

PANDEMIC PLAN

TRANSITION TO OFF-SITE
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SECTION 1

PURPOSE

To establish Durham College's (DC) response plans and coordination of procedures relating to disruptions created by the declaration of a Pandemic Influenza/Health Emergency or as identified by the Emergency Management Response Team.

DEFINITIONS

Pandemic Influenza - a pandemic influenza is a global outbreak of a new strain of influenza virus. This new virus can cause serious illness and spread easily from human to human contact. A pandemic influenza is different from "typical" seasonal outbreaks of influenza caused by influenza viruses already in existence.

Critical Service – a service whose compromise in terms of availability or integrity would result in the impairment of the health, safety, security, workplace environment and efficient functioning/operation of the college, and the cancellation of instructional and research activities. A critical service includes academic instruction, research projects, support functions, operations, financial services and/or other staff or equipment required to provide the service.

FACTS

EMPLOYEES:

The impact of an influenza pandemic or health emergency will depend on several factors, inclusive of how virulent the strain is, the speed of spread and the effectiveness of response efforts. The Government of Canada and/or the Ministry of College and Universities may impose restrictive measures upon individuals, groups or entire communities. These measures may include isolation, travel restrictions, quarantines, closures, modified academic delivery and restrictions on public gatherings. These measures could result in the cancellation of classes and up to and including the transition to remote teaching, learning and service delivery at DC.

Impacts to the continuity of operations at DC due to an increase of employee absenteeism could affect the college's ability to provide critical services. These situations of absenteeism could be resultant of staff infection by the virus or because of their aiding family or friends affected by the virus.

STUDENTS:

The impacts of absenteeism will most certainly also occur with the student population as illness, caring for loved ones and a general fear of being in public places take hold.

During a pandemic or health emergency, a very real concern with a reduced faculty and student population is lost instructional time that will become a serious issue with any prolonged event cycle. Given this, it is critical that alternative methods of education and service delivery or means of catching up after the pandemic or health emergency situation are considered.

For more information on pandemic influenza, visit the Public Health Ontario website, Public Health:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>

SUPPLY CHAIN:

During a pandemic or health emergency, suppliers of goods and services to DC are likely to experience operational, production and shipping interruptions due to the loss of their own workforce in addition to the logistical impacts faced by their suppliers. These pandemic events are also very likely to have an impact on the availability of specific products and services resulting from supply and demand, if the products and/or services remain available.

GENERAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- a. The college community will strive to preserve and protect the health, safety and security of all its members;
- b. DC will continue to operate as normally as possible to minimize disruption of instruction, research, service and to protect and preserve the academic experience and workplace environment;
- c. Communication to all stakeholders, including students and their families, employees, members of the DC community and the general public will be a priority prior to, throughout and following a pandemic;
- d. DC will ensure people and processes are in place to maintain effective operations throughout a pandemic or health emergency;
- e. To the best of DC's ability, students' needs will be accommodated and students will be provided the flexibility necessary to complete course work and exams;
- f. All reasonable considerations will be made to protect the academic integrity and reputation of DC;
- g. DC will be committed to return to normal following a pandemic or health emergency.

EMERGENCY PLAN ACTIVATION

In the event of a Pandemic declaration, the Durham College Emergency Plan will "activate" at a **Level 2 (Emergency) Response (active monitoring)**. The manager of Emergency Management (OCS) will engage and monitor situational awareness and report impacts affecting campus operations to the Durham College Leadership Team (DCLT) for decisions concerning the deployment of a larger response effort through initiating the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). Further, the manager of Emergency Management will continue to engage and liaise with Health & Safety, Risk Management, Durham Region Emergency Management Office, Durham Regional Health Department and Lakeridge Health to ensure expert advice and community safety is aligned for our campus populations.

SECTION 2

CONTINUITY OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS – ASSUMPTIONS

Following are broad-based planning assumptions:

HEALTH AND SAFETY (H&S):

- a. DC will continue, so far as is reasonably practicable, to provide a safe and healthy environment in which to carry on the college's affairs during a pandemic/health emergency/outbreak/closure;
- b. The health and safety officer will continue to provide advice, guidance, technical support and core field services to department and academic faculty units on safety, health and environmental matters during a pandemic or health emergency;
- c. The health and safety officer will ensure safe shut down of all areas that may contain hazardous substances;
- d. The health and safety officer's response to requests for service will be based on a prioritized risk assessment of the issue/hazards;
- e. The health and safety officer will assist the Emergency Management Team promoting measures that are proven effective during a pandemic or health emergency in protecting students and employees;
- f. The health and safety officer, working with the Emergency Management Team, will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that any actions taken by DC are performed in a safe manner and in accordance with legislation.

ACADEMIC:

- a. The interest of the students is paramount in the determination of academic concerns in the event of a pandemic or health emergency;
- b. Where possible and if resources are available, continuation of course work and assignments will be facilitated through independent course work and the use of technology (remote delivery);
- c. Decisions on instructional matters that do not require Board of Governor's approval will be the responsibility of the executive vice president, Academics in consultation with the relevant deans and associate deans;
- d. Decisions to extend the term, revise exam schedules or other alterations to the academic schedule, as recommended by the Office of Campus Safety Team (OCS), health and safety officer, risk manager and endorsed by the executive vice president, Academic and the President, will occur through the Executive Committee (DCLT) to make these decisions in an emergency. A special meeting of Board of Governors may be called by the chair where time permits;

- e. Students maybe given the flexibility to complete their coursework missed during illness or permitted to withdraw from courses without academic penalty. If possible, students may be required to produce a medical certificate.
- f. Students will follow college's procedures to apply for consideration of the return of tuition, should it be necessary.

RESEARCH:

- a. In the event of a shutdown, academic faculties and departments must identify research and equipment that can be shut down;
- b. Academic faculties/departments shall identify any equipment that **must** remain operational, and will develop procedures for continued operation. In addition, a list of necessary supplies including necessary chemicals and hazardous materials required to sustain the continued operation and a delivery mechanism for these supplies, must be documented based off a risk assessment and review of safety operations plan;
- c. Academic faculties/departments will make the necessary plans to care for laboratory animals;
- d. The executive vice president, Academic, in consultation with the associate vice president, Academic and appropriate dean, will be the decision maker with respect to research issues in the event that the college cannot support all current research projects;
- e. Every effort to accommodate students whose research has been delayed due to a pandemic shall be considered.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

- a. Initially, if the college shuts down, all employees scheduled to work will continue to be paid. This decision will be reviewed as the length of the shutdown progresses;
- b. Employees who are unable to attend work due to illness or complications related to the pandemic will be covered by the existing sick leave provisions in the relevant collective agreement or DC's Policy and Procedures and/or applicable legislation;
- c. Employees may be required to work from home if their jobs can be carried out effectively in this manner;
- d. Maintenance of payroll, pension and benefits will take priority. In instances where inaccurate disbursements are made, DC will take corrective steps in the post-pandemic or health emergency stage;
- e. Supervisors and Human Resources staff will work with employees and their union/association representatives to provide cross training/re-deployment of employees and/or employee duties;
- f. Employees will be educated on symptoms and will be required to stay home if showing symptoms. If possible, a medical certificate may be required to substantiate the absence and/or return work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES:

- a. During a shutdown, Information Technology Services (ITS) servers and network infrastructure can normally run without on-site staff for two weeks. After that time, employees will be required to attend the campus to perform some maintenance functions.
- b. During a shut down there will be a protocol for allowing ITS employees access to the college to perform maintenance and recovery functions;
- c. If requested, ITS will endeavor to provide a call centre management infrastructure for an off-site help desk, student, employee and public queries and other functions;
- d. In all scenarios, it will be necessary to keep core websites, data network, and email services running.
- e. Shall liaise with telephone and internet services suppliers to ascertain if they have a pandemic plan in place and determine where DC falls within their priority response cycle;
- f. In administrative systems, ITS defines requirements from their business units.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

- a. Services will be maintained as long as possible provided there are adequate staffing levels;
- b. Cleaning of washrooms and public areas will be a priority. Increases to the frequency of the cleaning of classrooms and commonly used surfaces including doorknobs, washrooms, public access computer keyboards and eating areas may be necessary. Cleaning of offices will be given a lower priority if the number of cleaning staff is limited;
- c. Facilities Management staff shall liaise with local utility service providers including electrical, gas, water and others to coordinate availability of these services on a priority basis as may be available during the phases of a pandemic/closure;
- d. In the event of a campus shutdown, Facilities Management will prioritize essential services necessary for the long-term viability of the campus infrastructure and life safety systems. (i.e., environmental systems).

STUDENT RESIDENCES:

- a. Residences will continue to operate as normally as possible during a pandemic/health emergency;
- b. In the event of a shut down the residences will be kept open even though some students may decide to return home during the period of the shut down;
- c. Students in residence are encouraged to practice preventative measures and to arrange for a pandemic buddy. Pandemic-buddies watch out for each other and assist in the event one of them becomes infected;
- d. Procedures will be established to isolate sick students and to provide the necessary services;

- e. Third-party service providers will maintain services to students in residence. Students may be recruited to augment areas where staff are ill, and services need to be maintained (i.e., cleaning, food services etc.);
- f. Arrangements made through the Campus Health and Wellness Centre to provide medical and mental health services to monitor the health of students in residences.

SECURITY SERVICES:

- a. In the event of a pandemic, staffing will be maintained on a 24/7 basis; however staff absences will likely hamper the services provide by the department;
- b. Emergency services provided to DC by the Region of Durham will still be in place;
- c. Security Services staff will be equipped with safety equipment to protect themselves from infection, and with first-aid training. Additional training or equipment in the event of a pandemic or health emergency sourced as required to assist in fulfilling operational responsibilities.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING:

- a. The Communications and Marketing (C+M) department is responsible for all ongoing communications regarding college operations during the pandemic or health emergency.
- b. C+M will provide stakeholders with timely and relevant information on DC's strategy for various communications channels including college website, social media, mobile application and email.
- c. C+M will share Public Health information with the campus community regarding how to protect themselves from symptoms, and appropriate actions to take as it relates to the campus health and safety;
- d. Shall develop communications as requested by the Office of Campus Safety (OCS) Team and Departments;
- e. Shall provide communications guidance to DCLT and a call centre, if established.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

- a. The manager of Emergency Management and director of OCS shall monitor the pandemic situation/ health emergency and will provide updates on the status of the pandemic/closure;
- b. Shall promote measures that are effective during a pandemic/closure in protecting students, employees as endorsed by public health authorities. (i.e., Public Health Agency of Canada, Ontario Health, Durham Regional Public Health)
- c. The Emergency Operations Centre activated to a **Level 1 (Monitoring)**.
- d. Shall liaise with other colleges to determine the status of the closure, as it affects them;
- e. Shall assist the occupational health and safety officer as required.
- f. Shall liaise with external organizations/authorities regarding mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery action during the pandemic/ health emergency;

FINANCIAL SERVICES:

Financial services will take the necessary steps to ensure the continuation of payment, insurance and supply of goods and service functions as deemed essential.

Financial services assumptions:

1. Authorize student loan documents, issue bursaries and refund e-transfers to student accounts/loans.
2. Procure required goods and services.
3. Process payments to faculty and staff for reimbursement claims, payroll and to vendors for goods and services procured.
4. Banking services.
5. Track extraordinary expenses related to Pandemic or Health Emergency Response.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Public Health authorities at all levels of government will have the lead role during a pandemic or health emergency/closure due to influenza. DC will support Public Health authorities in the containment of a pandemic influenza by complying with control measures. The college will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of students and employees by educating them on what the health emergency is, how it is spread and how to protect themselves and their families.

ACTIVITIES BY PHASES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

- a. Education of students and employees:
 - i. What the health emergency is and how is it spread (including variant modeling)
 - ii. How to protect themselves and their families
- b. Individual academic faculties and departments shall identify their critical services, with a focus to prioritize and develop procedures to ensure continued operation.
- c. Academic faculties, in addition to the above, require to:
 - i) Create and maintain an inventory of research projects. Prioritize projects to indicate which are the most critical to the departments. Procedures will be developed to protect these research projects through a pandemic or health emergency;
 - ii) List those classes which are most critical or time sensitive and will require that additional efforts be focused on maintaining these classes at an acceptable level;
 - iii) DCLT will plan alternate means of service delivery for as many classes as possible in the event that Ontario Public Health or Durham Region Health Department recommends or orders a closure of our campus.

PREPAREDNESS PHASE

Departments will develop their individual pandemic plan. Departments must contact third-party service providers to ensure that they have a plan in place to continue to provide their service to the college.

DC will take the following action:

- a. Continue to educate students and employees;
- b. Communications and Marketing will develop and maintain a Pandemic Influenza/closure update site on the DC website.

RESPONSE PHASE

Should a declaration of a Health Emergency occur in Ontario, DC shall:

- a. Continue to educate students and employees;
- b. Promote protocols and hygiene measures to minimize influenza transmission;
- c. Increase the frequency of cleaning of classrooms and commonly used surfaces including doorknobs, washrooms, share access computer keyboards and eating areas;

- d. Reduce close contact with students, coworkers, or others for the duration of the declared pandemic or health emergency by:
 - i. Postponing all non-essential college sponsored or sanctioned group events on college property;
 - ii. Reduce the number and duration of in-person meetings or conduct these meetings via telephone or email;
 - iii. For meetings that must occur, create buffer zones based on the directive from Durham Region Health Departments of at least two metres between participants and keep meetings as short as possible; and
 - iv. Consider other strategies for reducing crowded situations and increasing social distance.
- e. Communicate DC's operations to students and employees.
- f. Prior to commencing any travel outside or within Canada, consult Ontario Public Health Links (1-877-543-8931 or 647-260-7100), Ontario Health, and Durham College's risk manager at DCRiskManagement@durhamcollege.ca; <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/> or; Canada Flu: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenzasurveillance>.
- g. During a request to shutdown operations, students and employees will be required to remain off campus unless assigned a role to a critical/essential services. Face-to-face meetings or class instruction will cease during a full shut down.

RECOVERY PHASE

A pandemic cycle generally comes in waves of six to eight weeks and can last up to four years. A pandemic will result in a variety of impacts that the college and its academic faculties and departments must be prepared to address, including:

- a. Psychological stress, low morale and related issues for employees and students;
- b. Permanent loss of employees and their corporate knowledge;
- c. Significant loss of instructional time and a backlog of work that was postponed due to the pandemic/closure;
- d. Additional costs to the college that will need to be managed; and
- e. Communicating the college's operational status with students and employees.

ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic faculties and departments will prepare an individual pandemic plan. This plan will include a list of all classes, services and administrative activities that normally take place. Faculties and departments will then prioritize their list into those activities and services that are most critical or time sensitive. These strategies will ensure services may continue or be delivered by an alternate means. Less critical activities and services can be postponed and if necessary, the staffing resources can be re-assigned to supporting the critical activities and services. Faculties and departments will ensure personal contact information is updated.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Practice preventative measures (i.e., CPE, PPE, washing hands frequently, follow coughing etiquette, maintain physical distancing);
- b. Remain off-campus and not attend classes if they are experiencing symptoms, advise their professor(s) and/or instructor(s). Obtain any instructional material they can complete at home;
- c. Remain off-campus during a campus transition;
- d. Contact their professor(s) and/or instructor(s) for any instructional material they can complete during the period of the shutdown;
- e. Monitor the college website for up-to-date information;
- f. Upon the re-opening of the college, report to classes on the identified day;
- g. Contact their professor(s) and/or instructor(s) if they are unable to return due to quarantine, nursing an infected person or are ill.
- h. Comply with college protocols in place for the health and safety of themselves and others on campus.

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Practice preventative measures (i.e., washing hands frequently, follow coughing
- b. Etiquette, maintain physical distancing);
- c. Vice president, Academic will have oversight of all academic operations to ensure consistency;
- d. Where possible develop alternate means of delivery of instruction (i.e., remote, electronic, etc.) for their students in the event of an extended absence or a shutdown of the college. Faculty should consult with their dean to identify alternate delivery channels and ensure that capacity will be allocated;
- e. The Province may request the taking of attendance to aid in monitoring the spread of the pandemic influenza;
- f. Remain off campus, not attend classes if they are experiencing symptoms and adhere to protocols. Advise their dean or associate dean; Risk and H & S;
- g. Remain off campus during a campus transition unless they have been identified to maintain critical services;
- h. Monitor the college website for up to date information;
- i. Upon the re-opening of the college, report to classes on the identified day;
- j. Contact their dean or associate dean, Risk, H&S, if they are unable to return due to quarantine, nursing an infected person or are ill with symptoms. Follow DC guidelines.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Practice preventative measures (i.e., washing hands frequently, follow coughing etiquette, maintain physical distancing);
- b. Working with their supervisor, document procedures for the continued operation of their service in the event of an extended absence;
- c. Contact their supervisor, H&S, if they are experiencing flu like symptoms, follow their directions including immediately departing, remaining off campus and follow protocols;
- d. Remain off campus during a campus shut down unless they are identified as a critical service provider;
- e. Monitor the college website for up to date information;
- f. Maintain contact with their supervisor during the shutdown via virtual meetings, telephone and /or email;
- g. Upon the re-opening of the College, report to work on the identified day unless they have been advised otherwise by their supervisor/department head;
- h. Contact their supervisor/department head/H&S if they are unable to return to work due to quarantine, an emergency situation or are nursing an infected person or are ill with COVID-19.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

All faculties and departments will identify key response personnel and designate persons who are able to succeed them in the event they become afflicted, deployed to other areas of responsibility or unable to fulfill their responsibilities.



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