

Emergency School Closure Policy

The Emergency School Closure Policy applies to all academic, health sciences, and technical programs, as well as students, faculty, and staff at Southern Union State Community College. In the event of a school closure due to emergencies—such as inclement weather, natural disasters, public health crises, or other unforeseen events—the following guidelines will ensure the continuity of instruction:

Campus Closure: Any campus closure due to emergency conditions (e.g., inclement weather, natural disasters, public health crises, or other emergencies) will be determined by the College President. When the physical campus is closed, no on-campus courses, practices, rehearsals, or other in-person activities will take place. Campus closure notifications will be sent to students, faculty, and staff through the College's emergency notification system, email, and phone. These notifications will also be posted on the College's website. In the event of a closure lasting more than 24 hours, the College will provide daily updates to keep all stakeholders informed of the status of the closure.

Off-Campus Activities: All off-campus activities—including clinicals, preceptorships, apprenticeships, school trips, ball games, and other extracurricular events—will be subject to the determination of the respective deans. The decision to cancel activities for Health Sciences students (clinicals, preceptorships, apprenticeships, etc.) will be made by the Dean of Health Sciences. **Health Sciences students must adhere to any guidelines provided by clinical facilities and their instructors for any virtual simulations or make-up sessions for missed clinical hours.** The Dean of Technical Education and Workforce Development will determine the cancellation of activities for Technical Education students (apprenticeships, field placements, etc.). The Dean of Academics will decide whether to cancel activities for Academic Transfer students (conference events, academic tournaments, off-campus assignments, etc.). The Dean of Student Affairs will determine cancellations for other extracurricular activities.

Communication Regarding Instructional Changes: Faculty will communicate any changes to the class schedule or instructions to students via the Learning Management System (LMS), currently Canvas. Additionally, faculty will notify their department chair and dean of these changes via email.

Online Transition: If the campus is closed, in-person classes will shift to online instruction through Canvas, if feasible. All courses should be set up in Canvas at the start of the semester to ensure a smooth transition if needed.

Cancellation Guidelines

Communication:

The College will notify students, faculty, and staff of the closure via email, text, Canvas, and the College website. Faculty will communicate any instructional or schedule changes to students through email and Canvas and to their department chair and dean through email. In the event of a closure lasting more than 24 hours, daily updates will be provided on the status of the closure.

Instructional Options:

- **Synchronous (Virtual):** If feasible, real-time virtual instruction (e.g., live lectures or virtual class meetings) will take place through video conferencing or other platforms.
- **Asynchronous:** If synchronous instruction is not possible, course materials, assignments, and instructions will be posted online, with timelines specified for completion of assignments and assessments.
- **Assessments:** Some online assessments may require identity verification, environmental scans, or other check-in procedures through Canvas. Students must adhere to the check-in procedures posted on Canvas and procedures may vary from instructor to instructor.

- **Deadline Adjustments:**

Instructors will adjust deadlines as necessary and communicate these changes to students to ensure they can complete their coursework on time.

- **Modified Schedule:**

In the case of extended closures, instructors may modify course syllabi, schedules, and deadlines. Flexible deadlines will be offered to students facing difficulties accessing online instruction.

Instructor Responsibilities

- **Less Than 24-Hours Closure:** Instructors will take immediate action to maintain instructional continuity. If the class has not yet met that day, instructors will contact students as soon as possible to explain how the class will be conducted (e.g., by providing recorded lectures, conducting live sessions, or posting relevant materials). Any schedule changes will be communicated promptly to ensure students can continue their coursework.
- **More Than 24-Hour Closure:** Instructors will implement additional strategies to maintain instructional continuity, building on those made for a closure of less than 24 hours. Instructors may also modify syllabi, schedules, and deadlines as needed. They will track attendance for both synchronous and asynchronous sessions and provide daily updates to ensure students have the necessary resources to succeed.

Student Responsibilities

Students should check their official school email, text messages, and Canvas **daily** for updates on closures or instructional changes. If students face challenges with instruction, they should contact their faculty members for assistance. If students encounter technical issues, they should reach out to IT support at support@suscc.edu.

Health Sciences students must adhere to any guidelines provided by clinical facilities and their instructors for any virtual simulations or make-up sessions for missed clinical hours.

Commitment to Instructional Continuity and Communication During School Closures

In the event of a school closure, the College is committed to maintaining instructional continuity and keeping students, faculty, and staff informed. It is essential that all parties remain flexible and responsive to any changes that may occur. In cases of unforeseen circumstances, such as natural disasters (e.g., tornadoes) that disrupt the internet or power for extended periods, there may be delays in communication and instructional delivery. Students should stay engaged by checking communication channels daily and reaching out to the appropriate support resources as needed. Faculty and staff will work together to ensure that students have the necessary tools and guidance to complete their coursework successfully, understanding that some challenges may arise beyond the College's control.