Inclement Weather Policy

Category: Operations and General Administration
Responsibility: Vice-President Finance & Administration

Approval: Senior Administrative Council

Approval Date:

Issue Date: November 18, 2008

Next Review:

INTRODUCTION

The University will "close" because of severe weather when normal operation would pose a significant danger to students, staff, faculty and the community in attending classes or other activities held at the St. Catharines and/or Hamilton campuses.

The St. Catharines campus includes the main and east campus, Rodman Hall and the Brock Research and Innovation Centre.

It should be noted that given the variation in weather activity between Niagara and Hamilton, there may be situations in which one of the campuses is not affected and can continue with normal operations.

Concerns over safety while on campus and in traveling to and from the campus will be paramount to the University's decision to close. In addition, in making decisions to close, the University will recognize the impact that other closures in the region have for our faculty, staff and students. With those factors in mind, decisions will be based on a variety of information such as:

- Weather reports from Environment Canada
- Accessibility of campus roadways and parking lots
- Reports of road and highway conditions for Niagara and Hamilton
- Status of public transportation
- Closing of school boards, Niagara College as well as other businesses and services

In this policy "inclement weather" refers to severe weather conditions involving snow, rain, wind and/or ice. If the event severe weather conditions are sustained over a period of time, this policy may be overridden by the Emergency Response Management Plan.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

 To co-ordinate information gathering, decision-making and action when the policy is enacted; • To communicate effectively and in a timely manner to the campus community and to the broader community when circumstances threaten to interrupt the normal operations of the University.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Brock University departments and faculties.

DEFINITION OF CLOSING

Closing the University is defined as:

- Classes are not held;
- Meetings and other scheduled community events are cancelled. Any exceptions will be communicated via the Brock website and/or local radio stations;
- All areas and operations not defined as "essential" are closed;
- Examinations scheduled on the day or evening of a closing are cancelled, and rescheduled;
- Deadlines for assignments and other submissions are postponed until the same hour of the next academic day on which the University is not "closed."

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

As the home of 2,400 students living in campus residences, the University is responsible for maintaining essential services necessary for the care of these students and for the protection of life and property throughout emergency closing. The following is defined as "essential services" to be kept in operation during weather-related closing:

- Food service in the residences
- Campus security services
- Facilities management
- Animal care
- Residence and conference services
- Emergency repair and maintenance
- Telecommunications
- Marketing and Communications

Staff to provide essential services will be so designated by the department heads (or delegates) responsible for those services. Department heads are responsible for assigning duties to be carried out and making reasonable arrangements for the protection of essential staff. Department heads are expected to show flexibility and, so far as possible, sensitivity to individuals" needs in assigning duties for "essential

services."

The designation of other essential services must be approved by the department head.

Any employee working in a position identified as "essential services" will continue to perform his/her duties when the University closes unless notified by their supervisor that they are free to leave.

PROCEDURES

Decision to Close

The decision to close the University will be made by the President or Acting President. That decision will be based on a recommendation made to the President by the Vice-President, Finance and Administration following the consultation process outlined below:

In the event the maintenance and operations crew advises that it cannot manage the result of inclement weather in a way that allows for the safe continuation of normal university operations and/or safe access to and from the campus, the Executive Director of Facilities Management will consult with the Director of Campus Security who will contact the local school boards, Niagara College, the Niagara Regional Police Service, Environment Canada Weather Services and St. Catharines Transit.

The Associate Vice President (AVP) of University Marketing and Communications (in his/her absence, the Communications Officer, University Marketing and Communications) will monitor media outlets and report information to the Vice-President, Finance and Administration. Similarly, Campus Security will report information to the Vice-President, Finance and Administration (in his/her absence, the Vice-President, Academic).

The Vice-President, Finance and Administration, calls the President (in his/her absence, the Vice President, Academic) with a recommendation. The decision is made and communicated by the Vice-President, Finance and Administration to the Associate Vice President of University Marketing and Communications.

Based on the decision, the AVP, University Marketing and Communications will release announcements to media outlets and make arrangements for information to be posted on the Brock homepage, portal and recorded for the auto-attendant messaging system. **Every effort will be taken to communicate the decision by 7:00 a.m.**

Based on the decision, the AVP, Marketing and Communications will release one of the following announcements utilizing the attached media plan. Release by 7:00 a.m.

A) Despite inclement weather (or other events), Brock University will be open today and classes will be held. A decision on evening classes, events and activities will be

announced by 3 p.m.

B) Due to inclement weather, Brock University is closed and classes are cancelled for the day. For information on other University programs, events and activities please check with the organizers.

Individual faculty, staff, and students are responsible for checking the Brock website, portal, and/or telephone switchboard, and to listen for local radio station announcements of closures at the University.

In the absence of a communicated decision to close, the University remains open and all activities continue as planned. At all times, individuals should assess their personal safety in deciding whether to come to work or class.

Change of Status During the Day

When inclement weather or other events could challenge the functioning of the University during the day, the Executive Director of Facilities Management will consult with the Director of Campus Security who will contact the local school boards, Niagara College, the Niagara Regional Police Service, Environment Canada Weather Services and St. Catharines Transit.

The AVP, University Marketing and Communications (in his/her absence, the Communications Officer, University Marketing and Communications) will monitor media outlets and report information to the Vice-President, Finance and Administration. Campus Security will then advise the Vice-President, Finance and Administration (Vice-President, Academic, in his/her absence) in time to announce a decision by 3 p.m.

The Vice-President, Finance and Administration, calls the President (in his/her absence, the Vice President, Academic) with a recommendation. The decision is made and communicated by the Vice-President, Finance and Administration, to the AVP, University Marketing and Communications prior to 3 p.m.

Evening classes are those that begin as of 5:00 p.m.

Based on the decision, the AVP, University Marketing and Communications will release one of the following announcements utilizing the attached media plan.

- Despite inclement weather (or other events), Brock University will hold classes this evening.
- Due to inclement weather (or other events), evening classes at Brock University are cancelled. For information on other University programs, events and activities please check with the organizers.
- Due to inclement weather (or other events), evening classes at Brock University

are cancelled, as are all campus events and activities.

Closing outside of normal business hours:

If weather conditions justify closing the campus during the late evening, so that night shift staff are not required to come to work, the decision will be made by the Vice President, Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Executive Director of Facilities Management and the Director of Campus Security, who will notify the Director of University Marketing and Communications. The AVP, University Marketing and Communications will initiate the appropriate communication procedure. Such a closing is effective until the next morning (no later than 7:00 a.m.) by which time a decision will be made whether the University will be closed any portion of the following day.

If weather conditions justify the closing of the campus on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the Vice President, Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Executive Director of Facilities Management and the Director of Campus Security, will notify the AVP, University Marketing and Communications.

Non-Closure

Weather conditions can sometimes be intimidating even though the University remains open. Staff living some distance from the campus can be particularly affected. Consistent with any applicable collective agreement, time not worked due to storm conditions, but when the University is open, will be accounted for through leaves available in the conditions of employment.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

The AVP, University Marketing and Communications (in his/her absence, the Communications Officer, University Marketing and Communications) will initiate the following communication during a change of status for the University. In all cases, local radio and television stations play a key role in informing the Brock community and the general public about changes to the normal operation of the University.

Decision to close prior to 7:00 a.m.

- Notify Campus Security of the decision;
- Notify the local media by 7:00 a.m.;
- Activate the switchboard auto-attendant messaging system with the relevant message;
- Campus Security will post notices around the campus at main entrances and in other key areas;
- Place a weather alert notice on the Brock Home Page with a link to the "News" page for details.

Change of status during the day, no later than 3:00 p.m.

- Notify Campus Security of the decision;
- Notify the local media by 3:00 p.m.;
- Activate the switchboard auto-attendant messaging system with the relevant message;
- Send a message to all administrative phone users on campus.
- Campus Security will post notices around the campus at main entrances and in other areas and will communicate directly with staff in key areas of the University;
- Departments will post notices in their work areas;
- Send a list serve e-mail to all computer users on campus and post a bulletin on the Brock portal;
- Place a weather alert notice on the Brock Home Page with a link to the "News" page for details;
- Send a Cable TV Channel 10 alert to all Brock cable users through Telecommunications and Network Services.

Decision to close outside of normal business hours

- Notify Campus Security of the decision;
- Notify the local media by 9:00 a.m.;
- Activate the switchboard auto-attendant messaging system with the relevant message;
- Send a message to all administrative phone users on campus.
- Campus Security will post notices around the campus at main entrances and in other areas and will communicate directly with staff in key areas of the University;
- Departments will post notices in their work areas;
- Send a list serve e-mail to all computer users on campus and post a bulletin on the Brock portal;
- Place a weather alert notice on the Brock Home Page with a link to the "News" page for details;

The following local media outlets will be notified in the event Brock University closes due to inclement weather.

AM Radio

CKTB 610 CHSC 1220 OLDIES 1150 CHML 900 CHAM 820

CFBU Brock Radio 103.7

FM Radio

CHTZ 97.7 CHRE 105.7 CKEY The River 105.1 GIANT 91.7 COUNTRY 95 95.3 KLITE 102.9 Y108 107.9

Television

CHTV

Channel 11