November 21, 2017

Dear Colleagues:

As we head toward winter, declining temperatures, and possible snow, it is time to once again review the University’s procedure for responding to significant inclement weather. As a public entity and residential campus, PSU is open for business every day of the academic year, except for recognized holidays and other periods of official closure.

From time to time, however, weather conditions are sufficiently extreme or hazardous such that operating the University would jeopardize the safety of our students, faculty, and staff. When this happens, PSU officials responsible for campus safety, facilities, and operations consider a multitude of factors, including weather conditions and forecasts, metro road conditions, and public transit operations. If normal operations are not possible, the University may:

1. Open late or close early, based on weather conditions; or
2. Close completely, canceling all classes and events, and providing only essential services.

If PSU does not delay the start of the workday or close due to inclement weather, but you are concerned about your personal safety, you should make the right decision for yourself. Our ability to know the precise weather conditions where you live and to know your particular personal situation is limited. We encourage you to make a decision about coming to work or attending classes that best fits your situation. We encourage you to consider now what personal preparedness steps you can take to be ready for any weather emergency.

Notification of Closure or Delay

PSU will only notify the community if there is a change to the normal operations of campus (for example, to open late or close early, or to cancel all normal operations). If inclement weather impacts the start of the day, we will make reasonable efforts to notify the community of this decision by 6:30 a.m. If inclement weather requires action later in the day, we will make reasonable efforts to notify the community with as much advance notice as possible.

Every employee is personally responsible for verifying the University’s operational status prior to coming to work. Information on campus status can be obtained by:

- Checking for PSU Alert messages (text messages, voicemail, emails).
  - PSU Alert messages are automatically sent to all “@pdx.edu” email addresses.
  - Individuals can opt-in to PSU Alert messages via text message, phone call to a personal phone, or email to an alternate address. Opt-in to these messages in your Banweb profile.
  - To access your PSU voicemail from off campus, call (503) 725-7000 and follow the prompts.
- Check the PSU website.
• Checking PSU’s official social media accounts:
  o Facebook
  o Twitter
• Calling the PSU switchboard voicemail at (503) 725-3000; and/or
• Listening to, or watching, local media announcements.

Please take this opportunity to update your PSU Alert contact information, as the PSU Alert systems is the primary communication channel for closure notifications. Updating your information is simple: log into Banweb, select Personal Information, select PSU Alert Emergency Notification System, update your contact information, and click submit.

Impacts to Campus Activities and Operations

When the University closes due to inclement weather, all scheduled classes, performances, meetings, and other events are cancelled unless a specific exception is approved in accordance with University procedures.

The following services will continue with essential staffing during a closure or delayed opening, though potentially at a reduced service level:
• Campus Public Safety
• University Housing and Residence Halls

Reporting Procedures

Classified SEIU Employees:
• If the University closes, do not come to work.
  o If a University closure is announced before the start of your normal work shift, Article 63 of the SEIU Collective Bargaining Agreement authorizes you to use accrued vacation, compensatory time, exchange time, personal leave, or leave without pay during the period in which your work shift is curtailed due to the inclement weather or hazardous conditions. This article also provides that, when the University is open, an employee reporting within two hours of the scheduled starting time can make up the lost time under specified conditions.
  o If PSU announces a closure or curtailment of work after you have started your work shift, you will be paid for the remainder of your work shift.
  o Additionally, in the event of a full campus closure due to inclement weather or hazardous conditions, the University President or designee, in his or her sole discretion, may declare such a closure as a paid day. Such a declaration shall be made within 72 hours of the announcement of the closure. Where no declaration is made within that time, or where the declaration is that a form of leave must be used, pay options noted in Article 63 will be used.
• If the University is open and you do not come to work, you must use vacation time or take unpaid leave for the time you are not in attendance. However, in some circumstance, certain employees may be able to make other work arrangements with their supervisor. In such cases, the employee must call and receive approval from her or his supervisor.
• Essential Services and Facilities: Regardless of the closure decision, classified employees designated to perform essential duties will be expected to come to work. Examples include public safety
employees and those responsible for snow removal or storm clean-up. Supervisors of employees who perform essential service work are responsible for communicating attendance expectations in advance and discussing anticipated transportation difficulties. In accordance with Article 63 of the SEIU contract, essential employees who are required to work during periods of closure or curtailment will be paid at the rate of time-and-one-half for all hours worked during such periods.

**Unclassified Employees:**

If the University closes, do not come to work unless otherwise notified by your supervisor. Work from home (telework) arrangements are encouraged, with supervisory approval, and as allowed by the closure situation and circumstances.

- AAUP-represented Unclassified employees will be paid as though they had worked their normal schedule for all work hours missed due to the closure, per Article 26 of the AAUP contract.
- Unrepresented and Excluded employees may work from home, with supervisory approval, and as allowed by the closure situation and circumstances, and are required to use their available Governor’s Day, vacation leave, compensatory time (if overtime eligible), or leave without pay leave to cover work time missed due to the closure.

**Impacts to Classes and Faculty Notification of Class Cancellation**

Faculty should discuss this policy and PSU inclement weather communications with their students, and are encouraged to include it in the course syllabus, so students fully understand how to get inclement weather information. In addition, all faculty members are asked to exercise flexibility with students who miss class, or are unable to submit coursework as a result of inclement weather. If you are a student who chooses not to come to campus when classes are being held, then you are making a decision not to attend class.

**A Note to Supervisors**

PSU may remain open even though regional public schools or child-care centers choose to close. When this occurs, supervisors are encouraged to recognize the difficulties this creates for working parents by responding with as much flexibility as their particular work environment will allow.

**Additional Information**

Before an inclement weather incident, review the [Inclement Weather Resource page](#).

After an inclement weather event, there may be questions about reporting work hours and leave usage. Human Resources can provide additional guidance on these issues at askhrc@pdx.edu, or by phone at 503-725-4926.