Guidelines for Faculty and Teaching Assistants in case of campus emergency

The instructional mission of the university would be impacted in any emergency situation, whether it is a severe winter storm, a tornado, a utilities grid failure or health crisis such as pandemic influenza. In some scenarios, the situation could even be complicated by an extended suspension of classes, and potentially, even the shortening of a semester.

This document is intended to suggest several strategies that will help make adjustments easier and avoid problems that could arise. Since we are unable to predict when emergencies will happen, or when they might impact the Purdue campus, implementation is recommended immediately.

1. **Make it a routine to teach safety and emergency preparedness in your classroom every semester.**
   In addition to the usual lab safety instructions, Purdue instructors are asked to make it a priority to include instruction to their students on how to respond to campus emergencies that may occur during class.
   You and your students should know how to distinguish between the various alarms and emergency sirens, what to do, where to go, and how to react. A classroom check list, safety reference materials, quick reference guide, poster and useful links are provided on the Campus Emergency Preparedness website. Using these materials will make assembling the information and learning and teaching the Purdue procedures easier for you.

   **Rationale:** When an emergency arises, it is already too late to teach students how to react. That is the time for quick instructions that reinforce procedures you have already taught them. Some of these emergency procedures are classroom specific, and some are general information that everyone needs to know no matter where they are. As educators, it is part of our job to teach our students appropriate response to emergencies. Please incorporate this preparedness information into your course early each semester.

2. **Include the following statement in the syllabus of each course that you teach.**
   In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course.
   Blackboard Learn web page, my email address: ________@purdue.edu, and my office phone: 49X-XXXX.

   **Rationale:** This paragraph alerts students that in an emergency situation the professor may need to adjust the requirements of the course and the grading strategy. It should help to reduce the number of grade appeals that could result from any adjustments that may be need to made if the semester length is modified as a result of an emergency. It puts students on alert that they also need to spread their effort across the entire semester.

3. **Have a means of contacting students.**
   **Rationale.** If classes are suspended, an instructor may want to be in touch with students to provide them with assignment materials or information about the course. It is wise to have some means of contacting students. One easy means is to request an ITaP email list be created for each of course. You can request a course email list at [http://www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/tools/emaillists/](http://www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/tools/emaillists/)

4. **Set up a Blackboard Learn site for each course.**
   Set up a Blackboard Learn site for each course, including independent studies, thesis, etc. even if is not currently used/needed for the course. Begin by posting course materials on the course site so they could be available to students as needed. E.g. syllabus, copies of readings, assignments, etc. Instructors may want to add lecture notes or PowerPoint slides for work students could do outside of the classroom in the event of a temporary suspension of classes. allows instructors to load materials and hold their release until a specific date. See: Blackboard Learn at [http://www.itap.purdue.edu/ltl/Blackboard Learn/](http://www.itap.purdue.edu/ltl/Blackboard Learn/)
**Rationale:** Should classes be suspended, Blackboard Learn may be a primary way instructors can communicate with students in the interim and provide an equitable access point to course information.

5. **Review the course grading structure of each course and try balancing it across the semester.**

   **Rationale:** In the event of an emergency suspension, it may become necessary to shorten the semester. In that situation, instructors will want to avoid a situation where a high percentage of the student’s grade cannot be accomplished because it was due at the end of the semester. A review of the course grading structure will help to identify potential problems and allow for adjustments so that the distribution of grading points can be made more evenly across the semester. In some courses, the last few weeks and especially the final is very heavily weighted, and this could cause problems if the semester were suddenly concluded early in response to an emergency.

6. **Examine course attendance policy.**

   **Rationale:** Some faculty require and reward attendance as part of the grade in a course in order to encourage attendance and reward students for participation in the class. However, in the case of a health emergency, it is in everyone’s best interests that ill or exposed students NOT be in class since they could potentially infect others. In addition, if there were a pandemic outbreak in which mortality rates were higher than normal, individual students may be faced with the situation in which they would be attending multiple funerals or have significant family issues. In these situations, grading for attendance may become part of the problem since it would encourage students to be in class even if they should not be, and it might unfairly disadvantage grieving and recovering students. For these reasons, we recommend that any attendance and "make-up" policies instructors may have for their classes be reviewed and alternatives be considered. Have a backup plan you can use should an emergency occur. Flexibility is recommended.

7. **Back up critical grading records.**

   A backup set of grades is recommended. Online grade books and even electronic spreadsheets may become unavailable under some emergency suspension situations. For peace of mind, instructors may want to have those grades backed up somewhere secure and off-line. Consider a thumb drive or spreadsheet printout. Keep FERPA requirements in mind be sure the backup is kept secure so student privacy rights are not violated. For a review of FERPA requirements, see: [http://www.purdue.edu/policies/pages/records/e_51.html](http://www.purdue.edu/policies/pages/records/e_51.html).

8. **Post any course changes on a Blackboard Learn website for each course.**

   **Rationale:** If instructors find it necessary to make changes in the course schedule, grading structure, etc. during the semester as a result of a suspension of classes for emergency, it would be good practice to post information about those changes on the course webpage so that students who may not be able to return to class immediately will have the information as well as those students in who may receive a handout. An alternative would be to email a copy of the information to all students in the class, but that assumes they have access to email.

9. **Use the new ITaP one stop webpage.**

   This website has been established to serve as a one stop gateway to ITaP resources for faculty. Bookmark: [http://www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/innovate/index.html](http://www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/innovate/index.html)

   **Rationale:** This location will provide faculty and graduate teaching assistants with links to all ITaP provided resources such as tutorials, information, Blackboard Learn sites, etc.

10. **Be prepared to work from home.**

    In the event that the university responds to a pandemic with an emergency closure, or the local schools close and instructors find it necessary to do more work from home than usual, you may want to be prepared with an internet connection so you can manage your work
remotely. It is also a good practice to have necessary materials ready to take home on short notice.

**Rationale:** If university operations were disrupted, instructors may not be permitted to get materials from campus buildings, may need to stay home for family reasons, or may be asked to remain home for safety reasons.

11. **Prepare your household to ride out any emergency**

Local health officials are currently recommending that all residents prepare for the worst case scenario of a severe pandemic influenza that may last for an extended period of time when residents may be confined to home, businesses may close, or there will be shortages.

Needless to say, this is good advice in the event of any emergency. But it is also possible your family may need to evacuate your home or the area. Do you have the essential items ready in “Go bags”? How would you manage in the event of an extended power outage? For more information on household preparedness, see: [http://www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org). Click on Get Prepared, Home. Then choose your emergency. Tippecanoe County has links to other emergency preparedness information at [http://www.tippecanoe.in.gov/department/?structureid=22](http://www.tippecanoe.in.gov/department/?structureid=22)