

Loyola University New Orleans Academic Affairs Continuity of Operations Plan

I. Introduction

- A.** What follows are general guidelines based on the experiences of Loyola University's faculty, staff, students, and administrators in emergency situations both longer and shorter term. Obviously, no plan can cover every contingency. Each emergency may present a different set of unforeseeable challenges for the city and the university. These guidelines are meant to be just that - a set of prescribed actions that are meant to cover the foreseeable scenarios and to help with decision-making in those unforeseen circumstances. As decisions and exceptions must be made as new challenges present themselves, persons at each level should make decisions that at least follow the intent of these guidelines, if not the exact directions.
- B.** Each vice president is responsible for developing specific plans that provide requirements and guidance to aid in the safe and effective management of their operations in an emergency situation. These individual plans are part of the university's overall emergency response plan.

The Office of Academic Affairs has primary responsibility for instructional activities. The guidelines in this document are intended to ensure the continuity of instruction in the event of an evacuation or suspension of on campus operations.

- C.** [Emergency Plans](#) as well as Continuity of Operations Plans are activated when the campus is evacuated or campus operations are suspended. The procedures for continuation of instruction are basically the same for either an evacuation or suspension of campus operations.

II. Complete Evacuation Overview

- A.** In an evacuation, all on-campus operations cease. All faculty, staff and students are instructed to leave campus. An evacuation will be ordered by the president.

Evacuation may occur as a result of an imminent hurricane calling for a complete evacuation or from a more local, area-specific emergency such as a hazardous material (HAZMAT) scenario, for example, material (flammable or poisonous material) that would be a danger to life or to the environment if released without precautions.

During hurricane-driven situations, the decision to evacuate will ordinarily precede the evacuation of the city or the neighborhoods adjacent to the university.

- B. During hurricane evacuation forcing the relocation of the student body, all campus buildings will be locked and access strictly prohibited until the threat passes and safety has been confirmed by the Emergency Manager (EM), Physical Plant, Loyola Police, and University President. Depending on the storm's trajectory, speed, and expected landfall, laboratory science faculty may be allowed access to labs until a specific time prior to landfall, provided access has been approved in advance by the dean, provost, and EM in consultation with Physical Plant and University Police. However, once the evacuation of the campus is complete, access will only be allowed once the storm has passed and safety is restored.
- C. Faculty and students are expected to evacuate and be prepared to continue instruction by distance learning through the Learning Management System (LMS - currently Canvas), and completion of reading, writing, or other assignments specified by the course instructor on the course syllabi. Classes will resume operations within 48-72 hours.
Online courses and programs will typically continue normal operations. In the event that online operations are also disrupted due to the emergency, they will resume operations within 48-72 hours. Faculty teaching in online programs, in consultation with their respective deans, will notify their students of changes in availability while faculty members are traveling to their evacuation destinations.

III. Suspension of Campus Operations Overview

- A. Campus operations may be suspended when external conditions on or around campus are unsafe, but not severe enough to evacuate. Faculty and staff will be directed to leave campus by a specific time. Only personnel designated by the EM may remain on campus after suspension goes into effect.
- B. Residential students will continue to be housed on campus in locations designated by the Office of Student Affairs in consultation with the EM.
- C. During a suspension of campus operations, all academic and administrative buildings will be closed and locked. Laboratory science faculty may be allowed access to labs when access has been approved in advance by the dean, provost, and emergency manager in consultation with Physical Plant and University Police. Access will only be allowed when it is safe. If power failure occurs, buildings must be checked individually to ensure life-safety equipment is fully operational before any access to any building is granted.
- D. **On campus classes** will continue instruction in distance learning mode utilizing the LMS, and completion of reading, writing or other assignments specified by the course instructor or on the course syllabi. Courses will resume within 48-72 hours.
- E. **Online courses and programs** will continue normal operations. In the event that online operations are also disrupted due to the emergency, they will resume operations within 48-72 hours. Faculty teaching in online programs, in consultation with their deans, will notify their students of changes in their availability.

IV. Assumptions

- A. Academic Affairs will be directed by, and its activities will be consistent with, the overall university emergency plan.
- B. Members of the Provost's Council will review the Academic Affairs Continuity of Operations Plan at least once a year and share the plan with all faculty and AA staff.
- C. Academic Affairs will provide training during new faculty orientation through the Center for Teaching, Research, and Learning.
- D. The university will not close during an evacuation or suspension of on-campus operations; academic instruction will continue in a distance learning mode.
- E. Student enrollment and contact with students will be maintained.
- F. Faculty and staff will check in with their deans or supervisors within 48 hours of an evacuation. All units will maintain and distribute current contact information, including all faculty and staff cell phone numbers. Loyola official email will be the primary contact with faculty and staff.
- G. All faculty, staff, and students will keep their personal contact information up-to-date in Colleague.
- H. All faculty and instructional staff will make course materials and assignments available through the LMS for each of their courses.
- I. Students will be required to keep up with course assignments within 48 hours of evacuation or suspension of on-campus operations. The provost may ask faculty and students to move to distance teaching and learning prior to an evacuation or suspension of campus operations in order to facilitate and ensure a safe transition.
- J. Deans will use their discretion to cover courses with absent/unprepared instructors due to disaster/emergency events as per the Faculty Handbook.
- K. Academic rules and regulations will remain in force during an evacuation or suspension of on campus operations. Any changes to academic regulations (e.g., Pass/Fail grading) will be approved by relevant academic committees and published as a University Bulletin addendum. These changes will be communicated by the provost to faculty and students.
- L. The university will update the existing emergency [website](#) as soon as possible before or after an evacuation or suspension of on campus operations and provide students and employees with ongoing updates.
- M. All campus buildings will be locked during an evacuation or suspension of campus operations. Except for lab science faculty that made advance arrangements, requests for building access will be denied until campus operations resume. In very limited circumstances faculty/staff may request access to their offices through their dean or provost, but this access must be approved by the Emergency Manager to ensure safety.
- N. Direct communication with faculty, staff and students will be made using the Everbridge app, Cadence/Mongoose (for students), and Canvas Global Announcements.

V. Instructional Responsibilities and Enrollment Policies

- A. The university will adjust the academic calendar as necessary to adhere to accreditation and federal financial aid requirements.
- B. If an evacuation or suspension of campus operations takes place, the University has the right to alter or extend terms/schedules in order to ensure academic compliance. Faculty may also conduct make-up classes via the LMS (or other alternative instructional methods as approved by their unit head, chair, director, or dean) as instructed by the provost and deans. All grades, lectures, and assignments must be maintained in the LMS to ensure course continuity in the event that a faculty member is not able to fulfill their teaching duties as a result of the emergency.
- C. **On Campus Instruction:** Instruction of on campus courses will continue during an evacuation/suspension through distance education and will be maintained in all courses as follows:

Within 48-72 hours of an evacuation, instruction will continue in all courses via the LMS except those specifically designated by the dean as not appropriate for extended distance education (e.g., science lab courses, private music instruction, studio classes, practicum). Examples of teaching pedagogies appropriate for distance education during an emergency include pre-recorded video lectures, slide presentations, interactive assignments such as voluntary (but recorded) synchronous discussions, or reading and writing assignments. Assessments should be made available on the LMS with clear directions. It is assumed that all faculty will learn how to use the LMS *before* an emergency occurs (such as by working through the material in the university Canvas 101 course).

Students enrolled in courses designated inappropriate for extended distance learning will be assigned a grade of IP in those courses within a reasonable time period from the date of the emergency. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that grades of IP do not negatively impact students' time to graduation.

- D. **Fully Online Programs and Course Instruction** Instruction in all online courses will continue on the LMS given the guidelines for both faculty and students below.
 - 1. Students in an area impacted by an emergency event: As with traditional students, online students impacted by an emergency event will be required to keep up with course participation and assignments within 48 hours. Online students impacted by an emergency event will be given seven (7) days to contact their instructors if any additional support is required. Students impacted by catastrophic events prohibiting communication will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by their respective dean.

If a student cannot access a course within 48 hours of a non-Loyola

emergency event, the faculty member will develop a plan with the student, supervisor, and dean (if necessary).

2. Faculty in an area impacted by an emergency event: All faculty will have 48 hours to contact their supervisors. Online instructors will contact their students (or have a University delegate contact their students) within 48 hours to set their expectations immediately following an emergency event. If there is a disruption of instruction longer than two days, it is the faculty's responsibility to contact their program director to report the outage.

VI. Academic Administrative Responsibilities

A. Provost

1. Pre-Evacuation/Suspension
 - a) Ensures that the *Academic Affairs Continuity of Operations Plan* is posted and widely communicated.
 - b) Updates the Group Me contact list to ensure timely communication with all Provost's Office direct reports.
2. During and After Evacuation/Suspension
 - a) In case of suspension, establishes immediate communication with the deans, vice provosts, and other direct reports. Works with deans and Emergency Management Team representative (Vice Provost) to ensure timely updates to faculty, staff, students, and families.
 - b) In consultation with deans, develops plans for resumption of instruction on campus.
 - c) Ensures that faculty and staff have prompt access to campus as soon as it is feasible so that they can expedite the return to normal operations.
 - d) In evacuations/suspensions lasting more than two weeks, establishes contact and consults with the Standing Council for Academic Planning (SCAP) and the Executive Committee of the Senate through the LMS or other electronic communications.
 - e) Communicates necessary changes in academic policy and procedures caused by the evacuation/suspension and ensures they are appropriately documented in meeting minutes and the University Bulletin as appropriate.
 - f) Upon resumption of on campus operations, obtains feedback from faculty and staff by utilizing the University Senate, Administrative Senate, Standing Council for Academic Planning, Deans' Council, and/or electronic questionnaire to all faculty and staff.

B. College Deans: Each college dean is responsible for the following activities:

1. Pre- Evacuation/Suspension
 - a) Develops and shares the following:
 - (1) Contact information for all faculty and staff in a

downloadable format.

- (2)** Designation of a second and third in command.
 - (3)** An understanding within the college and its departments of what discretion means in terms of faculty holding or canceling classes prior to an official university announcement of evacuation or suspension of campus operations.
 - (4)** Description of plans for continuity of instruction, including exceptions noted above (courses inappropriate for extended distance education, e.g., lab courses, private music instruction, studio classes).
 - (5)** Provisions for distinct needs of a department or program for campus access. These provisions must be approved by the Provost and the Emergency Manager.
- b)** Establishes communication with their faculty and staff.
 - c)** Directs faculty to prepare and post on syllabi assignments for all their courses in case of an evacuation or suspension of campus operations, consistent with the College plan.
 - d)** Coordinates college- wide evacuation/suspension policies for faculty, staff, and students.
 - e)** College of Arts and Sciences only: Obtains name, contact information, and location of science faculty who may need access to on campus labs during suspension of on-campus operations and provides this information to the Emergency Manager, Provost, and University Police Chief.
 - f)** College of Music and Media only: Identifies faculty/staff to manage/operate the Mike Early Studio as needed by the administration. These faculty/staff may need access to campus during suspension of on-campus operations. Provide this information to the Emergency Manager, Provost, and University Police Chief.
 - g)** Shares student checklists (see section VII) with unit and program directors.
- 2. During Evacuation/Suspension**
- a)** Establishes immediate contact with faculty, staff and students.
 - b)** Communicates with the provost regarding the status of college activities.
 - c)** Communicates with the chairs and directors regarding duration of closure, instructional activities, etc.
 - d)** Communicates to faculty, staff and students in the college that the main university webpage (<https://emergency.loyno.edu/>) will be the source of official university updates. If students are most accustomed to accessing a specific URL that directs them to their specific college, the deans should indicate in advance that the main source of information will be posted to the main university website (<https://emergency.loyno.edu/>).

C. Director/Chair/Coordinator

1. Pre- Evacuation/Suspension
 - a) Ensures faculty have plans in place for continuation of course instruction.
2. During Evacuation/Suspension
 - a) Contacts all faculty and staff in the department/school.
 - b) Keeps faculty and staff informed of any new information disseminated by the administration.

D. Faculty

1. Pre- Evacuation/Suspension
 - a) Faculty and teaching staff are responsible for keeping up to date with the LMS.
 - b) Become fully familiar with continuity (emergency) plans of the university, Office of Academic Affairs, and college.
 - c) Faculty are responsible for planning for their own internet connectivity, such as securing a hotspot, within a reasonable time period (generally 48-72 hours after the event). Faculty are strongly encouraged to have access to a hotspot.
 - d) Ensure that each course has an LMS presence and participate in Canvas 101 training course and scheduled training sessions.
 - e) Use the LMS as the primary source/repository of teaching materials, grades, etc. In the event the faculty member is unable to continue their teaching duties, the dean may assign another faculty member to teach the course and, therefore, access to all these materials will be provided by a LMS administrator.
 - f) Develop and communicate course work and assignments appropriate for evacuation/suspension periods and, when appropriate, distribute prior to evacuation/suspension.
 - g) Faculty in the sciences and in equipment-intensive disciplines will ensure that their research laboratories and sensitive equipment are secure and that temperature sensitive supplies (e.g., tissue or cell cultures, certain chemicals, etc.) or materials that require constant care are evacuated/secured as appropriate.
 - h) Prepare to take equipment, supplies, and documents needed to continue instructional activities during evacuation/suspension.
 - i) Science faculty that may need access to labs during suspension of on campus operations will notify their departmental chair and dean of lab location and access needs. All campus buildings will be locked during suspension of campus operations. No access will be allowed, except for science faculty that have made advance arrangements with their dean.
2. During Evacuation/Suspension
 - a) Communicate with the dean and chair regarding the status of courses within 48 hours of an evacuation or suspension of on campus operations.

- b) Continue course instruction according to the Instructional Responsibilities and Enrollment Policies.

E. Library

1. Pre- Evacuation

- a) Works with faculty to develop electronic reserves within the LMS.
- b) Manages computer loans and hotspots to students to help mitigate existing student digital inequities.

2. Post- Evacuation

- a) Provides access to electronic resources, including full-text journals and electronic books.
- b) Provides 24/7 reference assistance.
- c) In the event of an extended evacuation, provides interlibrary loan/article delivery services and support for media applications.
- d) Manages the return of computers and hotspots loaned to students.

F. OIRE and Office of Student Records (During ERP Implementation)

1. May-July months

- a) For each summer session, produce backup reports for on-ground students, on-ground faculty, online students and online faculty (four reports each summer session). Work with IT to create listservs clearly defined for each of these four groups in each summer session.

2. Post- Evacuation

- a) Provide deans, director, and/or chair with currently enrolled students and their courses by keeping Colleague up-to-date with withdrawal information.
- b) Provide deans with current candidates for graduation.
- c) Provide contact information for students: permanent addresses, phone #'s, cell #'s and e-mail addresses.

VII. Student Responsibilities and Checklist

- A. Pack textbooks, assignments, syllabi, and any other needed materials for each course and bring them during an evacuation.
- B. Log on to the university Web site within 48 hours of an evacuation.
- C. Log on to each course through Canvas within 48 hours of an evacuation, or earlier if instructed by the provost.
- D. Log on to Canvas within 48 hours of any evacuation (or earlier if instructed by the provost) to receive further information regarding contacting course instructors for course continuation information. Faculty will continue to expect the same level of responsibility and performance from students during a disruption of campus operations.
- E. Students are required to keep up with coursework during the evacuation as specified on course syllabi and online Canvas courses.
- F. Students are required to submit assignments on time during the evacuation period and once the university campus has reopened.

- G. Students are required to contact professors during an evacuation or as soon as classes resume on campus to explain any emergency circumstances that may have prevented them from completing expected work.
- H. Students should also monitor the main university site (www.loyno.edu) and their emails for general information. Additional information can be obtained through the University Emergency Website: <http://www.loyno.edu/emergency>
- I. In the case of a pandemic or other such emergency, university or government officials may require an appropriate quarantine period before returning to campus. In that case, instruction will continue in an online modality.

Approved May 15, 2023 by the Provost's Council

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