

CS-004

Unscheduled campus closures

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Policy Holder	Print Name	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

College Council	
Advising Body	Date Consulted (MM/DD/YYYY)

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Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for college administrators faced with circumstances that may warrant closing a building; closing one or more campus locations; or suspending a service operation (e.g. Employment Centres).

Scope

This policy applies to all **staff, students, clients and visitors** at **all campuses**.

- Note: This procedure does **not** deal with individual class cancellation procedure.

Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Building closure	In a building closure, all individuals will be prevented from entering a specified building. No classroom activities or services will take place in the building. Classroom and service activities will continue to operate in other buildings on the campus.
Campus closure	In a campus closure, all classroom and service operations, except those deemed essential activities, will be suspended at that location. Individuals will be prevented from entering the premises.

Responsibility

- An **administrator** will be designated at each campus and/or service area to make decisions about closures and subsequent re-openings.
 - The **designated administrator** must delegate another employee to make any necessary closure decisions during his or her absence.
 - The **designated administrator** must act in a responsible but timely manner regarding closure and re-opening decisions, when circumstances such as inclement weather or other emergencies arise.
- **Communications staff**, in concert with **campus managers**, will communicate details of closures and re-openings to the college community and the public.
- **Faculty and staff** will take all reasonable efforts to ensure that students evacuate all occupied rooms
- **Campus Security** where available, will ensure that affected buildings have been evacuated.

Policy

- The college makes every reasonable effort to be open and accessible to students and clients during all regular operating hours. However, circumstances sometimes dictate that classes are cancelled, or buildings or entire campuses/service centres need to be closed.
- The most common reasons for closure include inclement weather, loss of water, power or heat or other emergencies. This policy does not intend to define all possible causes or combinations of causes that could lead to closure.
- An administrator or designate for each campus/service area is to be available at all times to make decisions on possible closures.
- Closure decisions will be made in a timely manner, with due regard to the safety of staff, students, clients and visitors as well as other considerations including activities planned for the day, public transit operations, and road and weather conditions, among others.

- Closure and re-opening information will be disseminated to students, staff, clients and the public.
- All college buildings will be evacuated and secured.
- Campus managers and designates will monitor conditions to determine when a campus/service centre may safely re-open. This may happen later the same day or on a following day.
- When a building or campus closure occurs, all formal classroom activities at the affected location will cease.
- When a building or campus is closed, staff will work with their supervisor to determine if their work might be conducted elsewhere on campus, at home or by other arrangement. Department managers will determine which elements of their operation and staff are essential.
- At times, buildings and campuses may be open but some students and staff may not feel conditions are safe for them to travel to the college. Students should discuss their situation with the person who has oversight of the course to discuss alternative arrangements. Staff who elect not to travel to the campus/operation site because of inclement weather must inform their manager of their decision to not attend work. The following procedure provides details regarding staff compensation and alternatives in various circumstances.
- It is never the intention of the college to compromise the personal safety of students or staff in their efforts to attend class or work.

Procedures

2.1 Campus Service/Operation Closure

2.1.1 Who makes the decision?

Discussion of the situation will occur to determine if closure is the appropriate course of action. A designated administrator will make a decision at each campus or service operation location. He or she will consider:

- safety of staff, students, clients and visitors
- types of activities planned for the day
- accessibility of the campus
- operations status of public transit
- road and highway condition reports
- weather condition reports
- status of closure decisions at other nearby campuses, schools, businesses

2.1.2 For closures during the business day, consideration will also be given to the safety of those leaving the campus/site and whether forecast changes in conditions should allow for a safer departure later in the day.

2.1.3 Input to the decision with a variety of individuals may be advisable, but perhaps not always possible, given the urgency of the situation.

- 2.1.4 Units that have scheduled campus events or activities in the evening or on a weekend or holiday, or staff scheduled for duty overnight or on a weekend day or holiday, are responsible for providing, in advance, the name of an emergency contact person to the Office of Campus Safety Services together with the timing of the event.
- 2.1.5 If a decision to close for the evening or weekend is considered necessary, the appropriate staff from areas such as, but not limited to, Conference and Events Services, Continuing Education, The Last Class, and gymnasium and fitness centres, will be contacted by Campus Safety Services.

2.2 When will the decision be made?

- 2.2.1 In the event that the college has made the decision to close a building, campus or location, or suspend a service operation in the morning, every effort will be made to make that decision by 6 a.m. and communicate it via the channels noted in paragraph 2.3.1 by 6:30 a.m. Decisions surrounding evening closures should be made by 2:30 p.m. to enable communication by 3 p.m. The decision to close may be made at any time during regular business hours, should conditions exist to warrant closure.
- 2.2.2 In the event that factors indicate the college may re-open during the day or for evening classes this will be noted in the morning communications.
- 2.2.3 In the event that the college has closed a campus(s) or operation in the morning and expects to re-open by noon this will be communicated in the announcement and staff/students should monitor the communication channels noted in paragraph 2.3.1. The decision will be made by 9:30 a.m. and communicated via the channels noted in paragraph 2.3.1 by 10 a.m.
- 2.2.4 In the event the duration of the closure is expected to continue past noon, the decision will be made by 9:30 a.m. and communicated via the channels noted in paragraph 2.3.1 by 10 a.m.
- 2.2.5 In the event that the college intends to re-open for evening classes that commence at 5 p.m. or later, the decision will be made by 2:30 p.m. and communicated by 3 p.m. In the event that the college decides not to re-open for evening classes, the decision will be made by 2:30 p.m. and communicated by 3 p.m.
- 2.2.6 In the event of a closure for less than a full academic/business day, only those events, or activities scheduled (including scheduled classes) to commence after the re-opening time will proceed as scheduled.

2.3 How will the decision be communicated?

- 2.3.1 Communications staff, and the official designated in 2.1.1 above for the other locations, will ensure closure information is available to students, clients, staff and the public. Notification may be made via:

- Georgian social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Safe@Georgian app
- Georgian website
- Recorded message when callers telephone a local campus
- Student or employee portal
- Georgian email account
- Staff, students and the public may also hear about closures on local radio. They should monitor more than one communication channel.
- Communications (and local campus managers/principals for local media in concert with Communications) are the only staff authorized to contact the media about closings.

2.4 How will a campus or site be closed?

- 2.4.1 When a decision to close a campus or service operations site has been made, all college buildings will be secured.
- 2.4.2 Staff, students, clients and visitors will be required to leave the premises as soon as it is safe to do so. Each location will designate a common waiting area for those who are unable to leave immediately.
- 2.4.3 It may be necessary to close the location to vehicles to prevent individuals from encountering a dangerous situation, to facilitate snow removal, or allow work crews to undertake repairs, etc.
- 2.4.4 Faculty and staff will take all reasonable efforts to ensure that students have evacuated classrooms, labs, etc. that are occupied at the time of closure. Security will ensure that affected buildings have been evacuated.
- 2.4.5 Staff, students, faculty or visitors who require special assistance or advice about transportation and accommodation during a campus closure are advised to contact Campus Safety Services and/or the local campus manager/campus principal.

2.5 Campus re-openings

- 2.5.1 Any decision to re-open the campus for the balance of the day or the evening will be made in conjunction with the individuals noted in paragraph 2.1.1
- 2.5.2 Staff and students are expected to monitor the college website and local media stations for messages regarding the decision to re-open for classes or services. If campuses or operations are re-opened, staff and students will be expected to attend and staff will complete the remainder of their normally scheduled shift/work day.
- 2.5.3 When the college locations are open, staff are expected to attend work. Staff are asked to take every reasonable precaution while driving in inclement weather.

- 2.5.4 If however, a staff member chooses not to travel to work and the college/operation is open, he or she has a choice of requesting leave without pay or to use vacation for the portion of the day not worked.
- 2.5.5 Full-time support staff also have the option of using lieu time, consistent with provisions of lieu time as detailed in Article 6.2.4 of the Support Staff collective agreement. Staff who elect not to travel to the college/operation site must inform their manager of their decision not to attend work.

2.6 Student implications

- 2.6.1 When a building or campus closure occurs, all formal classroom activities at the affected location will be cancelled. Any arrangements to the contrary must be approved by the Vice President Academic or designate if the Vice President Academic is not available.
- 2.6.2 In instances where a campus is closed, or students are prevented from attending class due to inclement weather, faculty will determine an acceptable means of covering the course material and achieving the learning outcomes. In such circumstances, faculty may also agree to change deadlines for assignments and/or test dates.
- 2.6.3 If a campus is closed on a scheduled exam date, the Office of the Registrar and the Academic area will re-schedule the exam to a suitable date and time.
- 2.6.4 The college understands that there may be times when a campus is open but, however, some students cannot attend due to concerns they may have for their safety. A student shall not be penalized if he or she has made a reasonable decision based on personal safety considerations as long as all course requirements are met to the satisfaction of the faculty.
- 2.6.5 If a student cannot attend class for any reason, he or she shall consult the individual who has oversight of the course (i.e., faculty, technician, clinical placement staff) to discuss alternative arrangements. Georgian College understands that there may be circumstances which may create a safety concern for a student, resulting in the student's decision to not attend a class or classes. This may include a situation where severe weather is occurring at the point of departure or along the route leading to the campus but not at the campus.
- 2.6.6 It is never the intention of the college to compromise students' safety in their effort to attend classes.

2.7 Staff implications and compensation

- 2.7.1 When a building is closed, staff will work with their supervisor to determine if their work might be conducted at another site on the campus, from home or by other appropriate arrangement.

- 2.7.2 In a building, campus or service operation closure, or other situations where employees are sent home, the employees will be treated as though they were actively working, for pay purposes only.
- 2.7.3 The manager of each department will decide which elements of their operation are essential, depending on the circumstances of the closure.
- 2.7.4 Employees who are assigned essential services after the campus has closed (these may include, but are not limited to, Payroll staff, Facilities Management, Communications, Campus Safety Services, or Information Technology) will be entitled to additional time on an hour-for-hour basis for each hour worked while the campus/operation is closed.
- 2.7.5 When the building, campus or service operation site is open, staff are expected to attend work. Staff are asked to take every reasonable precaution while driving in inclement weather.
- 2.7.6 It is not the intention of Georgian College that any employee risk their personal safety to attend work.
- 2.7.7 If a staff member chooses not to travel to work and the campus/operation is open, they have a choice of requesting leave without pay for the day or taking a vacation day.
- 2.7.8 Full-time support staff also have the option of using lieu time, consistent with provisions of lieu time as detailed in Article 6.2.4 of the Support Staff collective agreement.
- 2.7.9 Staff who elect not to travel to the college/operation site must inform their manager of their decision not to attend work.

Related Materials

- Individual class cancellation policy/procedure
- Academic and support staff collective agreements