Policy on Inclement Weather

Office of Administration:	Vice-President, Administration and Vice-President, Academic and Provost
Approval Authority:	President and Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date:	December 4, 2019
Next Review:	February 2024
Review History:	January 29, 2018;August 24, 2016; October 1, 2014; March 2, 2000

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the Policy on Inclement Weather (the "policy") is to establish guidelines for the Laurentian University (the "University") community in the case of inclement weather.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all staff, faculty, and students of the University, and to all contractors, volunteers, and visitors to the University workplace and learning environment.

3. Definitions/Principles

3.1 Safety is paramount in any situation. The University recognizes that inclement weather can affect the ability of staff, faculty and students to safely travel to and from campus. Inclement weather can affect the University's ability to open or remain open as per regular business operations.

3.2 "Inclement weather" refers to severe or harsh weather. These types of weather conditions can make travel conditions extremely hazardous, resulting in a significant and unusual threat to personal safety.

3.3 "Essential staff" are employees who are required to maintain the following essential services during any closure: Communications department, mechanical/electrical/

maintenance personnel, security services personnel, animal care personnel, and others who may be designated as essential by the Vice-President, Administration or Vice-President Academic and Provost.

3.4 “Close” and “closure” refer to the decision to temporarily cancel classes and the interruption of normal business operations of the University. All non-essential operations will be suspended, and all non-essential employees will be released from their duties. More specifically, “Close” and “closure” will result in the following: classes are not held; meetings and other scheduled events are cancelled; scheduled tests are cancelled, to be rescheduled by the instructor during another scheduled class meeting; scheduled examinations (scheduled by the Registrar) are cancelled, to be rescheduled by the Registrar’s office; deadlines for assignments and other submissions are postponed until the same hour on the next business day on which the University is not "closed"; staff, other than those providing "essential services," are not expected to be at work, but are paid for a normal day.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 In accordance with the University’s commitment to staff, faculty, and students, the University will remain open for all classes and services, and conduct business as usual except in those instances where normal operation would pose a significant danger to students and employees.

4.2 The decision to close the University in the event of inclement weather will be made by the Vice-President, Administration. The Associate Vice-President, Facility Services and the Director, Campus Safety will stay abreast of the weather conditions, access to campus, the availability of Greater Sudbury Transit services, and the advice issued by the Greater Sudbury Police and/or the Ministry of Transportation, in order to inform the Vice-President, Administration. The President and Vice-Chancellor, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and the Executive Director Government Relations, Communications and Marketing will be consulted with prior to announcing a notice of closure due to inclement weather.

4.3 A notice of closure due to inclement weather will be announced by the Communications Department and sent to all students, faculty and staff by e-mail, campus TV broadcast, social media, on our public website and local radio stations. A copy of the communication will also be shared with Federated Universities, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Daycare, Willet Green Centre, and Collège Boréal and Cambrian College.

4.4 During a closure, staff and faculty will be dismissed from work, and students will be dismissed from class. There will be no monetary consequence to the employees, and no refunds to students.

4.5 There are a number of essential services that must be maintained, regardless of weather conditions and therefore there are essential staff who are required to report to work during any closure.

4.6 Unless otherwise directed, all staff and faculty are expected to make every reasonable effort to report to work at their regular time and to remain at work throughout the course of their regularly scheduled workday. If an employee believes they cannot commute safely during periods of severe weather, the employee is required to notify their supervisor or Dean, and has the following options in accordance with the applicable Collective Agreement or Terms and Conditions of Employment:

i) Taking a leave of absence without pay;
ii) Using vacation credits;
iii) Making arrangements with their supervisor to make up the hours missed.

Approval will only be granted if the option requested meets the department's operational needs.

4.7 The University will not penalize staff and faculty for lateness or absence if every effort is made to get to work. In considering if every effort is made, one will consider the following: road closures, operation of public transportation, and the advice issued by the local authorities such as the police or the Ministry of Transportation.

4.8 Classes will not be held during "closed" periods. Faculty members and academic departments do not have the authority to make exceptions. An instructor may elect to reschedule a missed class. The instructor should consult with the students, where practical, and with the Registrar's office to find available dates, rooms and times. But ultimately, an instructor has the authority to reschedule the missed class on the next day on which classes are not scheduled (normally Saturday) at the same time as the missed class. When the "closure" occurs in the last week of classes, the make-up class can be scheduled on the first day in the period between the last day of classes and the start of examinations. Instructors should notify students as soon as possible regarding rescheduled classes.