenance shop workers
- f. Student volunteers

2. Equipment

- a. Contract sources as determined by the Director of Facilities Management and Planning

III. PERSONNEL POLICIES

A. Essential Personnel

1. Authorization: Deans and directors shall prepare essential personnel lists each year consistent with CBA requirements. Employees will be informed in writing of this status.
2. Expectations: Essential employees are required to work during their regular shifts during such periods of time that the University is closed due to severe winter weather conditions, unless on approved leave for this period of time.
3. Compensation entitlements:
 - a. Essential employees who do not work their regularly scheduled hours during University closing will be subject to disciplinary action and may be permitted to use annual or personal leave for those hours not worked, depending on the circumstances of their absence.
 - b. Essential employees who had leave approved prior to the closing will continue in the leave status.

B. Other Personnel

1. Those employees not designated as essential for this purpose will be excused from work, with no leave charged for their regular shift hours that the University is closed.
2. Employees not designated as essential may work their regular hours during the closing, if their supervisor has prior knowledge and has given approval.
3. Those employees on leave when a University closing is announced will still be charged for that period of leave. This applies to employees who request and are granted leave prior to the official announcement of closing.
4. If closing of the University is announced during an employee's shift, and the employee chooses to leave before the actual time of closing, the employee will be charged leave for the period of time from the time he/she leaves until the time that the University closes.
5. In the event of consecutive full day closings employees will be charged annual, personal, or leave without pay, as appropriate, on the second and ensuing days.

- C. The liberal leave policy will be in effect when announced. Liberal leave means that an employee's request for appropriate leave will not be required prior to the employee's shift. The employee will notify his/her supervisor of his/her leave status as soon as possible.

IV. ACADEMIC POLICIES

A. Adjusted On-Campus Class Schedule

If the university is operating on an "adjusted schedule," all classes that begin prior to 9:30 are cancelled for the day; all classes that begin 9:30 or after will run normally. 8:00 and 9:00 classes that are cancelled should be made up. It will be the responsibility of faculty and students to ensure that coursework missed because of weather related class cancellations will be adequately covered during the time remaining in the semester. Possible make up methods include but are not limited to: online, face-to-face the following Tuesday or Thursday at 3:30, Friday at 2:00, or another time that works for the faculty member and all of the students. Faculty teaching 8:00 or 9:00 classes should include a statement in their syllabi, outlining class cancellation contingency plans.

B. Shippensburg Classes at Off-Site Locations

1. Shippensburg University classes at off-site locations are governed by a combination of the policies at the off-campus site and Shippensburg University.
2. If the off-campus site is closed but Shippensburg University is open, the class is cancelled.
3. If the off-campus location is open but Shippensburg University is closed, the class is cancelled.
4. The Office of Extended Studies is responsible for notifying departments, faculty, and students in all off-campus classes of site closures, according to items 2 and 3 above.
5. Classes that are cancelled shall be made up in a method left to the faculty member's discretion (online, or face-to-face at a time that works for the faculty member, all of the students, and room availability at the off-campus location). Faculty teaching off-campus classes should include a statement in their syllabi, outlining class cancellation contingency plans.

C. Make-up Days

1. Day classes having been missed the equivalent of one week of class time should be made up. Day classes having been missed less than the equivalent of one week of class time may be made up on an informal basis at the discretion of the faculty member.
2. Night classes (beginning at 6:30 p.m. or later) having been missed the equivalent of more than one week of class time should be made up. Night classes having been missed up to the equivalent of one week of class time may be made up on an informal basis at the discretion of the faculty member.
3. Saturdays are the best days to use for make-up days.

D. Library

1. Every effort will be made to keep the Library open even when classes are cancelled provided adequate staffing can be maintained.
2. For this purpose, certain Library employees may be designated as “essential” in accordance with other provisions of this policy.
3. A separate policy for the Lehman Library is attached as an Appendix.

E. Final Exam Schedule

1. Any final exams cancelled due to weather will be made up at the time originally scheduled the Friday of exam week.

V. STUDENT SERVICES POLICIES

A. Residence Halls

1. All residence halls will remain in service during the period of severe winter weather. Communication of any changes to the academic schedule will be processed through the residence life staff from the appropriate University personnel (Vice President, Dean of Students, etc.) and disseminated to the residence population.
2. Every effort will be made to provide individuals to facilitate the University’s efforts in the removal of snow and ice from the entrances of the residence halls.

B. Ceddia Union Building

Every effort will be made to keep the Ceddia Union Building open in the event of severe winter weather even when classes are canceled. In the event the CUB needs to be closed, appropriate announcements will be made through the University’s notification services.

C. Recreation Facilities

Every effort will be made to keep the recreation facilities open in the event of severe winter weather even when classes are canceled. In the event the recreation faculties need to be closed, appropriate announcements will be made through the University’s notification services.

D. Athletic Events

The decision to cancel any athletic events or travel will be made by the Director of Athletics in conjunction with the Vice President for Student Affairs. In the event the athletic events or travel need to be canceled, appropriate announcements will be made through the University’s notification services.

E. Dining Services

Dining services will maintain their regularly scheduled hours during severe winter weather. However, in the event the decision is made to close the University for the entire day, dining services will operate on a brunch/dinner schedule in Reisner Hall only. All other dining facilities will be closed. The decision to operate on a brunch/dinner schedule will be determined by the Vice President for Student Affairs in conjunction with the Director of Dining Services.

F. Health Services

Health services will maintain their regularly scheduled hours of operation during any period of severe weather.

G. Other Student Services Offices

Any other student services offices will follow the University’s personnel procedures regarding appropriate attendance.

H. Services to Students with Disabilities

During periods of inclement weather, services are to be provided to students with disabilities to ensure their safety and ability to attend classes. The following services will be provided: (a) High priority will be given to snow removal from ramps and walkways used by students with disabilities throughout campus; (b) hall directors and resident assistants in residence halls where students with disabilities are housed will assure that arrangements are made to provide meals to those students or to get them to classes; and (c) University Police will be contacted in any situation where students with disabilities need special assistance. In addition, students with disabilities are asked to contact their faculty to make them aware of special problems during periods of inclement weather.

VI. PUBLIC VENUE FACILITIES POLICIES

- A. Grace B Luhrs Performing Arts Center – When the university is closed, events at the PAC will be cancelled. If the University is open, patron safety will be given high priority.
- B. Luhrs Elementary School and Day Care – Luhrs Elementary School lots access will be given priority based on the Shippensburg Area School District schedule. Luhrs Day Care lots and access will be given priority based on University’s schedule.
- C. Leased Facilities – Spiritual Center, Stone Ridge Commons, Davis House, Conference Center, and off-campus parking lots are not maintained by the University, but by the lessors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- I. The President, or his/her designee, is solely responsible for authorizing university closures or schedule adjustments in emergencies.
- II. The Vice President for Administration and Finance, in consultation with the Provost, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for External Relations and Communications, and the Directors of the Departments of Public Safety and Facilities Management and Planning, is responsible for developing a recommendation for the president.
- III. Deans and Directors are responsible for preparing essential personnel lists each year consistent with CBA requirements and inform employees in writing of this status.
- IV. The Department of Public Safety is responsible for monitoring weather conditions.
- V. The Department of Facilities Management and Planning is responsible for snow and ice removal and ensuring continued building operations.
- VI. The Vice President for External Relations and Communications is responsible for all announcements of university closings and schedule modifications.
- VII. Responsibilities of Faculty
 - A. The following duties outlined in the CBA may be pertinent.
 1. Meeting assigned classes
 2. Giving timely notification to the proper authority and making a reasonable effort to insure that teaching assignments can be covered in case of absences
 3. Making a reasonable effort to notify students of any changes in class hours
 - B. The following statements appear in the University catalog
 1. “Each instructor shall state his/her course requirements including attendance expectations as part of the clearly written course information distributed at the beginning of each semester.”
 2. “An instructor must make provision for excused absences.”
 3. “Only when an absence has been approved by the instructor, preferably in advance, will the instructor be expected to provide a make-up opportunity.”
 - C. Faculty members should instruct their students to call faculty extensions first rather than the department number for updates on individual class cancellations during inclement weather. If possible, they should also send an email to the class list and post an announcement on Blackboard.
 - D. Faculty members should establish a method for communicating with their students in advance if they will be unable to meet their night classes.
- VIII. Responsibilities of Students
 - A. The following policies appear in the University catalog

1. If a student elects to be absent from a class without being excused, the student must be prepared to accept an evaluation for any graded activity, consistent with course requirements, which takes place at that session.
2. The student will be responsible for all material covered in classes.
3. Except under the most unusual circumstances, students are not permitted to make-up a scheduled examination which has been missed.

PROCEDURES

I. DECISION PROCESS

The decision to modify schedules and/or authorize a partial or full day closing will be made by the President of the University or his/her designee in the most extreme circumstances only. The primary basis for this decision will be the capability and condition of the campus to accommodate students and others in relative safety. It is recognized that during severe winter weather, roadways and parking lots should be expected to be snow covered and icy regardless of efforts to keep them clear. Accordingly, employees and students should equip both themselves and their automobiles to deal with this inconvenience. The decisions will consider the conduct of the evening graduate programs which enroll a high proportion of students commuting from considerable distance.

- A. Monitoring - The Department of Public Safety is responsible for monitoring weather conditions during periods when severe weather is anticipated. This monitoring will include checking with weather forecasts, Facilities Management and Planning, local and state weather monitoring resources, etc. After compiling all of this information and determining that conditions on the campus are such that a schedule modification or alteration may be advisable to minimize safety problems and clear campus, the Director of Public Safety will confer with the Director of Facilities Management and Planning and the Vice President for Administration and Finance to develop a recommendation to the President.
- B. Recommendation to the President - After conferring with the Director of Public Safety and the Director of Facilities Management and Planning, the Vice President for Administration and Finance will attempt, as circumstances permit, to confer with the Provost, Vice President for External Relations and Communications, and Vice President for Student Affairs, either over the telephone or in person, to develop a recommendation for the President. In his/her absence, the decision will be made by the Provost, the Vice President for Administration and Finance, or Vice President for Student Affairs, in that order.
 1. Form of Recommendation - If the recommendation to the President is to modify schedules and/or close the University in reaction to the weather situation, it will address both the issue of class schedule for faculty and students, and work schedules for staff. These are two separate questions, and the action taken on one may not be the same as the action taken on the other. For example, a decision might be made to release staff early in order to begin clearing parking lots for evening or the next day, while at the same time continuing the normal schedule of day classes. Similarly, the beginning of classes may be delayed in the morning while employee work shifts continue as scheduled.

Specific Points of information include:

 - a. Class Schedule
 - (1) Hour classes will end
 - (2) Hour classes will begin
 - b. Work Schedule
 - (1) Hour normal shift schedules will end
 - (2) Hour normal shift schedules will begin
 - (3) It is understood that unless specific information to the contrary is distributed, scheduled shifts will continue as normally scheduled.
- C. Decision by the President - When a decision has been made by the President, it will be forwarded to the Vice President for External Relations and Communications for communicating to the University community as described in III below.

1. Timing: The timing of the announcement of a decision is crucial. An attempt will be made to announce a decision prior to 6:30 a.m. for day classes and shifts and prior to 4:00 p.m. for night classes and other shifts. However, the precise timing of the decision will be based upon actual conditions.

II. NOTIFICATION OF WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

In an effort to keep all members of the campus community informed as to changes in the university's operation because of severe weather, following is the notification procedure.

- A. General Policy Announcements will be made only if the university's regular operation is disrupted. Announcements will not be made confirming that the university is open. Hotline and the university's website are the only official sources of information on any schedule changes.
- B. Notification Procedures
 1. Changes in schedule affecting the university's daytime operation will be announced by 6:30 a.m., as warranted by actual conditions.
 2. Changes in schedule affecting the university's operation during the regular day will be made as soon as conditions warrant during that period.
 3. Changes in schedule affecting the university's evening operation will be announced by 4 p.m. or earlier if conditions warrant.
 4. The Vice President for External Relations and Communications will be notified by the president or his/her designee about any changes in regular university operation requiring on-campus and/or off-campus notification.
 5. The Vice President for External Relations and Communications will use the appropriate communication methods (see list below) as dictated by the circumstances and the time the decision is made.
- C. Communication methods
 1. Primary communications methods for changes prior to the start of the regular day are:
 - a. Hotline
 - b. University's website
 - c. Release of information to selected area broadcast media (see list below)
 - d. Email to Shippensburg University email accounts.
 2. Primary communications methods for changes after the start of the regular day affecting daytime operation are:
 - a. Hotline
 - b. University's website
 - c. University phone mail system
 - d. Release of information to selected area broadcast media (see list below)
 - e. Email to Shippensburg University email accounts.
 3. Primary communications methods for changes affecting nighttime operation are:
 - a. Hotline
 - b. University's website
 - c. University phone mail system
 - d. Release of information to selected area broadcast media (see list below)
 - e. Email to Shippensburg University email accounts.
- D. Primary media contacts
 1. The following broadcast media will be exclusively used for off-campus announcements: WSYC-FM (88.7); WITF-FM (89.5); WHTM-TV; WHP-TV; WINK-FM (104.1); WGAL-TV; WHAG-TV; and WHP-AM (580).
- E. Wording of change announcements

1. To avoid any confusion as to meaning and intent, announcements about changes in operations will be made in the following standard format:

"Day classes (those beginning prior to 6:30 p.m.) at Shippensburg University are canceled; staff are to report; liberal leave in effect; essential personnel report."

"Shippensburg University is on an adjusted schedule. Classes beginning before 9:30 a.m. are cancelled; staff are to report; liberal leave in effect; essential personnel report."

"Evening classes (those beginning at 6:30 p.m. or later) at Shippensburg University are canceled; scheduled staff are to report; liberal leave in effect; essential personnel report."

"Shippensburg University is closed; no day or evening classes are scheduled; essential personnel report."

"Shippensburg University is closed; no day classes (those beginning prior to 6:30 p.m.) are scheduled; essential personnel report."

All members of the campus community are reminded that while the statements are given to members of the media in this format, the statements may not be broadcast in these exact words. In addition, individuals are reminded that Hotline and the website are the official sources of schedule changes and are asked not to contact other offices, particularly University Police, for change information.

RECISSION

NA

APPROVALS

President's Cabinet, November 16, 2009

FILENAME

401-002.0 Severe Winter Weather Policy.docx

DATE

November 18, 2009

DISTRIBUTION

President's Cabinet, December 14, 2009

Public