



## **POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT**

NUMBER: 0.2010/4.2600

DIVISION: Academic Affairs and Department of Human Resources

TITLE: Inclement Weather and Attendance Policy

DATE: March 3, 2015

REVISED: February 8, 2023

AUTHORIZED: Robert Fischer, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Andrea Sherrill, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources & Chief  
Human Resources Officer

### **I. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose and scope of this policy are to prescribe actions to be taken during periods of inclement weather that affect one or more of the WKU campuses and delineate policy to address classes missed because of compliance with the actions described herein. During inclement weather, online classes will continue as scheduled.

### **II. Policy**

In the event of inclement weather, the university will address how such conditions may affect the overall operations of the institution. In general, the university must continue certain operations during periods of inclement weather to meet the needs of students, the requirements of ongoing research activities, and other factors. The university recognizes, however, the need to exercise caution for the welfare of the university community, including all faculty, students, and staff, during adverse weather conditions, as set forth in this policy. Because many university operations continue 24 hours a day, seven days a week, this policy is applicable to all seven days of operation.

#### **A. Posting of Inclement Weather Information**

Communications and Marketing will use a variety of venues to communicate any decisions to alter normal schedules. These will be communicated to the campus via text alert and e-mail and all information will be posted on the WKU web site. Communication methods include: 1. Emergency text message, 2. WKU web site, 3. Campus-wide e-mail, 4. Social media (Facebook, Twitter), and 5. Selected news media (primarily radio and TV).

## B. Essential Personnel

In the event any campus is closed, division leaders are responsible for designating and notifying personnel who are considered essential and should still report to work. Each division should have a plan in place and be ready to implement. Departments may develop and implement additional policies concerning requirements for “essential personnel” during periods of inclement weather, consistent with this policy.

1. Non-exempt employees designated as essential personnel who report to work at their scheduled time when the university is closed due to inclement conditions will receive their regular rate of pay plus time and one-half for any hours worked.
2. Departments may adjust the work schedules of exempt and non-exempt employees who are designated as weather essential in response to inclement weather situations.
3. The absence of any exempt or non-exempt employee who is designated as essential but does not work during an inclement weather event will be considered unexcused, and therefore would not qualify for additional compensation as outlined above.
4. Only employees designated as weather or event essential personnel will receive additional compensation when the university’s operating status is affected by inclement weather.

## C. Class Cancellation (Weather Related and Other)

Faculty members should notify students of class cancellations whether for weather delays, if the university is closed, or for any other reasons. Faculty should notify the main department office of any class cancellations not caused by an official university decision.

Faculty should provide written instructions in all syllabi to inform students of the procedures for learning continuity when a class has been cancelled for any reason. For example, a professor could require viewing of videos, additional reading and/or written assignments in place of the class.

Faculty are expected to ensure that course content is not materially affected by any cancelled classes. To ensure compliance with the federal definition of the credit hour (WKU policy 1.4034 that defines how WKU interprets 34 CFR 600.2), instructors are expected to make up missed class time using recorded lectures, assignments, readings, and/or instructional materials. If inclement weather prevents a student from safely attending class, an instructor should provide the opportunity to make up work without penalty.

## D. Final Examinations

If the university is closed due to inclement weather or there is a weather delay or early dismissal during a final examination day, the university will reschedule any cancelled

final examinations except asynchronous **online exams, which will continue as scheduled.**

### III. Procedures

#### A. Delaying Opening, Closing Campus, or Closing Early

##### 1. Bowling Green Campus

- a. In the event of severe storm damage or winter weather conditions, the Director of Facilities Management, the WKU Police Chief, and the Director of Environmental Health & Safety or their respective designees will survey the condition of the campus and make a recommendation to the Provost regarding campus operations.
- b. The Provost will discuss with the President and will finalize the decision to cancel part or all of classes, to open late, or to close the University.
- c. The Provost will communicate the decision to Communications and Marketing no later than 5:30 a.m. for day classes and 12:00 p.m. for evening classes.
- d. Communications and Marketing will begin the notification process via emergency text alert, web site, campus-all email, social media, and appropriate news media.
- e. Communications and Marketing will consult with Campus and Community Events and Athletics to include information about major events impacted by the situation.

##### 2. Regional Campuses

- a. The Director for Regional Campuses, or a locally based representative appointed by the Director of Regional Campuses, will survey local and area conditions, and communicate decisions to open, close, or cancel classes at those campuses with Communications and Marketing.
- b. In the event a host KCTCS institution closes (e.g., Elizabethtown), the associated WKU campus will also close. Communications and Marketing will work with KCTCS institutions to include information about both in media announcements.
- c. The Director for Regional Campuses will inform Communications and Marketing, who will begin the notification process and will collaborate with the Director for Regional Campuses to notify appropriate news media. Regional campus contacts will also use their web sites and social media to communicate the decision.
- d. Since regional campuses draw from a wide area, decisions should be made no later than 5:30 a.m. local time for day classes and 12:00 p.m. local time for evening classes.

### 3. Weekends

- a. If inclement weather occurs during a weekend, university officials will determine if a delayed opening, early dismissal, or closure is necessary, as applicable to weekend operations.

### 4. Athletics and Other Special Events

- a. Upon the determination of the Athletic Director, in consultation with appropriate University officials, certain previously scheduled special events such as athletic contests may be conducted during times of university closure. Event essential personnel will be expected to report to work as regularly scheduled, unless otherwise directed by their supervisor. In coordination with Communications and Marketing, the university department responsible for such events shall provide public information regarding event status.

## B. Operating Status and Employee Attendance

Occasionally, due to inclement weather, the University will adjust its operating status. In general, inclement weather may affect the operating status of the university in three ways as detailed below:

1. Fully Open with Precautions - Although the university generally expects all employees to make every reasonable effort to come to work, on occasions when the university is open during inclement weather, each employee must exercise their personal judgement on whether it is possible and safe to report to work.
  - a. Supervisors must be notified of anticipated late arrival or absences. During extreme or hazardous conditions, employees will not be penalized (no loss of pay or charge to vacation time) for any tardiness up to one (1) hour after their scheduled starting time.
  - b. Employees who are unable to safely arrive at work will be given the option of (1) working remotely from home where applicable OR (2) not receiving pay for the period of absence OR (3) using accumulated vacation time to be charged against the absence OR (4) making up the lost time during the same workweek as approved by their supervisor/department head. Absences due to inclement weather will be treated as an "excused absence."
  - c. Any employee (exempt or non-exempt) on vacation or medical (sick) leave shall not be required to use accumulated leave for any hours/days when the University is officially closed (delayed or dismissed early) due to hazardous conditions.
2. Delayed Opening - During a delayed opening, university officials will publicly announce the specific time at which the University will open. All on campus academic classes regularly scheduled to begin prior to the delayed opening time will be cancelled and will not meet; all remaining day and evening classes will commence at their regularly scheduled time.

Under a delayed opening, the delayed opening time will apply to all on campus university classes, offices and regular business operations and will be determined with each incident of inclement weather.

- a. Employees designated as “essential personnel” should report by their regularly scheduled start time regardless of the announced delayed opening, unless advised otherwise by their supervisor. Those employees designated as essential personnel who work in a non-exempt position will receive their regular rate of pay plus time and one-half for hours worked prior to the University’s delayed opening time.
  - b. All offices and regular business operations will open at the specified delayed time.
  - c. Employees who are not identified as “essential personnel” are expected to arrive at work by the designated opening time and will receive their regular rate of pay for their scheduled hours.
  - d. Students shall not suffer any academic penalty that is a direct result of classes not held due to an inclement weather event or campus closing at the campus where the missed class was scheduled.
  - e. To ensure compliance with the federal definition of the credit hour (APS 1200.40), instructors are expected to make up missed class time using recorded lectures, assignments, readings, instructional materials, or other alternative forms of instruction. **Online classes will continue as scheduled.**
3. Early Dismissal - In the event of an “Early Dismissal,” the University will cease all on campus academic classes and regular business operations at a publicly announced time. In such an event, all remaining on campus day and evening classes will be cancelled after the specified time.

The designated early dismissal time for on campus university classes, offices and business operations will be determined with each incident of inclement weather and followed consistently.

- a. “Essential personnel” are expected to remain at work as regularly scheduled, unless otherwise directed by their supervisor. Any non-exempt employees determined to be essential who are required to work following the official closure of the University shall be paid their regular rate of pay plus time and one-half for hours worked.
- b. Employees who are not identified as “essential personnel” will be dismissed and receive their regular rate of pay for the remainder of their scheduled workday. Non-essential employees who have shifts beginning after the designated early dismissal time should not report to work and will receive their regular rate of pay for their scheduled hours.
- c. Students shall not suffer any academic penalty that is a direct result of classes not held due to an inclement weather event or campus closing at the campus where the missed class was scheduled.

- d. To ensure compliance with the federal definition of the credit hour (APS 1200.40), instructors are expected to make up missed class time using recorded lectures, assignments, readings, instructional materials, or other alternative forms of instruction. **Online classes will continue as scheduled.**
  - e. Normal university operations, including all academic classes and regular business operations, will commence at the regularly scheduled time on the next workday, unless otherwise noted.
4. Closure - In the event of a "Closure," all on campus day and evening classes will be cancelled.
- a. "Essential personnel" are expected to report to work as regularly scheduled, unless otherwise directed by their supervisor. Any non-exempt employees who are required to work because of their essential responsibilities will be paid their regular rate of pay plus time and one-half for hours worked. At the discretion of the supervisor/department chair, time off at the rate of time and one-half may be given in lieu of overtime pay. If time off is awarded in lieu of pay, it must be used by the employee during the same workweek.
  - b. If inclement weather conditions warrant a decision to cancel on campus classes and close offices and regular business operations, employees who have not been designated as "essential personnel" should not report to work and will be granted paid administrative leave during the official closure period and receive their regular rate of pay for their scheduled hours.
  - c. Students shall not suffer any academic penalty that is a direct result of classes not held due to an inclement weather event or campus closing at the campus where the missed class was scheduled.
  - d. To ensure compliance with the federal definition of the credit hour (APS 1200.40), instructors are expected to make up missed class time using recorded lectures, assignments, readings, and/or instructional materials. **Online classes will continue as scheduled.**
  - e. All offices and regular business operations will be closed.
  - f. Normal university operations, including all on campus academic classes and business operations, will commence at the regularly scheduled time on the next workday.

### **VIII. Related Policies**

Policy 1.4034 *Engagement Requirements for Hour of Credit*

Policy 1.4063 *Course Syllabi*

## **IX. Reason for Revision**

Policies 0.2010 and 4.2600 were last updated in 2015 and needed to be updated for SACSCOC. In looking at the policies it was determined by the committee that they could be combined and information pertaining to inclement weather and employee attendance be clarified. If the proposed policy is accepted the two related policies would be deleted.