

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

I. APPLICATION

1.00 These procedures apply to Western's main campus, Ivey Spencer Leadership Centre and Continuing Studies.

Western's Research Parks will inform clients and tenants directly about their state of operations.

2.00 These procedures do not specifically apply to Western's Affiliated University Colleges, however, in most instances, the Affiliates follow the same course of action as Western.

3.00 If Western is closed or classes are suspended, Clerks, Residents, and Learners on Clinical Electives or Placements on rotations in hospitals or clinics are generally required to attend the clinic or location of their rotation. The location of the clinic or rotation may have differing weather conditions than those at Western or the Windsor Campus. For further information, please refer to the Guidelines on Student Travel Safety and the Resident Health and Safety Policy.

II. FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN A DECISION TO CLOSE THE UNIVERSITY OR HAVE A REDUCTION IN SERVICE

1.00 A decision to close the University shall take into consideration the safety of students and employees.

2.00 Factors to consider in the decision to close the University include but are not limited to:

- (i) State of emergency or impending state of emergency;
- (ii) Weather conditions;
- (iii) Road conditions;
- (iv) Availability of public transport;
- (v) Ability to access and use the campus safely;
- (vi) Ability to maintain campus in a safe condition;
- (vii) Ability of emergency services to access the campus; and
- (viii) Inability to anticipate the changing conditions which could worsen or persist for travel to and from campus.

3.00 Although these procedures have been developed primarily for closing or reducing activities/service as a result of hazardous weather conditions, they will also be followed in the event of any other conditions that require the closing or evacuation of the University.

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

III. TIMING

- 1.00 Every effort will be made to communicate a firm decision as early as possible. Ordinarily, a decision to open as usual or close the University will be made by:

Daytime operations	6:00am
Evening operations	2:30pm

- 2.00 The University will occasionally need to close after classes and business hours have started for the day. A decision to close during the day will specify whether the closing is “immediate” or at a stated hour. Unless otherwise specified, the closing continues from that hour until the beginning of work the next day. A class or examination taking place on campus that would continue past the specified closing hour is cancelled in its entirety.

IV. COMMUNICATION

- 1.00 The Vice President (Operations & Finance) or designate, will collaborate with the Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG), as appropriate in the circumstances, and direct Western Communications to inform the media of the specifics of a decision to close the University. No one other than Western Communications is authorized to contact the media about the decision to close the University. The information will be communicated via the University’s news website (<https://news.westernu.ca>), on the University’s home page <http://www.uwo.ca> and across Western’s core social media channels. Alert Western-U will also be utilized to communicate closure information.
- 2.00 The Vice-Presidents or designates will convey the decision for reduction in service or closure to their respective jurisdictions. The various Deans, Associate Vice-Presidents, Directors, and Budget Unit Heads will be responsible for notifying employees in their areas. Deans, Associate Vice-Presidents, Directors and Budget Unit Heads will have predetermined which employees are critical for operations and ensure that they are contacted accordingly.
- 3.00 Employees and students are responsible to check the University’s news website (<https://news.westernu.ca>), on the University’s home page <http://www.uwo.ca>, social media and/or Alert Western-U to determine if a decision to close or reduce activities/services has been made. Unless otherwise communicated by the University, Western should be considered open.
- 4.00 In recognition that not all students, faculty and staff have access to all communication methods, a variety of methods will be used.

Media Advisory

Western Communications will proactively issue a media advisory to local outlets advising them of any closure. Often, these advisories are shared by local media outlets. Media outlets provide additional awareness; however, we should not rely upon them to provide the most up-to-date or detailed announcements as we would provide on our own channels.

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

Alert Western-U

Alert Western-U is Western's emergency mass notification system. In the event of a campus closure, alerts will be issued to all campus community members via email or text.

Social Media

Closure notices and updates will also be posted to the University's official Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/WesternU>), Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/WesternUniversity>) and Instagram account (<https://www.instagram.com/westernuniversity/>).

- 5.00 In addition to the methods outlined above, individual departments may choose to contact staff through the use of phone trees, voice mail or email to provide more detailed information.
- 6.00 Messaging will include closure or activities/service reduction details and encourage the campus community to leave in a safe and orderly fashion, while exercising patience with one another. In the case of inclement weather, it will be made clear that a closure brings a reduction in services and limits access to some areas of campus but an immediate evacuation is not required.

V. SERVICES MAINTAINED DURING CLOSURE OR SERVICE REDUCTION

- 1.00 The University may need to keep certain facilities operating after a decision to close the University has been made. Some departments and services may have to continue total or partial operations depending on the circumstances. It can be anticipated that some or all of the employees in such departments may be asked to remain at work or be called in to work to provide emergency services. Operations during such closure may be reduced, but there are services that will be maintained, as applicable, for students, research, campus safety, and facilities. These include but are not limited to the following:
 - (i) Western Special Constable Service
 - (ii) Power Plant
 - (iii) Animal Care
 - (iv) Facilities Management
 - (v) Residences
 - (vi) Hospitality Services
 - (vii) Libraries
 - (viii) Health, Safety & Well-being
 - (ix) Western Technology Services
- 2.00 Employees required to report to work will be so designated by their department heads (or delegates) responsible for those services. Department Leaders/Managers are responsible for assigning duties to be carried out.
- 3.00 The provision of planned online services will continue at the discretion of the support unit leader.

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

VI. PREPAREDNESS

- 1.00 When circumstances warrant, a notice of closure, class cancellation or other change in operation status of the University will be issued in advance of conditions expected to have a significant impact on the University's normal operations.
- 2.00 When there is appropriate lead time and circumstances warrant, consideration will be given to issuing an advisory on the University home page regarding a "weather watch" (or other emergency situation) that is being monitored for impact on the University's normal operations.

VII. NON-CLOSURE

- 1.00 Weather conditions can sometimes be intimidating even though the University remains open. Employees who live at some distance from the University campus may be particularly affected. Consistent with any applicable collective agreement, time not worked due to weather conditions, but when the University is open, will be accounted for through vacation time, accumulated time, personal leave day, emergency unpaid leave or flexible working hours/arrangements.
- 2.00 When Western University does not close in severe weather, the University will strive to ensure the safety and accessibility of the campus. Entranceways to all buildings and all accessibility paths will be cleared on a priority basis. Please refer to: www.uwo.ca/fm for priority snow clearance paths. Individual circumstances vary widely and, when the University remains open during severe weather, those who judge that it may be unsafe to come to campus should discuss alternate work and study arrangements with their instructor or supervisor.
- 3.00 Faculty (instructors) who are not able to reach the campus to conduct their classes, or unable to continue with online classes, should inform their students as soon as possible by whatever means is appropriate (announcement on course homepage, email, etc.). In the event that students miss examinations or graded coursework due to severe weather, they may seek academic consideration through the Academic Counselling unit in their Home Faculty.
- 4.00 Graduate Teaching Assistants who are not able to reach the campus for their scheduled work must notify their course instructor and endeavor, whenever possible, to find a suitable replacement and determine how to make up missed hours.
- 5.00 Staff members will inform their Department Leader/Manager as soon as possible if they will not be present at work that day.

VIII. CLOSURE

- 1.00 The University will close when there is a situation that makes it extremely difficult or dangerous for students, faculty, or staff to inhabit University facilities, remain at, or travel to the University.
- 2.00 In addition to Section 1.00, the University will close when the President determines that closure is appropriate in the circumstances.

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

- 3.00 Service reductions on campus (i.e., of selected buildings or activities) may take place from time to time and may result in staff being moved to other facilities on campus.
- 4.00 The University may close for part of the day to allow for the snow or ice removal of parking lots and to give individuals more time to reach the campus.
- 5.00 When a decision to close has been made, such a decision will specify whether the closing is “immediate” or at a stated hour and will be posted to Western’s homepage. Local broadcast, web and social media can be expected to carry the announcement.
- 6.00 At the hour designated for closing, employees (except those identified to provide services by their leader as outlined in Section IV 1.00 above) are entitled to leave without loss of pay (see section titled “Employee Compensation”). As seems reasonable, a Department Leader/Manager may give permission for employees to leave sooner.
- 7.00 A class or examination taking place on campus that starts before the specified closing hour can continue no later than the specified closing time.

IX. CLOSING OUTSIDE NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS of 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

- 1.00 If weather conditions justify closing the campus during late evening, so that any night shift staff are not required to come to work, the decision will be made by the Vice-President, Operations & Finance, or designate, in collaboration with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and the appropriate communication procedure will be initiated. Such a closing is effective until the next morning, by which time a decision will be made whether the University will be closed for any portion of the following day.
- 2.00 If weather conditions justify the closing of the campus on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the Vice-President, Operations & Finance, or designate, in collaboration with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic will notify the appropriate individuals to ensure that the closure is communicated through the appropriate channels.

X. CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

- 1.00 In some circumstances, where it is deemed safe to remain open, it may be decided to cancel some or all classes. In this situation, no student will be academically penalized for being unable to attend campus.
- 2.00 Where classes have been cancelled, but the University remains open, all employees will make reasonable efforts to fulfill their regularly scheduled responsibilities at the University.
- 3.00 Western offers classes at various off-campus locations. In some circumstances, classes in these off-campus locations may be cancelled due to the closure of those facilities, while the Western campus remains unaffected. Alternatively, circumstances may allow classes to be held at off-campus locations, while the Western campus is closed.

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

XI. CANCELLED EXAMINATIONS

- 1.00 Cancelled formal tests or examinations will be rescheduled in the event that the University is closed.

XII. ONLINE LEARNING & EXAMINATIONS

- 1.00 In some circumstances, scheduled online learning and assessments will continue to take place at the discretion of the instructor. The expectation is that most previously scheduled online class activities will continue in the event of inclement weather.

XIII. SPECIAL EVENTS

- 1.00 Where campus facilities are rented for functions on the date of a closure, the University department responsible for the rental will notify the event organizer. The event organizer is responsible for communicating the cancellation to participants.

XIV. STRANDED INDIVIDUALS

- 1.00 An individual stranded on campus as a result of a decision to close the University should contact Western Special Constable Service for assistance.

XV. SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

- 1.00 The University recognizes that employees with accessibility issues may require assistance during a closure. Employees have a responsibility for requesting accommodation including identifying, where possible, the types of accommodation they consider appropriate. These employees are encouraged to contact their Department Leader/Manager to discuss any related needs, and to arrange for reasonable and appropriate accommodation.
- 2.00 Department Leaders/Managers also have a responsibility to initiate the process where they are aware that an employee, who is a member of an identified group, has a need for accommodation due to a characteristic and is prevented because of the characteristic from requesting the accommodation. In this case, the Department Leader/Manager shall obtain the consent of the employee to proceed.
- 3.00 All requests for such accommodation shall be documented by the Department Leader/Manager and copied to Human Resources. (hrhelp@uwo.ca)

XVI. EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

- 1.00 In instances when the University is closed, or there is a reduction in services under this policy, employees otherwise scheduled for in-person activities or work on university property will not suffer a loss in salary for lost time incurred. Those who are required to work to maintain services to the community during any period of closure will be paid in accordance with their collective or employment agreement.
- 2.00 Despite the foregoing, 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 closure was announced.

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

XVII. LIMITATIONS

- 1.00 These procedures 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 or closure, but it is possible that not all individuals will receive notification despite these efforts.

XVIII. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 1.00 The Special Constable on-duty is responsible to gather all relevant information, monitor the situation on an ongoing basis, and report to the Director Western Special Constable Service, Vice President, Operations & Finance, AVP Facilities Management and Manager Landscape Services in a timely fashion.
- 2.00 While every effort will be made to conduct thorough consultations before a closing decision is made, consultations may be limited in the interest of a speedy and efficient closing decision.
- 3.00 The University relies on the advice and warnings of:
 - London Police
 - London Transit
 - Provincial/Municipal transportation representatives
 - Environment Canada
 - Emergency Measures Organizations (EMO)
 - Middlesex London Health Unit
 - The closure of other businesses and schools in the local area will also be taken into consideration

XIV. RETURN TO NORMAL OPERATIONS

- 1.00 After the situation has normalized, the University will return to normal operations as soon as possible.
- 2.00 When it is safe to do so, some University operations may re-open or provide limited operations, prior to the rest of campus.
- 3.00 When the decision is made to return to normal operations, the same communications processes outlined for a closure will be followed

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.14 – Emergency Service Reduction or Closure

APPENDIX A – ELECTRONIC CLOSURE MESSAGES (EXAMPLES)

While difficult to predict the exact situation that may arise, the following messages illustrate the sequence of announcements that could be used in a weather-related University closing situation:

Sample Message 1 – No Closure/Cancellation

There are no closures or cancellations to report at this time.

Sample Message 2 – Classes are cancelled / University is open

The University is open; however, classes and examinations on campus are cancelled for (day/month/year). Online course activities may proceed at the discretion of the instructor. All employees are requested to report to work. This message will be updated by (time), if the situation changes. Students are advised to monitor the main Western website for updates. We remind members of the Western community and visitors to the University to exercise proper caution when traveling in winter conditions.

Sample Message 3 - University Has Delayed Opening

As of (time on date) the University has delayed opening until (insert time) due to weather conditions. This message will be updated by (time) if the situation changes.

Sample Message 4 - University is Closed

As of (time on date) the University is closed due to weather conditions. This message will be updated by (time), if the situation changes.

Sample Message 5 – University is open/ outage building closure

The University is open. However, all classes held in the (bldg. name) building have been cancelled until (date/time) due to a temporary power outage. All updates will be posted to this website.

Sample Message 6 - University is Closed but most online course activities will continue

As of (time on date) the University campus is closed due to weather conditions. Online course activities may proceed at the discretion of the instructor. This message will be updated by (time), if the situation changes.