Emergency Policies

Emergency policies specific to Mayville State University are listed below.
Click on a link to go to each individual policy.

- [M1902- Emergency Notification System](#)

- [M1990- Unanticipated University Closings](#)

- [M1991-Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency](#)

M1902 **Emergency Notification System**

Mayville State University has an emergency notification system (ENS). This system allows the campus to contact students, employees, and designated people rapidly during an emergency. The emergency notification system is populated with contact information from students, employees, and on-campus external entities. The information contained in the ENS will be used by the authorized campus administrators to contact the above population in the event of a qualifying emergency.

1. Mayville State University mandates all employees participate in the emergency notification system. Employees are required to review their emergency notification information annually. In addition, employees will receive reminders twice a year to update their records. Emergency notification contact information includes campus email, campus phone, home phone, personal cellular phone, and work cellular phone. The physical plant director will gather emergency information from non-campus personnel associated with Head Start, Traill County Technology Center, MSU campus/county nurse, ARCH personnel, Mayville Police Department, Mayville Fire Department, and other 911 groups deemed appropriate.

2. Students will have the ability to add and update their information in the Connect ND portal. The portal will allow students to enter campus phone, cell phone, email, texting information, and home phone. The system will periodically remind students to review their information. In addition, students have the option to receive emergency notifications from other campuses depending on their class location. Students can "opt-out" of the emergency notification system in the Connect ND portal.

3. Students are allowed to leave cell phones on during class to receive emergency notifications unless instructed otherwise by faculty. If a faculty member instructs students to turn off their cell phones, the faculty member must be able to receive emergency notifications by one of the following methods:
    a. Registered personal cell phone that is turned on
    b. Registered campus email when a computer or other electronic communication device is active
    c. Campus classroom intercom or phone
    d. Nearby office personnel instructed to notify faculty

4. The emergency notification system is only for emergencies as defined in SBHE Policy 1902. An "emergency" means a situation that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of someone in the institution or system community or significantly disrupts institution or system programs and activities. Mayville State University's Emergency Management Team (EMT) is responsible for defining emergencies that warrant system use. The EMT is made up of the President, VP Academic Affairs, VP Student Affairs, VP Business Affairs, Public Relations Director, and the Webmaster. MSU will conduct ENS tests at least once each semester.

5. The ENS will be refreshed with information from Connect ND a minimum of once per semester. This removes data associated with former employees and students from the emergency notification system.

6. To eliminate misuse of the emergency notification system, access to deploy messages will be granted to the President, VP Academic Affairs, VP Business Affairs, VP Student Affairs, and the Physical Plant Director.

7. Students, employees, and visitors should report all emergency situations to the President, VP Academic Affairs, VP Student Affairs, VP Business Affairs, Athletic Director or the Physical Plant Office. One of those staff will contact the proper authorities.

8. During any emergency, MSU employees and students are asked to refer all media inquires to MSU's Public Relations Director or the President's Office.

9. Additional emergency notifications not outlined by EMT personnel, can be deployed if necessary by designated personnel. Campus emergency procedures are available online on the shared information drive. MSU will use campus email and website for detailed updates, in addition to redeploying of NotiFind.

10. Employee emergency notification telephone numbers or other emergency notification information is exempt from the state's open records laws as provided in SBHE Policy 1912 and may be released only as provided in that policy. Student emergency notification information, such as phone numbers or email addresses submitted for purposes of participation in an ENS, shall be excluded from directory information and is therefore confidential as provided under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, if a student phone number or email or other address submitted for the purpose of participation in an emergency notification system is also contained in other institutional records used for other purposes and the student has not exercised the student's right to refuse to permit disclosure of directory information, the information contained in the other institutional records is directory information and not confidential.

Established: January, 2009

Sponsor: Vice President for Business Affairs

M1990   **Unanticipated University Closings**

On occasion, the University closes due to weather-related conditions.

Closure due to winter weather: The most common reason for this is dangerous winter weather. Normally, the University is either open or closed. Only in some extraordinary circumstance might we "call off classes" and expect offices to be open. When the University is closed, so are related functions such as Head Start and Child Care. The President or a Vice President making the decision to close, notifies radio and television stations, sends and email notice to all students, staff, and faculty, and puts the campus announcement on the MSU Portal.

When the University closes, those whose duties must go on (such as food service when school is in session, or custodial and power plant functions) are encouraged to come in and work if it is reasonably safe for them to travel to the campus, whether they would normally be on duty at that time or not. If they are scheduled to be on duty but cannot travel safely, they should so notify their supervisor so that alternative arrangements may be made. Those who do work during a closure will be compensated accordingly, which may vary from one situation to another.

Those whose duties are not essential to campus life and safety or who cannot safely travel to campus will be paid as if it were a normal workday. They need not claim the day on their leave reports.

In the event of a power outage: The University participates in a cost-savings program with Xcel Power. In exchange for a lower rate, the University has agreed that the power company may shut off power to the University when the power is needed elsewhere. Most often, this happens on very hot summer days. Often, the University does not close on these occasions. If there is a closure announcement from the President or a Vice President, then the same guidelines regarding pay and leave apply as for a winter weather closing.

If the University does not close, those who are able to continue work without access to power are expected to continue working, perhaps shifting tasks for the time being to accommodate the loss of power. This might be a good time to offer to help someone else, too, if your own work cannot continue. If you cannot perform any useful service due to the power outage, your supervisor may excuse you under the same guidelines regarding pay and leave time as defined above for winter closures. If the situation is not clear-cut, one way or another; use your own judgment in consultation with your supervisor.

Reviewed: Fall, 2008

Sponsor: President's Cabinet

Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency

Should Mayville State University experience a pandemic or emergency situation that threatens to disrupt our instructional mission, we need to be prepared to respond. The MSU Cabinet would make the determination if a temporary suspension of classes or early ending of the semester is necessary and would notify the campus by the emergency notification system and conventional communication systems.

We can't predict every possible scenario but we can establish basic steps, use common sense and good judgment to deal with the unexpected. This should reduce uncertainty and anxiety among students and faculty.

We need to be prepared for higher than normal student absenteeism. Worst-case pandemic situations, which would be highly unlikely but need to be considered,: to order a mid-semester temporary suspension of classes to mitigate the spread of (example) influenza, or an early ending to the semester if social distancing is mandated by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or state/local health authorities.

Absenteeism can be as high as 30-40% during the peak of a pandemic. A question might arise as to the legitimacy of notifications of illness, particularly when health care providers are unlikely to provide written excuses (because people with symptoms of flu-like illness are generally being advised to avoid seeking health-care unless there are complicating factors).

It is important for you to take some specific steps so that you consider what you and your students need to know and do if MSU should be faced with a pandemic or emergency that affects the campus. MSU will need everyone's support if we are to meet our goal of maintaining continuity and quality of academic instruction, as well as student progress towards degree completion during a campus emergency.

The information below provides several strategies that will help you get started on your individual Continuity of Instruction planning. Timely implementation is highly recommended.

1. **Amend your syllabus and/or post in the learning management system (LMS) by adding a statement, that a university-wide emergency, such as a pandemic, may necessitate changes in the posted course structure. (MSU's LMS is Moodle)**

The addition to your syllabus alerts students to the possibility that their instructor may need to adjust course requirements or grading strategies in response to an emergency.

Statement: "In the event of a major campus emergency resulting in temporary suspension of classes or early ending to the semester; the course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages on the official syllabus are subject to change. I will notify you of such changes by email and/or by the campus learning management system (LMS) currently Moodle."

Since MSU provides all faculty with Tablet PCs, faculty have the capability to access campus email, the LMS and NDUS Campus Connection while on-campus and off-campus. The official class roster is in Campus Connection and final grades are assigned using this application. MSU's official method of communication is by email. The protocol may need to be clarified with students that they have a responsibility to inform you, the instructor when they become sick. Faculty have access to training if you are not familiar with these applications. It is your obligation to understand and have basic knowledge of these applications and use them as an instructional tool. MSU students have an obligation to use email, the LMS and Campus Connection for correspondence, course participation and student access to their academic record.

2. **All MSU courses have a LMS presence, which is ready for all faculty and students to use and may be essential to use during an emergency.**

The LMS allows instructors to load materials (readings, lecture notes, slides, assignments, exams) in advance and hold their release until a specific date. Should classes be suspended, the LMS will help you communicate with your students until classes resume. There is an obligation for all MSU faculty to have a basic understanding and use of the LMS as an instructional tool. If you need additional training or just a refresher, MSU Instructional Technologists are available to assist you.

3. **Examine your course attendance and "make-up" policies.**

In the event of a health emergency, it is in everyone's best interest that sick students not attend class. In addition, if there were a severe pandemic outbreak in which serious illness and mortality rates were higher than normal, individual students may have significant family responsibilities. For these reasons, we advise that you review your attendance and "make-up" policies and consider possible alternatives. Having a backup plan for use in an emergency will increase your flexibility and your ability to help students complete the semester. The LMS will allow you to conduct classes to students who are capable of attending class while providing instruction and materials to sick students. If a campus closure is necessary due to a pandemic or emergency, the LMS and email will allow faculty to continue with instruction to allow a continuity of instruction.

4. **Back up critical grading records.**

The LMS grade book and Excel spreadsheets may become unavailable under some emergency suspension situations. For peace of mind, instructors may want to have grades backed up somewhere secure and off-line. Consider a flash drive or spreadsheet printout. Keep FERPA requirements in mind, being sure the backup is kept secure so student privacy rights are not violated.

5. **Be prepared to work from home.**

In some emergency situations, university operations could be disrupted to the point of closing down campus office buildings. In the event that Mayville State or the North Dakota University System responds to a pandemic or emergency with an emergency closure, or if you yourself become sick, you may find it necessary to do more work from home. Consider making preparations that would enable you to work from home through an internet connection. It is also a good practice to have instructional materials ready to take home on short notice. Since all faculty and students have Tablet PCs, these materials can be stored on the Tablet PC and/or a flash drive. The LMS allows you to store your course materials and release them when appropriate. Also, the user features within the LMS and email will facilitate the transfer of course materials and the continuance of instruction.

Adopted: Fall, 2009

Sponsor: President's Cabinet