Inclement Weather

Scope

This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff and guests requiring physical access to the University of Nebraska at Omaha ("UNO") campus.

Policy Statement

In accordance with policy guidelines from the University of Nebraska system, the President, Chancellors, or their designees have the authority to declare an adjustment to campus due to inclement weather for their respective campuses.

In the event of severe winter weather that could impact access to campus or on-campus operations, the UNO Chancellor, upon consultation with the Chancellor's Weather Committee ("Committee"), will make a decision on whether to move applicable campus operations, including courses, to remote operations.

Reason for Policy

Due to UNO's geographical location in the Midwest, portions of each academic term is at higher risk for severe weather that can significantly impact physical campus operations and increase safety risk.

In May 2021, the Office of the President instituted HR-04, aka the "Inclement Weather Closure Pay Policy," for the NU System. As this policy indicates, there are many functions of the university that can be delivered remotely using technology even when access to the physical campus is limited.

The guidance that follows in this document codifies expected practices and policies, specific to UNO, to comply with and implement HR-04 for our campus while also understanding the wide range of needs and circumstances that members our campus community could find themselves under during a severe weather event.
Procedures

The Role of the Committee

In order to ensure that UNO fulfills its educational mission while also accounting for unplanned severe weather, the Committee is tasked with assessing and recommending to the Chancellor decisions regarding changes to normal campus operations if weather conditions become hazardous.

Committee Structure

The Chancellor's Weather Committee is designed to provide recommendations to the Chancellor on the status of campus operations due to hazardous winter weather. Representatives from the following campus units or representative bodies will comprise the Committee and consult in the Committee’s recommendation to the Chancellor:

- Academic Affairs
- Business and Finance
- Facilities
- Faculty Senate
- Student Success
- Human Resources
- Public Safety
- Student Government
- Staff Advisory Council
- University Communications

Additionally, any member of the Committee is able to request the temporary or permanent addition of another Committee member for additional consultation, with a confirmation of said addition being subject to a majority agreement of existing Committee members. For permanent recommendations, approval by the Chancellor is also required.

Committee meetings and tasks are to be managed by Committee Co-Chairs who are to be selected from University Communications and Public Safety units unless otherwise collectively decided by the Committee or Chancellor.

Committee Selection

Each year the Committee Co-Chairs will confer with the above-named units to identify the individuals who will represent those units.

Committee Meetings

Committee Meetings can be initiated at any time by the Chancellor, one of the Vice Chancellors, or one of the Committee Co-Chairs.

Decisions

In the event of Severe Weather, the Committee is tasked with providing a recommendation to the Chancellor on whether campus operations can continue normally or should be moved to remote mode for that day, or a portion of that day, depending on when severe weather is predicted to arrive.

Decisions made to move to a remote delivery method will impact academic and business operations, and will consider a number of factors which include, but are not limited to: National Weather Service advisories and warnings; campus conditions; off-campus road conditions; wind chill; and/or availability of campus resources.

Length of Time

The move to remote delivery of classes or business operations can occur for a portion or all of a particular day (or days) depending on weather conditions. These would include a full closure, delayed opening, or early closure. Any decisions to move to remote delivery of campus operations will automatically include remote delivery of regularly scheduled classes that would otherwise be held on campus.
For Staff

For the purposes of UNO campus closures and implementation of remote campus operations, staff will fall into one of four categories as identified by the University of Nebraska Inclement Weather Closure Pay Policy:

- **Essential Employees:** Such personnel are made aware of this designation at the time of hiring or reassignment to a position that is considered essential during an inclement weather closing. These employees are expected to report and work at their assigned worksite. Hourly/Non-Exempt employees in this category will receive pay for actual hours worked as well as a choice of inclement weather pay for previously scheduled hours or banked/saved inclement weather leave for scheduled hours. Salaried/Monthly Paid employees will be paid for regular scheduled hours during the closedown and will receive inclement weather leave for time worked (hour for hour) at a later date for the period of time they are required to work.

- **Employees with Alternative Work Site Capabilities:** For the purpose of the UNO Severe Weather Closures Policy, employees with alternative worksite capabilities are defined as managerial/professional staff with active Alternative Worksite Agreement (AWA) approved by the Vice Chancellor. Supervisors of employees that work during an inclement weather day are instructed to be flexible.

If there are external factors that limit an employee’s capability to work from their alternative worksite, such as but not limited to: reliable internet access, care of dependents, snow removal, lack of electricity, etc… these employees will no longer fall into the category of “Employees with Alternative Work Site Capabilities” as described in HR-04, and rather will fall into the category of “Other Employees.”

**NOTE:** Some employees who do not have an approved AWA may be asked to work remotely to maintain minimal campus operations and serve our constituencies. In that instance, and for the purpose of the UNO Severe Weather Closures Policy, these employees will be considered ‘Essential Employees’. As such, they will receive inclement weather leave for time worked (hour for hour) to be used at a later date.

- **Other Employees:** Employees with job responsibilities that cannot be performed at an alternative worksite location (also not designated as an Essential Employee during inclement weather), who are consequently not required to work or are not reassigned work to perform at an alternative worksite. Employees in this category will receive administrative pay based on their regular pay.

- **Employees Not Scheduled to Work:** Employees not previously scheduled to work during an inclement weather closure. Because these employees were not scheduled to work, they will not receive administrative pay for hours not worked.

Employee pay during an inclement weather closure that leads to the campus implementing remote operations is determined by the University of Nebraska Inclement Weather Policy [HR-04](#) (see Related Information appendix).

For Faculty

For the purpose of the UNO Severe Weather Policy, Faculty are considered “Employees with Alternative Work Site Capabilities.” In the event of a shift to remote learning due to severe weather, faculty will be asked to move their course into remote delivery until campus operations return to standard operating procedure.

Faculty who utilize on-campus lab spaces as part of their curriculum are asked to consider alternative solutions for that portion of their curriculum in the event the campus moves to remote teaching because of severe weather.

It is the expectation that faculty will promptly communicate and update their students on plans for the impacted day(s) as soon as possible after the announcement about moving to remote operations. Faculty should include overall guidelines for how remote operations will be handled in their course’s syllabus.

Faculty teaching online or remote courses need not make any adaptations for a remote learning day. Faculty teaching in-person courses will, on a remote learning day, have the option to use the regularly-scheduled class time for a remote/video-conferencing course or assign reading/learning materials to students for completion outside the regularly-scheduled class time. Faculty teaching in-person courses should not schedule additional in-person class sessions after the remote learning day to ‘make up’ material. Instead faculty should revise the overall course syllabus to adapt learning objectives to the remainder of the semester’s class sessions.
For Students

Students who have on-campus classes should check Canvas for instructions from their instructor once an announcement is made. Overall guidelines for how remote operations will be handled by a particular course should also be found in that course syllabus.

Those students who have entirely remote or entirely online course loads will not have their schedules impacted. Students are responsible for reading ahead in their course syllabus or working with their instructor to know what content they are responsible for covering that day.

Technology tools and remote access to campus resources will be available to students when campus moves to remote operations.

For Guests

In the event of a move to remote operations, the expectation should be that campus buildings will be closed and operating remotely. Due to this, all previously scheduled on-campus events during that time should be considered to either be postponed or cancelled. Omaha Athletic events will continue regardless of whether the campus is in remote mode unless otherwise indicated.

Communications

Once a decision is made by the Chancellor, that decision - and all supplemental information - will be shared with the campus and larger community through the UNO website, email, social media, text alerts, and through local news outlets. Until such a message is shared, all regularly scheduled classes and campus operations are considered to be conducted as normal.

In the event of Severe Weather approaching during normal business hours that would impact same-day operations, every attempt will be made to communicate on the status of campus operations at least two hours prior to the start of remote operations taking effect that day, subject to changing weather conditions.

In the event of Severe Weather approaching outside of normal business hours, every attempt will be made to announce campus operations for the following day as soon as possible and no later than 10 p.m. that evening, subject to changing weather conditions.

Definitions

"Severe Weather" is defined as adverse weather conditions that can bring extreme temperatures, ice, sleet, freezing rain, blowing snow, strong winds, tornados, and/or flooding. These usually involve designations from the National Weather Service in the form of Storm Advisories, Watches and Warnings.

Additional Contacts

Any individual with specific questions about how a decision regarding severe winter weather may impact them is encouraged to direct their questions to the contacts below based on their association with UNO.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Questions</td>
<td>UNO Weather Committee</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td><a href="mailto:unoweather@unomaha.edu">unoweather@unomaha.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Questions</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>402.554.3523</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cpettid@unomaha.edu">cpettid@unomaha.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Questions</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>402.554.2907</td>
<td><a href="mailto:asargus@unomaha.edu">asargus@unomaha.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Questions</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>402.554.4481</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lwakefield@unomaha.edu">lwakefield@unomaha.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest Questions</td>
<td>Navigation Station</td>
<td>402.554.2800</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ucomm@unomaha.edu">ucomm@unomaha.edu</a></td>
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</tbody>
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The University of Nebraska at Omaha shall not discriminate based upon age, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, gender-identity, sex, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran's status, marital status, religion, or political affiliation.

Related Information

Work Schedule

Electronic Messaging

University of Nebraska Inclement Weather Pay Policy

History

September 2021 draft policy to reflect changes to campus operations following the successful implementation of as of remote and de-densified learning, teaching, and working following the COVID-19 pandemic as well as new guidance on inclement weather pay from the University of Nebraska system.