

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

University Closing or Cancelling of Classes Policy Administration and Finance Business Policy

Policy Number: 2026:03
Supersedes: 2023:01

POLICY

Ferris State University is a multi-campus institution; therefore this policy was written to address situations in Big Rapids, Grand Rapids, and across the state. The Big Rapids campus is a residential student campus and will almost always remain open because of the number of students residing on campus and in the Big Rapids area. This policy provides for the delay of and/or canceling of University classes, closure of the Big Rapids and/or other University campuses or locations when conditions or circumstances warrant it, and for an employee's inability to report to work due to weather conditions.

PROCEDURE

- A. The decision to delay or cancel classes due to weather or other conditions will be made only by the President or their designee.
 1. Once the decision is made to delay or cancel classes, the Vice President of Administration and Finance or the Office of Public Safety notifies the Vice President of University Advancement and Marketing or their designee, who then informs the local radio and television stations and posts the information on the University's web site and appropriate local, regional and sometimes statewide media. (Refer to 4,5, and 6 below for off campus location information.)
 2. If it is necessary to cancel classes, announcements will be made on area radio and television stations, the University's website, and other pre-established communication venues. University officials will ensure such announcements are made as early as possible. It is the responsibility of students, faculty and staff to listen or look for these announcements. It is quite possible that the University will hold classes on days when the public schools in the areas are closed.

3. The University will delay the start of or cancel classes only under the most severe weather or other conditions.
 - a. If academic classes are canceled, employees are expected to perform their assigned non-teaching responsibilities for the day as usual. If an employee can work remotely and is approved to work remotely by their supervisor, they may do so. If an employee cannot report to work due to isolated weather or road conditions, or other circumstances pursuant to this policy, they must notify their supervisor and take an accrued vacation, sick time or a personal day. If the employee has no accrued vacation or personal days, they must take a day off without pay. (See 7 below) Supervisors are encouraged to offer flexible schedules so that staff (including student employees) can make up the lost work time.
 - b. Many students live on the Big Rapids campus and depend on Dining Services, Residential Life, Facilities, Housing and Public Safety, regardless of weather conditions. The University intends to provide these services and, in addition, make every effort possible to keep the Library, Sports Complex, Student Recreation Center and the David L. Eisler Center open.
4. Since campus locations across the state have several unique circumstances related to weather conditions, (i.e., closure of sites that we hold classes in such as community colleges, public school facilities or other locations used for extension courses, etc.) the College of Extended & International Operations (EIO) Dean or their designee will work with the Vice President of Administration & Finance or their designee who will have the responsibility for canceling classes, when necessary, at each respective location site. This includes notifying University Advancement and Marketing and other appropriate University staff.
5. Decisions on weather-related and other reasons for delays and closures at our Grand Rapids Campuses (Kendall College of Art and Design, the Pharmacy program, or other sites) are made by the Vice President of Administration and Finance or their designee in consultation with the Dean of KCAD, CES, or Pharmacy or their designees.
6. Employees are urged to use reasonable judgment regarding their safety. There may be days when, due to isolated weather or road conditions, or other circumstances, an employee may determine they cannot report to work regardless of whether the University has canceled classes. In that case, the employee must notify their supervisor and take an accrued vacation, sick, accrued personal day or work remotely, with their supervisor's permission. If the employee has no accrued vacation, sick or personal days, they must take a day off without pay, if they are not able to work remotely. If an employee leaves work early or arrives late to work, due to weather conditions, they must also use accrued vacation, sick or accrued personal time, or take time off without pay. Leave time must be used in accordance with the applicable Human Resource Policy & Procedure(s) (HRPP). Supervisors are encouraged to offer flexible schedules so that staff members (including student employees) can make up the lost work time.

- B. If the University elects to close the University to employees because of inclement weather or other circumstances, employees who can work remotely should work remotely. If an employee cannot work remotely, they must notify their supervisor and take accrued vacation, sick time, or personal time. If the employee has no accrued time available to them, they must take the time off without pay. Supervisors are encouraged to offer flexible schedules so that employees (including student employees) can make up the lost work time. Staff designated for continuing operations based upon their position, who must report to campus will be offered comp time for hours worked during the closure in addition to the payment for regular shifts (Bargaining Unit employees refer to your Collective Bargaining Agreement). Designated staff for continuing operations include: Food Service, Facilities, Flite, Student Rec Center, Public Safety, Housing, David L. Eisler Center, Sports Complex, others dependent upon timing/issues such as Payroll/HR, and IT (note designation is made by supervisor with approval of the appropriate Vice President).
- C. If a State of Emergency has been issued by the University, or local, state or federal agency, the same process will be followed as if the University is closed, including the review of staff who are designated to report for continuing and necessary operations. Staff designated for continuing operations will be offered comp time for hours worked during the closure in addition to the payment for regular shifts (Bargaining Unit employees refer to your Collective Bargaining Agreement). In the case of a State of Emergency, staff unable to work and unable to work remotely will be paid for all time up to three (3) days of regular pay. After three (3) days, the employee will be required to use accrued vacation, sick or personal time.

CONTACTS

For more information, please contact the following departments:
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