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MEMORANDUM

Date: July 6, 2021

To: Campus Presidents

From: Alison M. Wrynn, Ph.D.   Alison Wrynn (Jul 6, 2021 14:57 PDT)
             Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Programs, Innovations, and Faculty
             Development

Subject: Academic Continuity Planning Guidelines

The purpose of the attached *Academic Continuity Planning Guidelines* is to support campuses in their efforts to create robust, seamless integration between business and academic continuity planning. Based on research in the fields of emergency management, resilience and crisis leadership in higher education, the document aims to provide an overview of best practices related to emergency preparedness, crisis leadership and academic policies and practices. It was developed in consultation with stakeholders across divisions, from the Chancellor's Office as well as several campuses. Campuses may choose how to utilize the document and how – or whether – to integrate suggestions provided throughout.

The increase in the number and intensity of crises and emergencies across the state – both natural and man-made – has underscored the importance of emergency preparedness. Some CSU campuses, for instance, have experienced major wildfires and related air quality emergencies every fall for several years running, with significant impacts on students, faculty, staff and surrounding communities. Our collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic has provided an opportunity for expanding our shared expertise and developing strong procedures for building more formalized academic continuity plans. This proactive approach will help campuses capture and build upon lessons learned and prepare for the next disruption or disaster.

For questions related to this document, or other issues related to academic continuity, please feel free to contact me at awrynn@calstate.edu.

CSU Campuses	Fresno	Monterey Bay	San Francisco
Bakersfield	Fullerton	Northridge	San José
Channel Islands	Humboldt	Pomona	San Luis Obispo
Chico	Long Beach	Sacramento	San Marcos
Dominguez Hills	Los Angeles	San Bernardino	Sonoma
East Bay	Maritime Academy	San Diego	Stanislaus

c: Dr. Joseph I. Castro, Chancellor
Dr. Fred E. Wood, Interim Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
Mr. Steve Relyea, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Luoluo Hong, Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs and Enrollment Services
Dr. Nathan Evans, Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff, Academic and Student Affairs
Dr. Robert Keith Collins, Chair, Academic Senate of the CSU
Ms. Jenny Novak, Systemwide Emergency Manager
Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs
Vice Presidents of Student Affairs
Vice Presidents of Administration and Finance

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Academic Continuity Planning Guidelines
June 2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the rise in incidents related to poor air quality, wildfires, power shutoffs and other natural disasters, campus disruptions have becoming increasingly common in recent years. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic added the challenge of a major public health crisis to all sectors, including higher education. It is incumbent upon campus leadership, with the support of campus stakeholders, to ensure preparedness for all such events, including severe weather, fires, loss of campus power, public health emergencies and other disruptions. All California State University (CSU) campuses have emergency managers and/or other designated, trained personnel who are charged with creating and implementing strong emergency management plans under the direction of presidents and senior leadership.

This document provides campus leaders with guidance on how to approach preparedness and responsiveness. The document contains no new requirements: it is meant to provide guidelines and to help support leadership in the difficult work of preparedness and resilience.

The importance of preparedness cannot be overstated. Students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members look to campus and system leadership for guidance in times of crisis. In addition to campus-based planning and preparedness, mutual aid agreements across the 23 campuses help us stand strong together.

The mission of the CSU hinges on providing high-quality teaching and learning opportunities (including research, scholarship and creative activities), as well as serving the communities in which our campuses are located. In times of disruption or crisis, **mission continuity** – **comprised of both academic continuity and business continuity** – should drive decision-making to ensure the best possible choices are being made to protect students, faculty, staff and university property, as well as to enable the earliest possible return to normal operations.

CSU institutions are required to have Emergency Operations Plans (EO 1056) and Business Continuity Plans (EO 1014), including IT Disaster Recovery Plans. Academic continuity is a critically important component of institutional planning, but sometimes lacks the same level of formal preparation given to these other required plans. COVID-19 has provided an opportunity for expanding our shared expertise and helping campuses develop strong procedures to navigate the pandemic. In the CSU, we have an opportunity to build on what has been learned during the current pandemic in order to create more formalized academic continuity plans so we capture the lessons learned and prepare our campuses for the next disruption or disaster.

The Chancellor's Office (CO) stands ready to support campuses during all incidents, regardless of the scope or impact of the incident. The emergency management support provided by the CO consists of both informal and formal structures. In 2020, the CSU hired a Director of Systemwide Emergency Management & Continuity, a position currently filled by Jenny Novak. This role supports campus emergency management as well as business continuity planning.

During regional and statewide emergencies, Systemwide Emergency Management schedules a situation status calls with impacted campuses. Each activated campus Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Director or Emergency Manager is encouraged to participate in these calls to help ensure strong communication and support of the campus during an incident. Campus leaders also are encouraged to contact their CO counterparts when seeking function-specific advice or assistance during an incident, as an additional informal channel of support.

It is a best practice to develop an overall Mission Continuity Plan that integrates academic continuity <u>and</u> business continuity as key components of mission continuity. Barring an overall plan for mission continuity, academic and business continuity plans should link closely to ensure seamless operations. Consideration should be given throughout the planning process to the overall institutional approach to supporting students, faculty, staff and our communities throughout an incident and during the recovery period.

Emergency Operations Plans need to be consulted and shared to achieve this goal of seamless integration among all planning efforts. The processes and policies identified in all plans should be shared with appropriate stakeholders, including the campus and surrounding communities, and posted on institutional websites. Moreover, campus-based individuals charged with ensuring current, updated continuity plans should work closely with their academic partners to continue to build consistency and coherence among our planning efforts. Software used on many campuses in support of business continuity can be an excellent resource for bringing these planning efforts together.

Academic Continuity Plans play a critically important role in helping institutions maintain the core function of academic instruction during and after emergencies. Disruptions to academic continuity may include a wide range of challenges such as: operational issues that limit building and/or technology access; health emergencies that impede in-person instruction; local disasters that threaten the health and safety of campus stakeholders and other community members; power shutoffs that impact campus operations; failed sprinkler and other fire-safety systems; and any number of other threats to the institution's ability to protect the health and safety of its people and to protect the campus and its property.

A strong **Academic Continuity Plan** implemented in a consistent manner and thoroughly reviewed at regular intervals (e.g., annually or biannually) can build resilience for our students, faculty, staff and institutions. Overall, the goal of this document is to help campuses develop strong protocols and processes related to academic continuity. To ensure the broadest possible impact of planning efforts, the document provides a broad-based approach to contextualizing best practices related to emergency and crisis management.

To guide institutional academic continuity planning, this document contains:

    A. **Basic Principles of Crisis Leadership and Preparedness**
    B. **Mission Continuity**
    C. **Academic Continuity Planning**

A. Basic Principles of Crisis Leadership and Preparedness

Crisis leadership requires a commitment to **flexibility**, **adaptivity and empathy.** The more time campuses can spend preparing for disruptions and emergencies, the better prepared they will be to respond successfully and effectively over time. Such planning should be cross-functional (i.e., include people from different units and divisions) to ensure that units supporting facilities operations and other key aspects of the academic enterprise are integrated fully into the continuity planning efforts.

Emergency and crisis management are most successful when the leadership practice is to **communicate** clearly and regularly with stakeholders. Campuses that have experienced numerous emergencies attest to the importance of cross-divisional, cross-functional representation in the planning process as well as in the emergency management structure (e.g., Emergency Operations Centers, Incident Response Teams, or other similar structures).

During a major incident, the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) (or other designated communications expert) generally coordinates most public-facing communications for the purposes of: (1) communicating with external stakeholders (e.g., the media, government contacts, etc.); and (2) vetting, all messaging to ensure consistency and accuracy. Responses to individual inquiries may be handled at the level of the subject-matter expert (e.g., by a designee in Academic Affairs or Student Affairs, depending on the topic), but should be vetted for accuracy as part of the overall effort to ensure clear, correct information sharing, especially during highly dynamic situations.

Many campuses have found it beneficial to have a **formalized internal communication structure** for consulting with designated student, faculty and staff leadership during a disruption or crisis. For example, regular communication might occur in such scenarios between the Provost (or designee) and the Academic Senate chair; the Vice President of Student Affairs (or designee) and the student body president; and the Vice President of Administration and Finance (or designee) and the Staff Council Chair. Updates also may be provided from the Emergency Operations Center via a designee (e.g., the Situational

Status Unit) as another approach to information sharing. Determining how best to establish and maintain lines of communication with key campus leaders is an important aspect of successful crisis management. When making this determination for a campus, consideration must be given to the highly sensitive and dynamic nature of the information that might be communicated during an incident.

Campus leaders have learned through trial and error that it is vitally important to establish a clear set of responsibilities for all parties (e.g., leadership as well as campus stakeholders) for this kind of information sharing to function effectively. As a best practice, everyone involved should be informed about the obligation of campus leadership to abide by all policies and laws governing the confidentiality of certain kinds of information. For example, student privacy (as per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or FERPA) and health-related privacy (as per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or HIPAA) are protected by law, and information pertaining to these acts shall only be shared under the allowable legal parameters. Similarly, as in all other situations, information regarding personnel, law enforcement and legal matters can only be shared with designated individuals within the leadership structure. Finally, information obtained in confidential conversations with city, county and state partners should be treated with the highest levels of discernment.

Training is a critically important component of preparedness. Training has the added benefit of helping a campus determine, in advance of an incident, what the communication structures, modes and frequency should be for a given incident. As a best practice, faculty, staff and students should have full access to academic continuity plans and should have the responsibility to provide input via a formally defined process over time to help campuses improve their preparedness and responsiveness. Plans can be posted publicly on websites or internally via other means, but should be shared widely to ensure broad participation and understanding before an incident occurs. Training could include table top exercises as well as larger simulations of an emergency to help build capacity for responsiveness.

As discussed below, continuity plans should have **communication protocols**. Clear communication of all emergency management, disaster recovery, business continuity and academic continuity plans is an important component of ongoing preparedness, particularly as it helps stakeholders understand that a plan is in place to protect their health and safety. All such plans should have built-in processes and timelines for feedback, updates and improvements.

B. Mission Continuity

As mentioned, CSU institutions are required to have Emergency Operations Plans (EO 1056) and Business Continuity Plans (EO 1014), including IT Disaster Recovery Plans. An overall approach to **mission continuity** can facilitate strong integration between all planning efforts: by integrating academic continuity considerations into all aspects of

mission continuity planning, campuses can ensure a higher level of integration of teaching, learning and research priorities and plans into the overall campus approach to preparedness, recovery and resilience.

Emergency management and continuity plans often include a tiered approach to disruptions. Having pre-defined, agreed-upon language to describe anticipated scenarios can help improve communication and clarity during an incident. A sample tiered approach appears below:

1. *Lowest Level--Partial operational disruption*: this may include something as routine as a break in the water main that requires part of campus to close on a given day, or the loss of power to a sector of campus. Such disruptions generally do not result in campus closure, but may result in parts of campus being closed off for work to be done and, in some cases, in employees being moved to a different building or part of campus until the problem is solved.
2. *Mid-Level--Partial closure*: residence halls may remain populated but most (or all) other campus operations and buildings may close due to a campus-wide disaster or crisis. Classes may be moved to online or remote modality or to another location, depending on the situation and the campus.
3. *Highest Level--Full campus closure*: all residence halls as well as other campus buildings are closed; on-campus classes are canceled; and only emergency operations and other required on-site employees are allowed on campus.

Approaching mission continuity (including emergency operations, business continuity, IT disaster recovery and academic continuity) in an integrated fashion can position an institution to respond effectively to everything from a partial operational disruption to a large-scale disaster. It can help the institution develop a shared approach as well as a shared understanding of the scope and scale of anticipated events and therefore help build a more resilient, adaptive organization.

C. Academic Continuity Planning

In all cases of emergency or disruption, Academic Affairs and other campus partners should be prepared to support academic continuity as much as possible, and to adapt to changing circumstances that may include:

1. Supporting the continuation of teaching and learning when the Learning Management System or other key systems are down.
2. Moving some or all classes (or final exam periods) from one site to another due to such situations that could include building shutdown, poor outdoor air quality and/or the need to close off one part of campus while the rest remains open.
3. Changing the modality of some or all courses from in-person or hybrid to entirely online.

4. Canceling events (including, but not limited to, athletic events, performances, conferences, orientations and lectures).
5. Giving consideration to altering the academic calendar if a prolonged disruption or closure occurs.

Incidents that pose an immediate and direct threat to the health and safety of students, faculty and staff (such as active shooters, credible threats of violence, fires near campus) may require rapid decisions to be made about class cancellations, increasing the amount of remote instruction, shifting to all-remote instruction and/or evacuation of buildings (including residence halls). In such cases, academic continuity may be interrupted while the threat is assessed, mitigated and contained. All of these scenarios require proactive thinking to build adaptivity and resilience into the overall approach to teaching and learning, including curricula, syllabi and academic support services.

For example, all campuses in the CSU and most across the nation changed course modality during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Some campuses also altered their academic calendars for 2020-21. Having plans in place for scenarios that may include the cancellation of several weeks in a row of Thursday or Friday classes, as has occurred due to power shutoffs in California in recent years, may be one option for campuses that frequently lose power during fire season. Large-scale disruptions (e.g., wildfires and COVID-19) have resulted in adjustments to grading options for students and to Retention, Tenure and Promotion calendars for faculty. When major changes are made to course modality or academic calendars, accrediting agencies should be notified, as per the communications section below.

Preparing for academic continuity involves an ongoing dialogue between leadership and key stakeholders. Depending on campus culture, this likely will involve consultation with deans, chairs, academic senates, faculty development experts, professional development committees, student leadership, student services professionals (such as advisors, tutoring and disability services personnel) and others who support student and faculty success at the institution. Community partners and others may also be consulted depending on the campus.

For a basic checklist to assist with planning, please see **Appendix I: Academic Continuity Planning Checklist**.

D. Developing Communication Protocols

Developing communication protocols in advance of a disruption or crisis is an important first step in preparedness. The campus Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) should contain a "protocols" section specifically for communication. From the academic continuity planning perspective, it is important to consider the impact of any emergency or disruption on the academic mission of the institution and to ensure strong communication protocols are in place before an incident occurs. This is especially

important for the academic enterprise, given the highly distributed nature of communications within and among academic units. For example, listservs, chatbots, customer relations software and other modes of decentralized communication may exist within academic units. Having protocols in place to ensure consistent, clear communication across all platforms requires advance inventories, protocols and training.

Below are some considerations for communications plans to help campuses ensure that the communications protocols take into account both internal and external stakeholders and place an emphasis on the teaching and learning mission of the institution. All communications plans should emphasize the simultaneous priorities of (1) providing information in various formats to reach the broadest possible audience and (2) providing correct, timely and tone-appropriate communication.

1. **Modes of Communication:** All reasonable modes of communication should be used by those designated to communicate during emergencies and disruptions. These modes may include websites, social media, email listservs, outside electronic bulletin boards, Slack, emergency notification systems and other text-based modes of communication that may be available to communicate with students in particular, such as chatbots. Communication should be coordinated and vetted for consistency and accuracy.

   a. **Emergency Notification System**: Protocols for Emergency Notification Systems (ENS) are articulated in the Emergency Management Plan for each campus. A protocol also should be developed to ensure timely coordination between ENS messaging and other available communication venues (including websites, social media, email, Slack, etc.) to ensure consistency of information sharing across platforms.

   b. **Website:** Having a dedicated website for campus disruptions and disasters can help facilitate rapid, accurate communication during an incident. A protocol should be in place to rapidly add an emergency notification banner to the main campus website to inform stakeholders about a disruption, closure or other incident. The site can be used to connect to community services as an incident shifts from response to recovery as well. It is helpful if the design and verbiage of the banner are given consideration in advance of incidents (e.g., red is attention-getting in major incidents, and a different color may be used when shifting to recovery). Campuses have found that this works best when the site posts all communications (including e-mails, emergency notifications, etc.) with a time and date stamp so people can access a running list of all communications related to a single incident.

c. **Social media:** Coordination, timely communication of key information via the institution's primary social media sites should be part of any communication protocol for emergencies and disruptions.

d. **Call centers:** A central call line or help line is often helpful, but prior planning is required to: (a) activate the line in a crisis or emergency; (b) place a relevant, correct message on the line; and (c) staff the phone line during set hours. Training should occur in advance of incidents to ensure staff have the skills and support to do this job well. Since many of the questions that come to campuses during disruptions relate to classes and academics in general, those engaged in academic continuity planning can be helpful in creating the plans around how to staff such a phone line and how to respond to questions as they arise during an event. Some campuses (e.g., Channel Islands and Humboldt) use an external company to run a call center in such cases, thereby ensuring the ability to immediately and reliably get a call center up and running during a disruption. Whether the call center is external or internal, a clear protocol for developing and maintaining correct answers to frequently asked questions should be part of all continuity plans.

e. **E-mail:** As a best practice, campuses should create a dedicated, monitored e-mail address to serve as the central communications point for inquiries. The e-mail address can be generic and used in all disruptions or emergencies (e.g., AskASpartan@___) or, for large-scale events, could match the name of an event (e.g., COVID19@___.edu). Similarly, positions in the Emergency Operations Center can have designated e-mail addresses (e.g., e.g., eoc-planning or eoc-operations). This protocol helps ensure that all email communication for a given situation will be centrally available to anyone fulfilling a key communications or support role during the event. It also minimizes the possibility of inconsistent answers.

f. **Chatbots:** Campuses with **chatbots or other text-based messaging solutions** should fold the FAQs and correct answers into the chatbots as well.

g. **Communications contacts inventory:** When creating an inventory of available modes of communication, it is important to create a list of employees (and their contact information) who have the ability and the power to modify each available mode to ensure that a website can be changed rapidly, a listserv accessed rapidly and/or the information can be posted immediately on social media after the websites are updated. Cross-training is vitally important in such situations: having multiple points of contact for website changes and other key emergency functions is a best practice.

h. **Process in place to cancel scheduled communications:** Many campuses use a centralized system (often managed by Marketing and Communications) to manage the pace and timing of communications. All communications protocols for disruptions should note the importance of cancelling normally scheduled communications during a time of disruption or emergency. Examples of normally scheduled communications include reminders about upcoming events, open enrollment, celebrations, etc.

2. **Internal Communications Protocols:** Internal communications protocols developed among leadership, divisions, colleges and departments can help people across the institution have the information they need to contact others in their unit during an emergency or other disruption. In general, campuses have well-developed continuity planning for business operations, but often have less-developed communications protocols within Academic Affairs. For example, some business continuity plans already have phone trees or other communications protocols in place for divisions, schools, colleges and departments. Attention should be given to ensuring compliance with the CSU's commitment to accessible technology and inclusivity. For example, if video communications are posted, they must meet accessibility requirements, including having closed-captioning or a transcript available. If a call center is offered, there should be contact information posted for those who require a Text Telephone (TYY) or other support. Campuses also can consider the extent to which key information may or should be posted in other languages (e.g., Spanish).

   a. **Process for maintaining updated employee information at the unit level:** Ensuring that managers have access to updated employee information on an ongoing basis is one critically important component of internal communications protocols. This can be difficult for units with high rates of employee turnover, with contract employees, and large numbers of student employees. Developing a protocol to ensure that managers have updated employee rosters can mitigate miscommunication in such instances.

   b. **Identify and validate stakeholder lists:** It is important to use the planning and recovery period to validate the stakeholder groups to ensure that none are left out of communications planning. While students, faculty and staff are our primary responsibility and focus, campuses also have a responsibility to communicate externally (e.g., local elected officials, education partners, community partners, board members, police, fire, county Emergency Operations Centers, Cal OES, and/or Cal Fire).

   c. **Ensuring inclusive communications:** Ensuring that clear protocols are in place for contacting all students, faculty and staff during a disruption or emergency is vitally important. For this, please keep in mind the following groups:

ⅰ. **Auxiliary employees and students (including those in our professional, extended and continuing education programs**) sometimes are not included in employee and student databases for regular university communications, so every effort should be made to include these individuals in communications protocols.

ⅱ. Furthermore, a clear protocol should be in place for contacting and supporting **students studying away (domestically) and studying abroad**. The point of contact for such information sharing usually includes the Senior International Officer as well as Risk Management.

ⅲ. **Disability Services (or its equivalent)** should be included in the development of protocols for communication, since their stakeholders may require different modes of communication as well as additional support during or following an incident.

3. **Academic Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):** FAQs can serve an extremely helpful role in making information broadly available in a short amount of time. For the academic continuity plan, a focus should be placed on processes that help prepare the campus to anticipate and answer academically-related questions during a disruption.

   a. **Identify the appropriate lead(s):** For student, faculty and academically essential staff FAQs, identifying the leader(s) of the Academic FAQs effort is an important part of advance planning. Positionally, it often makes sense for at least one of the leads to be an Associate Vice President (e.g., of Academic Programs, Undergraduate Studies, etc.) and for the person to work with a pre-designated group of individuals in consultation with the Provost's Office and, in cases in which advising and other student-focused services are housed in Student Affairs and/or Administration and Finance, with a designee from that units. Many campuses report that having a co-lead approach is helpful to ensure the integration of efforts across divisions or units. The group may include an academic dean, director of academic advising and staff who are knowledgeable about undergraduate and graduate activities, including research, registrar and/or a key faculty leader with knowledge of academic policies and procedures. Decisions or recommendations coming from this group should follow a clear communications protocol to ensure all divisions are apprised of changes to policies or practices before, during or after an incident.

   b. **Maintain a database of FAQs:** Pulling together FAQs from other disruptions or emergencies (at your own institution or others) can be helpful as a starting point for planning.

   c. **Coordinate and plan:** It is important to ensure coordination between the Emergency Operations Center or other campus leadership unit and the

academic continuity planning lead(s). Experience with major incidents across our system has demonstrated the importance of clear, consistent communication during and after incidents. Dynamic situations create the need for adaptivity and accuracy, so it is important to ensure that all communications protocols include a direct line to the EOC.

d. **Academic continuity communication structure:** Some campuses embed academic continuity into the planning section of the EOC to ensure appropriate levels of communication during disruptions and emergencies. At the very least, campuses should place an Academic Liaison position within the EOC management structure. The Academic Liaison can act as the liaison to the academic continuity group and can be placed within the planning section of the EOC, as one example of a structure that works well for some campuses. Regardless of the EOC structure, proposed communications related to academics should be vetted for accuracy and clarity (usually by the PIO or other designated communications expert) when an EOC is active and the situation remains dynamic. This structure also allows the PIO to rapidly update university websites, social media and chatbots with correct, consistent information related to the incident. Whatever the structure, the protocols should be in place and exercised in advance of an incident to ensure accuracy and timeliness of communications, including publicizing dates on which the information was posted and updated.

4. **Key External Stakeholders:** In addition to communicating regularly with campus stakeholders during disruptions, senior leadership and emergency managers maintain close communication with the Chancellor and the Chancellor's Office staff. Furthermore, the Emergency Management Plan should anticipate the need for EOC and potentially other staff to be engaged in ongoing communication and coordination with external agencies (such as county and city EOCs, public health, CalFire, etc.).

Moreover, for major disruptions that result in the wholesale cancellation of all classes and last more than one (1) day, the **Academic Continuity Plan** should identify the need to communicate with:

a. **The WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)**: WSCUC is the institutional accrediting body for the CSU campuses. Under the direction of the President and Provost, the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) of each campus should reach out to their contact at WSCUC to inform them of the reason for the cancellation or suspension of classes and the anticipated re-start date.
    i. In the majority of cases, institutions will be in a position to inform WSCUC that the disruption or closure will not impede the ability of

students to achieve the Student Learning Outcomes stated in course syllabi.

    ii.   Note that if the disruption or closure is so prolonged that the SLOs clearly cannot be met and business operations involving financial aid will not be restored in a timely fashion, the campus will need to re-examine its academic calendar to ensure that SLOs can be met and/or establish an alternate plan for business continuity involving financial aid. In such situations, campus leadership should be in close consultation with the Chancellor's Office to examine possibilities for restoration of the learning environment.

    iii.   Note that communication with WSCUC is generally not required for minor disruptions that result in shifting of course modality for a short period of time as might occur due to a localized hazardous waste spill in a science building, for example. The campus designee(s) should maintain clear communication with WSCUC and other accreditors to ensure ongoing compliance.

b. **Other accrediting bodies:** Depending on the scope and scale of the incident, campuses may need to be in touch with other accrediting bodies.

    i.   In spring 2020, for example, the closure of pre-K-12 necessitated widescale consultation with agencies for teacher accreditation. A similar situation arose with nursing when students could no longer access clinical sites.

    ii.   The institution's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) generally serves as the point of contact and should be integrated into academic continuity planning to ensure appropriate communication during incidents that may disrupt these and other accredited programs. On some campuses, the contact designee for accredited programs or colleges may be a chair, director or dean. In all cases, communication should occur between the appropriate associate vice president, deans and/or department chairs and the relevant accrediting agency to ensure clear, consistent communication regarding the disruption and anticipated re-start dates. In such cases, the ALO should maintain close communication with the appropriate designee at the Chancellor's Office to maximize opportunities for clear information sharing and, when necessary, advocacy with the accrediting body in question.

c. **The Federal Department of Education**: The U.S. Department of Education initiates a "Dear colleague" letter to institutions that close down for more than one (1) day. The purpose of the letter is to elicit a campus explanation for the closure and a description of the impact to students' ability to continue their education and continue receiving financial aid. Fundamentally, the inquiry seeks to establish that the institution will remain eligible to

receive federal financial aid by reopening in a timely fashion. The letter is addressed to the campus president. It contains a series of questions that require a campus response. Campuses should draft a response and send it to the CSU Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and their senior staff (AVC, Academic Programs, Innovations and Faculty Development; AVC, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Division of Academic and Student Affairs Chief of Staff). It is important to respond promptly and correctly to avoid a situation in which financial aid may be threatened. [See **Appendix II: Sample Response to the U.S. Department of Education**]

d. **Granting agencies and/or donors**: Many research and program grants (or philanthropic funds) are awarded based on required timelines and outcomes. The Office of Research or, in some cases, Advancement, in consultation with Principal Investigators, may need to coordinate with the outside funding agency to inform them of the closures and associated delays to ensure that the funding agency is aware of the adverse impacts of a natural or human disaster or other disruption on the campus.

E. The Communications Cycle

1. **Start of Every Term**

   a. **Faculty:** During the first or second session of a class, faculty may choose to:

      1. Include key information about campus support services (e.g., advising, mental health services, etc.), safety (e.g., evacuation and shelter-in-place protocols, emergency notification systems, etc.) and other campus-wide information related to health and safety in syllabi.

      2. Tell students to frequently check their designated email and the Learning Management System (e.g., Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) and make sure their primary phone number is correct in the campus' PeopleSoft or equivalent system.

      3. Communicate that students themselves are responsible for their learning throughout the course, even if there are disruptions during the term. Faculty also can take the opportunity to state their own responsibility for being responsive to students, including communicating expectations clearly and providing updates to syllabi as needed during any given term. This presents opportunity to discuss the purpose of the Student Learning Outcomes for the course and to help students understand that they need to always be looking ahead to ensure they are keeping

up with expectations and assignments so they can be successful in the course. Faculty can help students understand that, while there may be some adjustments to the syllabus during a term due to unforeseen circumstances, the Student Learning Outcomes will guide all teaching and learning during the semester.

4. Encourage students to download key course materials in advance of due dates as well as to back up all of their course materials, including syllabi, assignments, projects and exams, as appropriate.

b. **Campuses**
   1. It is standard practice for the Emergency Operations Plan to delineate the campus-wide **emergency notification protocol** in place to regularly communicate with all faculty, staff and students to remind them to: (1) update their contact information in the appropriate system (e.g., PeopleSoft); (2) ensure they have enrolled to receive emergency notifications from the campus; and (3) check campus websites and email regularly throughout the term, especially during any disruption or emergency that may occur. This protocol also should include a link to the institution's IT Status Alert site, along with an explanation of how this site can be used to inform users about how widespread an outage may be. **Note:** In the event of an impending expected disruption to campus operations, this message can be sent out again to remind the campus community to take these actions in advance of an actual disruption or emergency.

   2. As part of the academic continuity plan, campuses also should develop processes to ensure that appropriate faculty (e.g., chairs and directors) and staff have contact information for pre-determined colleagues in their departments or college in the event of an emergency or disaster. Departments and programs should consider having contingency plans for alternate faculty to step in and teach classes in the event that a faculty member cannot teach as a result of such emergencies or disasters. They also should consider contingency plans for who might serve as the chair or program director if these leaders are incapacitated or out of touch during an incident. Department and program offices should also have contingency plans to ensure that designated staff are available for faculty and students in the event of such emergencies or disasters. Colleges / departments should also ensure that decision-making authorities are delegated to at least primary and secondary individuals prior to incidents.

2. **During the Term**

   a. **Faculty:** Faculty can revisit the conversation about preparedness with students frequently throughout a term. This can include a reiteration of the Student Learning Outcomes and the need to prepare for disruptions by downloading course materials in advance of due dates. Faculty can remind students that major disruptions sometimes require an adaptation of the syllabus and a modification of assignment due dates, but that in such cases an updated syllabus will be provided in a timely fashion.

   b. **Campuses:** During the academic term, it is a good institutional practice to remind students, faculty and staff of what steps they should take to ensure they have their correct contact information listed with the institution. This communication also can remind students to check their campus email regularly and to log in to the Learning Management System when a disruption occurs so they can be sure to access the latest information about class cancellations or updated syllabi or simply communicate with their instructor(s). While certain extreme events may interrupt internet access for an extended period, it is important to communicate that, just as the institution is committed to regular communication with stakeholders, employees and students alike have the responsibility to stay in communication with the institution if at all possible.

3. **During a Disruption or Emergency:** Regular, clear communication with students, faculty and staff during an emergency is a best practice. As mentioned, communication should be coordinated and should occur across multiple platforms to ensure the broadest possible reach and impact. For the academic continuity plan, consider in advance what the communications should be (and from whom) regarding teaching and learning.

   For example:

   a. **Faculty**
      1. **Limited-scale disruptions:** Since many disruptions occur on a limited scale (such as a localized on-campus power outage or hazardous waste spill), faculty within the localized area of disruption may be in a good position to communicate with students to inform them about any possible impacts to the class or assignments.

      2. **Larger-scale disruptions:** In cases of larger scope emergencies or disruptions, generally the campus Emergency Operations Center is designated to be the first to communicate with faculty, students and staff to ensure that correct information is being shared with

regard to scale and impacts. Follow up information often is then provided by the relevant vice president or unit leader, depending on the incident and its scope.

b. **Campuses**

1. **Centralizing communication:** Having a central, pre-designated website for disruptions and emergencies can help everyone on the campus know where to find information whenever a disruption occurs. As mentioned, the site can house all communications (including e-mails, emergency notifications, etc.) with a time and date stamp so people can access a running list of all communications related to a single incident. This can also serve as a resource site for the call center and for all involved in answering inquiries during and after an event. Links to external information sites (e.g., city or county emergency websites, CalFire, or community resources sites) can also be included.

2. **Targeted communications to faculty:** Communications targeted to faculty can help faculty understand the questions they should be considering as they adjust their syllabi in response to the event. For example, if one week of classes is lost due to a major natural disaster, a message that emphasizes the importance of communicating changes or impacts with students, updating syllabi and adjusting assignments can be helpful, as can providing resources to faculty (such as the Faculty Center or even peer mentors) so they can seek advice and help in such a situation.

3. **Targeted communications to students:** Communication targeted to students from the institution can focus on resources available to them (e.g., advising, counseling, technology, food banks, etc.) in addition to encouraging students to check email frequently, log in to the Learning Management System and communicate with their instructors.

4. **Targeted communications to staff:** Most communications protocols already integrate staff communications, but it is worth giving consideration to sharing more, rather than less, information with staff so everyone at the institution can be empowered with more information about how to help restore the learning environment. In some cases, when information is shared only with faculty, for example, staff may feel left out or ill-informed.

5. **Extended leadership communications:** Having regular meetings with an extended leadership group during and following the

incident can help improve communication and resolve issues as they arise.

   a. Anticipating this need as part of the planning effort can help the leadership (including deans, associate vice presidents, directors, etc.) understand the role they will be expected to play in maintaining strong lines of communication during an incident.
   b. For example, provosts can anticipate meeting with their broader leadership teams regularly to provide situational updates as an incident unfolds and as recovery is underway. This can help provide academically focused feedback from a broad and diverse group back to the Emergency Operations Center. It also helps ensure clarity of information sharing and provides an opportunity for input into decision-making.
   c. Similarly, it often is appropriate for deans to meet with chairs and directors more frequently during an event to ensure a strong feedback loop.

F. Teaching and Learning Continuity

During the periods between major emergencies and disruptions, campuses have the opportunity to help build a broader understanding of the need for continuous improvement and preparedness. Faculty play a critically important role in helping with this important undertaking. Similarly, campuses have had enough disruptions now to have a tremendous amount of data about the student experience, and such information also should be folded into these efforts.

Working with appropriate stakeholders to build communication plans, training modules and a shared set of expectations (that often require policy updates) is important for campus responsiveness. Establishing minimum requirements for teaching and learning continuity should be part of the academic planning process. Given the increasing number of disruptions and crises in higher education, this point cannot be over-emphasized: COVID-19 is but one of a series of major disruptions that have demonstrated repeatedly that our most at-risk students and community members are those who face the greatest challenges.

As an educational system committed to diversity, equity and inclusion, the CSU has an obligation to develop policies and practices that help faculty and staff acquire and sustain the skills and resources needed to serve students before, during and after disruptions. Similarly, institutions need to prepare to respond to the disparate impacts disruptions and major incidents have on the most vulnerable stakeholders. This work was on full display in the CSU during COVID-19, so campuses can build on lessons

learned from the responsiveness shown vis-à-vis the deployment of WiFi hotspots, the distribution of laptops, flexible grading practices and adaptive academic calendars, for example.

Campuses may wish to consider which elements of the academic continuity plan require new policies to be developed to ensure a basic level of continuity for all classes and students. Access, equity, and continuity should be prioritized as part of the planning process, which should also take into account the possible need to: (a) adapt syllabi due to an extended disruption; (b) accommodate students impacted by a disruption; and (c) assign a course to a new instructor due to a faculty member's need to go on leave following an event. All of these scenarios have played out on CSU campuses with some frequency in recent years. In preparing for their likelihood, campuses will continue to become more resilient. These experiences have shown that departments that keep a running list of faculty who have taught a given course over the years are well-positioned to seek substitutes more rapidly than others, for example. For more detail, please see **Appendix III: Sample Academic Statements and Policies**.

1. **Syllabi:** In preparing for a new term, faculty can be encouraged to consider whether their syllabi contain enough direction to help guide students in case of a disruption or emergency. Some institutions require the use of an official (accessible) syllabus template and still others provide sample attendance policies. Consideration should be given to the development of statements or policies regarding: (a) how faculty will attempt to continue instruction in the event of emergencies or disasters; (b) flexible attendance policies that take into account the possibility of course cancellations or campus closures; (c) requirements for all syllabi to be housed electronically by a department in the event that faculty cannot be reached. As a best practice, some campuses have moved toward including building evacuation and shelter-in-place protocols as a component of a syllabus template and/or regular communications.

2. **Learning Management Systems**: Continuity plans should strive to ensure that course materials are presented in such a way that they can be accessed both on- and off-campus in case of an emergency or a disaster. Learning Management Systems can be set up to broadcast important information to all students to read when they log into their course materials.

   Some guiding principles to ensure equity and consistency include:

   a. Using the Learning Management System is the most effective way to ensure that course materials are backed up in case of computers and home back-ups being disabled or destroyed.

   b. It is a best practice to back up instructional materials to the cloud and/or to external hard drives on a regular basis. Consider backing up the

following regularly: syllabi, lectures, discussion or forum topics, assignments (including student files if appropriate), quizzes and grades. This ongoing process of updating and backing up all data is especially important for instances in which a Learning Management System may become unavailable and for those times when a faculty member may need to take over another individual's course due to unforeseen circumstances.

It is possible that the Learning Management System itself may become disabled during a major incident. Campuses should identify a suite of tools that can be used in such an eventuality to enable continuity of teaching and learning while the Learning Management System is restored.

3. **Academic Policies:** Campuses should consider whether their Academic Plan (or related policy) requires faculty to use the Learning Management System for certain elements of the course (such as the syllabus and the gradebook) to ensure equity of access for all students and to help minimize disruptions that occur when an event befalls an individual faculty member (such as the loss of a computer or even of a home).

G. Restoring the Learning Environment After a Disruption or Disaster

Generally speaking, recovery from a disruption or a disaster is often proportional to the scope and scale of the incident. As campuses have learned over and over again, losing power for a day or two has a small impact compared to a large-scale disaster or a violent event. Some campuses are moving toward more resilient infrastructure (e.g., microgrids and load prioritization planning), but building resiliency into campus physical plants will take time and resources.

For purposes of preparedness, continuity planning should include a prioritization of essential functions to ensure that recovery can occur in a timely fashion and to avoid duplication of effort during or following an incident. Academic continuity should be included in this prioritization. Such planning provides the campus with a target deadline for continuity purposes. Target restoration timelines can be devised in advance of an event, but will likely need to be adjusted, depending on the type and scale of the event. A sample (and partial) prioritization for restoration of services appears below:

Tier 1 (restore within 12-24 hours): e.g., public safety priorities; critical IT functionality including the Learning Management System; critical research infrastructure such as freezers, incubators, etc.

Tier 2 (restore within 24-48 hours): e.g., student health, remote library services, classrooms, tech support, advising, critical business functions, etc.

Tier 3 (restore within 5-7 days): business offices, bookstore, athletic facilities, etc.

Considering how wide-ranging disasters have become and that the state now has an extended fire season, leadership needs to think more proactively and empathetically about how to manage not only during a crisis, but also during the prolonged recovery period.

Academic continuity plans should articulate processes relevant to recovery, training and preparedness related to the academic enterprise, including:

1. **Re-entry and Recovery**: Institutions should have plans in place (usually within the Emergency Operations Plan and/or the Business Continuity Plan) to help students, faculty and staff re-enter and recover after a disruption, emergency or disaster. It is important to keep in mind that disruptions that impact the campus often also impact the entire community, resulting in significant stress as well as loss of income and sometimes housing. Campuses should anticipate that students, faculty and staff will have a wide range of needs that include, but are not limited to: student assistance (e.g., advising, counseling, financial aid, basic needs) and employee assistance (related to employment as well as to mental health). Coordination among divisions—especially between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs for student-related issues—is critically important to ensure students' needs are met. Universities cannot provide all necessary services, but can provide links to other community resources (e.g. local assistance center) or even hosting such resources (such as insurance assistance for property loss) on-site during the recovery period. Often the EOC or Business Continuity Advance Planning team serves as the point for gathering such resources in preparation for re-entry. Notably, government assistance often is available for campuses that have an emergency declaration. The Chief Business Officer, in conjunction with the EOC finance section, usually leads this effort to access funds.

2. **Training and Preparedness:** The preparedness cycle should include a focus on gathering feedback from students, faculty and staff via an after-action mechanism (e.g., a report, survey and/or review) about what is working and what needs improvement with regard to the institution's support structure and responsiveness. Strong integration between the academic and business continuity plans can help ensure that major issues needing attention are prioritized between events. Institutions often find that more training is needed to help managers, instructors and others respond empathetically after a traumatic incident. Such training can help

the entire institution build a culture of compassion and resilience over time. Similarly, more training often is needed to help faculty develop more robust toolkits to adapt to disruption and to modify course planning for future terms.

3. **Resilience-Informed Preparedness**: Given the ongoing nature of disasters and the expanded fire season statewide, many stakeholders suffer varying levels of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). For example, during the fall 2020 wildfires and widespread poor air quality throughout California, not only were lives and homes lost, but many of those who were evacuated or otherwise exposed to wildfire smoke also likely felt newly triggered and traumatized. Moreover, campuses should always bring an equity lens to preparedness: communities of color, at-risk students, and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged suffer disproportionately during disasters. Approaching the work of preparedness and recovery through the lens of resilience and equity can help all of CSU campuses be stronger and better positioned to support students, faculty and staff during and after major incidents. **See Appendix IV for Resources, including sample academic plans and resources related to preparedness and resilience.**

Appendix I: Academic Continuity Planning Checklist

This checklist provides an overview of the processes, policies, and structures that are helpful for overall continuity and resiliency planning. It can be modified and expanded depending on institutional needs.

A. **Crisis Leadership and Preparedness Planning**
___ Cross-functional, cross-divisional group in place to support business, academic and emergency management planning.
___ Cross-functional, cross-divisional emergency management and EOC structure that includes academic continuity functionality, position or sub-unit.
___ Training opportunities planned on a regular basis for these cross-functional groups, including staff from all divisions.
___ Onboarding processes in place for new members of the EOC, academic continuity planning group and other leadership positions critical to crisis management.

B. **Mission Continuity Planning**
___ Plans supporting mission continuity (including business, IT disaster recovery and academic continuity) posted and available.
___ Plans include a shared, agreed-upon description of levels of closure and disruption.
___ Training and exercises occur on a regular basis to test protocols and provide process improvement opportunities.
___ Feedback opportunities provided to ensure ongoing process improvement.

C. **Academic Continuity Planning**
___ Pre-designated, cross-functional group (or groups) in place to address academic continuity planning (including communications, which may be sub-group of the broader group or a separate group with crossover membership).
___ Clearly defined relationship between the academic continuity planning group (or lead/s) and the EOC.
___ Designee(s) (usually the Accreditation Liaison Officer, sometimes in conjunction with appropriate deans or chairs) charged with communicating with relevant accrediting bodies during times of major disruption and closure.
___ Inventory of existing accrediting agency contacts and active granting agency contacts with a timeline and process for regular updates.
___ Protocol established for communicating with external stakeholders connected to the academic core, including board members, and business partners. This might include college, school, or program board members; internship sponsors; key donors, etc.
___ Processes and/or policies created to address incident response, the need to modify syllabi, assignments and other academic experiences (e.g., internships, clinical experiences, student teaching) as well as the academic calendar, if needed.

D. **Communication Protocols**

___ Consistency exists between the Emergency Operations Plan communication protocols and all other related protocols.

___ Inventory of modes of communications and personnel authorized to activate each mode (e.g., designated e-mail addresses, listservs, call center, central major incident website, chatbot, social media, etc.).

___ Inventory of passwords and user instructions for relevant communication modes, usually kept by the EOC.

___ Units have established communications protocols to ensure employees in the unit can be reached by the relevant manager as needed.

___ Protocol established for canceling pre-scheduled communications, canceling events, and communicating with external stakeholders (e.g., ticket holders, conference attendees) as appropriate. This protocol should include attention to auxiliaries, extended education, and study away and abroad rosters. While recommendations may be decentralized, all incident-related decision-making and communication during a major incident generally is handled via the EOC.

___ Protocol established for how EOC or campus leadership will communicate with key campus partners, including, for example, the leadership of Academic/Faculty Senate, Associated Students and Staff Council.

___ Archive of communications and websites from prior incidents available via EOC share drives or other accessible storage site to avoid duplication of effort.

___ Employee and contract employee lists kept up to date so managers can communicate readily with all employees in an emergency.

E. Communications Cycle

___ Protocol to regularize start of term communication, including:

 ___ Faculty responsibility to communicate with students about how to succeed and prepare for disruption (including updating contact information, checking email frequently, using the Learning Management System, focusing on the Student Learning Outcomes and downloading course materials in advance).

 ___ Campus-wide communication regarding emergency notification protocols.

___ Protocol for mid-term communications, including:

 ___ Reminder to faculty to reiterate start-of-term message about student responsibility and communication.

 ___ All campus messaging (e.g., before fire season or an upcoming possible weather event) reiterating the protocols for the emergency notification system, the need to prepare for a possible disruption, and the responsibility to maintain contact with instructors, managers and chairs in the event of a disruption.

___ Protocol for communications during an emergency, including:

 ___ Determination of whether and how communication will be centralized via the EOC or other point of contact during a large-scale event

 ___ Protocol for ensuring academically related communications and FAQs can be created, vetted and posted in a timely fashion.

___ Pre-identified extended leadership groups (e.g., Provost Leadership Team; deans with their chairs and directors) in place to allow for rapid response and broader input mechanisms outside the EOC, as appropriate.

F. Teaching and Learning Continuity

___ Common syllabus template updated to include statement(s) about possible disruption, flexible attendance policies, building evacuation protocols, shelter-in-place protocols, and other disruption-related statements as deemed appropriate by the campus.

___ Process or policy in place encouraging or requiring the use of a common syllabus template.

___ Process or policy in place encouraging or requiring syllabi be electronically housed at the department level and/or posted on the Learning Management System.

___ Process or policy in place encouraging or requiring use of the Learning Management System for basic functionality, including syllabus, gradebook and assignments, for example.

___ Faculty training available on an ongoing basis to encourage resiliency and adaptivity and the sharing of best practices.

G. Restoring the Learning Environment After a Disruption or Disaster

___ Campus has an agreed-upon prioritization of restoration of services that includes teaching, learning and research priorities.

___ Re-entry plans exist to help students, faculty and staff recover after a disruption or disaster. Re-entry planning should include attention to academic support for students as well as mental health, basic needs and other services that may be needed.

___ Protocol in place to hold post-event faculty workshops and related training to help increase resilience and build on the shared experience and expertise of those who have been through major events or disruptions.

APPENDIX II-**Sample Response to the U.S. Department of Education**

Note that the U.S. Department of Education reaches out to the campus (usually to the president). The campus designee then prepares a response for the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs, who then submits a response via email to the U.S. Department of Education. All of this occurs in the first ~48 hours of a campus closure.

[The example memo below provides a report on the operations of Sonoma State University following the Pacific Gas & Electricity (PG&E) Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) and the Kincade Fire that impacted the campus beginning on Saturday, October 26, 2019. The information provided in this memo reflects the campus status as of Oct. 30, 2019.]

The standard questions from the Department of Education are answered below:

Specific dates that the campus was closed.

Sonoma State University closed on Saturday, October 26, 2019. The campus was prospectively slated to be impacted by a Pacific Gas & Electricity (PG&E) Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS). The Kincade Fire impacts spread to the campus by Saturday, Oct. 26, when power was shut off not to the campus itself but to the offsite pumping station that powers our primary fire suppression. While secondary fire suppression is available, out of an abundance of caution, at that time (approximately 18:00) residential students and staff were relocated offsite and we closed the campus fully.

What is the current operating status of the institution and its financial aid office?

All university business operations, including the Financial Aid Office, were closed from Saturday, October 26, 2019 through Friday, November 1, 2019. Housing, police services, and limited food services will resume on Saturday, Nov. 2, 2019 for campus reopening on a limited basis for the residential students to return to residence halls. Campus operations are slated to resume fully on Monday, November 4, 2019. SSU has maintained an Emergency Operations Center during the closure. The EOC ensured business continuity for all mandatory operations during that time.

 If the institution is currently closed, what is your projected reopen date?

Housing, police services, and limited food services resume beginning Saturday, November 2, 2019 so that residential students can return to campus. The campus will be open for all normal business operations on Monday, November 4, 2019.

Has there been any structural damage to the institution?

No structural damage has occurred to the main campus or any of its off-site locations.

If structural damage has occurred, will you establish a temporary site for instruction and what is the address for the temporary alternate location?

Not applicable. No structural damage occurred.

Have the utilities, such as: electric, water, gas, heating, and air conditioning been affected?

All campus-based utilities are functioning normally with the exception of the power being shut off to the offsite pumping station. That pumping station provides power to the primary fire suppression system for the campus. Secondary fire suppression system is in place and the local fire district and state fire marshal have been notified. Due to the air quality from the fires, we have closed the outside air intake and locked all buildings as per standard procedures.

How is your institution communicating operational status and providing key updates to students and the community?

The SSU EOC provided regular updates to all students, faculty, and staff regarding operational status. These messages were pushed out via email and web updates. In addition, Sonoma State published regular updates to a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page to provide additional information. Push notifications from the campus' Emergency Notification system were deployed as well for instances of closure and public safety as needed. An emergency hotline provided recorded updates and a call center were deployed to answer specific questions.

What issues or questions can we address to date related to the administrative relief and flexibilities described in Dear Colleague Letter (GEN 17-08)?

The closure of Sonoma State University for <u>five</u> business days did not significantly impact financial aid processes for students. The length of the academic year will not require adjustment, even though this is the second closure at SSU during this fall term, because the closures were of short duration (three days and five days for a total of eight business days). The campus will <u>not</u> require the flexibilities identified in the Dear Colleague Letter (GEN 17-08).

APPENDIX III-Sample Academic Statements, Policies, and Framing Questions

A. Sample Course Statement for Disruptions

"Disruptions (including natural disasters and loss of power) are increasingly common in our region. We all need to be prepared for the eventuality that we may experience a disruption and we might not be able to access the Learning Management System, come to campus due to closure, or even download materials precisely when we need them. All students should ensure that you have access to your syllabus, your instructor's name and email address, and to the course materials in advance of when assignments are due. Having these materials on your own computer in advance of due dates will allow you to successfully continue learning throughout the term.

For every course, students should focus on the Student Learning Outcomes on the syllabus, as these tell everyone—students and instructors—what the learning goals are for the course. Unless directed otherwise, students should follow the syllabus. Sometimes faculty may need to alter the syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances, in which case a revised syllabus will be shared in a timely fashion and will replace the original syllabus."

B. Sample Flexible Attendance Policy

"Given that disruptions (including power outages, campus closures, and natural disasters) may occur during the academic term, students are encouraged to contact the instructor immediately when an event or incident impacts the student negatively to ensure that the instructor is in the best possible position to provide alternatives when appropriate."

C. Framing Questions: Suggestions for Framing Discussions about Preparedness

For planning purposes, including for the development of institution-wide policies, some campuses have framed discussions in terms of preparedness questions, including, for example:
- *Student success:* How do students know how to be successful learners? Is there a university-wide tutorial available in the Learning Management System? Are "Tips for Success" included in the syllabus template?
- *Course design:* What component of each syllabus will be adjusted if a week of class (or more) is lost due to a disruption or emergency? Are courses designed in modules or units that can be adjusted in case of disruption? Are these course adjustments equitable to all students? Are attendance policies flexible enough to accommodate widespread disruptions as well as individual students' hardship?
- *Assistance with student hardships:* Do faculty have an alert mechanism to report student hardship or other issues of concern (such as persistent absence or missing assignments)?

- *Technology:* If access to technology is not available on a given day, what might substitute for an online exam or other technology-reliant assignment?
- *Emergency assistance:* If a faculty member needs to take a leave during the semester, what plans are in place to ensure a smooth transfer of teaching duties to another instructor? Is the course loaded into the Learning Management System (including updated syllabus, assignments, and gradebook)?
- *Policies:* What aspects of academic continuity planning should be codified into policy to help ensure both student and faculty success? How does the academic continuity plan integrate with the business continuity plan of the institution? At what intervals are these plans revised and/or revisited?

APPENDIX IV-**RESOURCES**

Academic Continuity Plan Resources (CSU Campuses)

California State University, Bakersfield. "Business Continuity Advice for Staff, Faculty, and Students."

https://its.csub.edu/continuity

California State University, East Bay. "Instructional Continuity."
https://www.csueastbay.edu/online/instructional-continuity-preparing-your-first-online-courseinstruction.html

California State University, Northridge. "Academic Continuity Planning."
https://www.csun.edu/academic-resources-planning/academic-continuity-planning

Humboldt State University. Focused Instructional Transition Team (FITT): Cross-divisional academic continuity planning team. https://fitt.humboldt.edu/

Sacramento State University. "Academic Continuity during Campus Disruption."
https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/academic-continuity/

San Diego State University. "Academic Continuity Planning."
https://its.sdsu.edu/academic-continuity/

Keep Teaching and Learning Resources (CSU Campuses)

CSU campuses have created continuity resource sites focused on adaptivity and resilience for students, faculty, and staff, including, but not limited to:

California State University, Bakersfield. "Academic Continuity Resources."
https://www.csub.edu/tlc/Remote_Instruction_Resources/index.html

California State University, Channel Islands. "Keep Teaching, Keep Learning, Keep Working."
https://www.csuci.edu/keep-teaching-learning-working/

California State University, Chico. "Keep Teaching" and "Keep Learning."
https://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/keep-teaching/index.shtml
https://www.csuchico.edu/keep-learning/

Humboldt State University. "Keep Teaching at HSU."

https://ctl.humboldt.edu/content/keep-teaching

California State University, Los Angeles. "Keep on Teaching."
https://www.calstatela.edu/cetl/edtech/keep-teaching

California State University, Long Beach. "Keep Teaching and Learning."
https://www.csulb.edu/academic-technology-services/instructional-design/faculty-resources/keep-teaching-and-learning

California State University, Monterey Bay. "Keep Teaching."
https://csumb.edu/cat/keep-teaching

California State University, Northridge. "Keep Teaching" and "Keep Learning."
https://www.csun.edu/it/keep-teaching
https://www.csun.edu/it/keep-learning

San Francisco State University. "Resilient Teaching and Learning Resources."
https://instructionalcontinuity.sfsu.edu/

Other Resources
EDUCAUSE. "Instructional Continuity Plans."
https://library.educause.edu/resources/2020/6/instructional-continuity-plans
This library of continuity plans primarily includes those created in response to COVID-19.

Federal Emergency Management Agency. "Ready Campus."
https://www.ready.gov/campus
FEMA's site supports the creation of emergency management and preparedness planning for institutions of higher learning.

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center.
https://rems.ed.gov/
Resources for creating and supporting resilient educational institutions. REMS provides support to pre-k-16, including free resilience training and numerous Publications and Guidance Documents for planning and preparedness.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "Tips for Survivors of a Disaster or Other Traumatic Event: Managing Stress."
https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Tips-for-Survivors-of-a-Disaster-or-Other-Traumatic-Event-Managing-Stress/SMA13-4776

This site has dozens of resource pages that can be downloaded as PDFs and that address everything from managing stress to "[Tips for College Students After a Disaster or Other Trauma](#)."