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Name:	Senate Policy on the Academic Implications of Disruptions of University Business
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Responsibility:	University Senate
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1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1** For the purpose of this policy, a *Disruption* occurs when academic activities are substantially interrupted or impeded as a result of strikes, lockouts, demonstrations, natural disasters, or other like causes. A Disruption may result in the closure of the University or may be limited to interruptions of some academic activities.
- 1.2** The term "academic activity" includes any work subject to evaluation or necessary for a student to meet the requirements of a course or programme of study (e.g., class activities, examinations, labs, or library and resource access).
- 1.3** For the purpose of this policy, the term "Contact Hours" is defined as class instruction hours in the physical classroom or lab as outlined in the Registrar's official timetable.
- 1.4** For the purposes of this policy, a short-term disruption is defined as affecting 10% or less of the contact hours.
- 1.5** For the purposes of this policy, a long-term disruption is defined as affecting more than 10% of the contact hours.
- 1.6** In determining whether an interruption or an impediment is *substantial*, the following factors shall be considered by the Senate Executive:
 - 1.6.1** The duration and point in the term or session in which the Disruption occurred;
 - 1.6.2** The availability of physical and instructional resources;

- 1.6.3** The impact on the attendance of students, instructors, and other necessary participants;
- 1.6.4** The impact of timing and sequence of evaluations such as examinations, practica, assignments and presentations etc.

2. POLICY

The governing principles of this policy are: *Academic Integrity, Fairness to Students, and Timely Information.*

2.1 Academic Integrity

In the event of a Disruption, the primary obligation of Senate is to ensure the academic integrity of all programmes. There should be as little diminution as possible in the standards normally expected of students or in the instructional and supervisory support given to students.

2.2 Fairness to Students

2.2.1 Students who do not participate in academic activities because:

- a) they are *unable* to do so owing to a Disruption, or
- b) they *choose not* to participate in academic activities owing to a strike or lock-out on campus

are entitled to immunity from penalty, to reasonable alternative access to materials covered in their absence, to reasonable extensions of deadlines and to such other remedy as **Senate** deems necessary and consistent with the principle of academic integrity.

2.2.2 Such remedies shall not alter the academic standards associated with the missed activity. Students are not relieved from mastering material that is covered.

2.2.3 The availability of a remedy under this policy does not guarantee students the same learning experience that they would have received in the absence of a Disruption.

2.3 Timely Information

Students, staff and faculty have a right to be informed in a timely manner of changed requirements, rescheduled academic activities, and procedures to be in effect at the conclusion of the Disruption.

3. PROCEDURES

3.1 Communication and Dissemination of Information

3.1.1 When a Disruption appears imminent:

3.1.1.1 The **Senate Executive Committee** shall ensure that the normal informational channels, including Senate's webpage, are alerted so that Senate policies and decisions will be reported widely and accurately.

3.1.1.2 The Senate Executive Committee shall post an appropriate notice to remind or notify students, staff, faculty, Chairpersons, Coordinators,

Directors, and Deans of their respective roles in giving effect to Senate policy and shall ensure that this information is disseminated speedily.

3.1.1.3 A notice shall be posted by the Senate Executive Committee regarding the possibility of rescheduling following a Disruption and of term extension following the conclusion of a Disruption.

3.1.1.4 A précis of this policy shall be prepared which can be circulated widely and posted on the University's website in the event of a Disruption.

3.1.2 When a Disruption occurs, the Senate Executive Committee shall declare so and request that:

3.1.2.1 The Registrar use best efforts to inform and update relevant external bodies about the Disruption.

3.1.2.2 University officers use best efforts to have externally imposed deadlines extended, especially where the lack of transcripts or the unavailability of letters of recommendation would impose a hardship on current students.

3.1.2.3 The University Librarian disseminate information about the impact of a Disruption on access to collections and services as early and as frequently as possible via print notices, messages on websites, and other means;

3.1.2.4 Any adjustment of deadlines be announced widely, including on University's webpage;

3.1.2.5 The University provide a telephone information service to make known relevant information about academic activities.

3.1.3 When a Disruption ends, the Senate Executive Committee shall declare so and shall give notice to students and course directors of the procedures then in effect under this policy.

3.2 Short Disruptions

3.2.1 For disruptions that affect 10% or less of the contact hours, individual *faculty* shall determine the extent to which their courses, seminars, graduate supervision, labs, practica, etc., have been affected by a Disruption and what remedial action is required.

3.2.2 If, in the opinion of Senate Executive, remedial action ought to include rescheduling in order to preserve course integrity, in consultation with the Office of the Registrar he/she shall take actions consistent with the principles of academic integrity, fairness to students, and timely information as stated above.

3.3 Long Disruptions

3.3.1 For disruptions that affect more than 10% of the contact hours, the Senate Executive Committee shall evaluate the need for a modification of the teaching term with any concomitant changes in examination scheduling.

3.3.2 The Senate Executive Committee shall oversee the process of directing and implementing the necessary remedial action. In cases where substantial

amounts of instructional time have been lost due to a Disruption, the Senate Executive Committee shall:

3.3.2.1 as soon as possible, call a special meeting of Senate.

3.3.2.2 resolve conflicts between the principles of academic integrity and fairness to students. In particular and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Senate Executive Committee may anticipate and apply remedies which would otherwise be available by petition and shall do so in light of University precedent and practice.

3.3.2.3 If a Disruption continues to a point where no feasible remedy consistent with the principle of academic integrity is available for a specific course, then, Senate Executive Committee may recommend to Senate that credit not be given for the course.

3.4. Petitions and Appeals

Normal appeal procedures shall apply to deal with academic issues arising from a Disruption.

Version History Version. #	Date Changed	Updated by	Description of Change
1.0	October 19, 2007	Senate Committee on Regulations	Document creation. Approved by Senate on October 19, 2007
1.1	January 16, 2015	Senate Committee on Regulations	Additions to section 1 Definitions. Revisions to sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.1 to address impact of sequential storms.