Policy

The authority to cancel classes or close the University due to weather conditions or other emergencies resides with the President or his/her designee. Vice Presidents shall develop and implement procedures within their divisions for use during emergency closures that are consistent with this policy.

Procedures

Definitions

- Severe weather is typically defined, but not limited to, heavy snowfall (typically greater than 6”), ice storms or excessive winds which result in the closure of multiple, surrounding major roads and create significant safety concerns.
- Other emergencies may include, but not be limited to, the threat and/or presence of an active shooter, bomb threat and/or explosion, natural or manufactured disaster, act of terrorism, other potentially hazardous situations or any threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the university and/or surrounding communities.
- Cancellation of classes means that classes are not held but offices are open and all other activities are conducted as usual.
- Closing the University offices means that all functions of the University cease other than those deemed essential.

Responsibilities

When classes are cancelled, the decision to cancel non-academic events such as athletic contests, plays, musical performances, lectures, or meetings shall be made by the director responsible for the activity, in consultation with the appropriate Vice President. The Office of Human Resources shall develop and maintain procedures related to employee leave and on-call status associated with class cancellations and university closings. A document entitled “Procedures for Class Cancellation or University Closings due to Severe Weather” is reviewed and distributed to appropriate divisional offices in August. This checklist details the decision making and notification processes for cancelling classes [on the Mankato campus as well as courses located off-campus or on other campuses] or closing the University. The review of this checklist is initiated annually by University Security.

Communications

- Class cancellations or University closings: Notifications will be placed on the University website and email notices sent to students and staff. The Campus Hub will provide live and/or recorded information via incoming telephone calls to their facility. Text message announcements will be broadcast to individuals who have registered for Star Alert via their E-Services account.
- Announcements will be provided for broadcast to local and regional radio and television media (e.g. KMSU, KYSM, KEEZ, KDOG, KTOE, WCCO, KEYC, KARE, and KSTP).
• Morning announcements will be made by 5:30 a.m. and afternoon/evening announcements will be made by 2:30 p.m.
• In the event an emergency occurs as defined herein as other than a severe weather emergency, announcements may be made as necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of members of the University and surrounding communities.
• Each Vice President shall develop procedures to inform their employees with hearing impairments of class cancellations and university closings.

Related Documents
• Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy 4.4 Weather / Short Term Emergency Closings.
• A sample of the document “Procedures for Class Cancellations or University Closings due to Severe Weather” is available upon request from the Director of Security.

Rationale

This policy outlines the decision making processes for the cancellation of classes or closure of the University in the case of weather or other emergency. Since the nature of emergencies varies, there is a need to determine with each occurrence, what services will be available and what events will take place as scheduled. Additionally, this policy recognizes the need to maintain the availability of essential services that support the safety and well-being of the campus community and the integrity and security of university facilities.