

LAKE SUPERIOR STATE UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES MANUAL

Administrative Policy

Section: Academic Administration

Section Number: 2.1.12

Subject: Academic Catastrophic Event Policy and Procedure

Date of Present Issue:
8/21/26

Date of Previous Issues:
n/a

Purpose

Lake Superior State University (LSSU) is committed to protecting students' educational interests in the event of a catastrophic occurrence that significantly disrupts or permanently prevents the University from delivering instruction. This policy establishes procedures for maintaining academic continuity, implementing teach-out plans when necessary, preserving student academic records, assisting students with program completion or transfer, and ensuring compliance with NC-SARA requirements, applicable state and federal regulations, and accrediting agency expectations. This policy complements the University's Emergency Management Plan, which addresses emergency response and operational continuity.

Scope

This policy applies whenever an event substantially disrupts academic operations, including natural disasters, fire or facility damage, pandemics, cybersecurity incidents, utility failures, financial exigency, program discontinuance, institutional closure, or other events determined by the President to significantly impair instructional delivery.

Policy

Academic Continuity

Whenever feasible, LSSU will continue instruction through alternative delivery methods such as online or hybrid instruction, temporary relocation of classes, adjusted academic calendars, and modified clinical, laboratory, internship, or field experiences. The Provost & VPAA (Vice President for Academic Affairs) will determine appropriate instructional modifications.

Student Academic Records

LSSU will preserve permanent academic records in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements and will continue to provide access to official transcripts, degree audits, academic history, course descriptions, and syllabi when appropriate for transfer evaluation.

Teach-Out Planning

If an academic program cannot continue, LSSU will develop teach-out plans or teach-out agreements whenever feasible. Plans may include completion through LSSU, alternative

instructional delivery, cross-registration, consortium agreements, partnerships with other accredited institutions, or online completion options. All teach-out activities will comply with applicable accreditation and regulatory requirements.

Transfer Assistance

If students cannot complete their programs through LSSU, the University will provide reasonable assistance by issuing transcripts promptly, providing course descriptions and syllabi when appropriate, assisting students in identifying transfer institutions, coordinating with receiving institutions when possible, and providing academic advising. Transfer credit decisions remain the responsibility of the receiving institution.

Institutional Closure

If LSSU determines that it can no longer operate as an institution of higher education, the University will take all reasonable steps to protect students' educational interests through an orderly institutional closure process. The University will develop teach-out plans and agreements when feasible; preserve permanent academic records and ensure continued transcript access; notify students, employees, regulatory agencies, accreditors, and other required stakeholders; assist students with transfer opportunities whenever possible; provide timely information regarding academic records, financial aid, tuition refunds (when applicable), and student support resources; and comply with all notification and reporting requirements of the State of Michigan, NC-SARA, the U.S. Department of Education, the Higher Learning Commission, and applicable specialized accreditors. The President, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, will oversee implementation and designate responsible administrators.

Financial Protection

If instructional services cannot be provided, LSSU will comply with all applicable federal, state, and NC-SARA requirements regarding student financial protection. As applicable, protections may include tuition refunds, return of unearned Title IV financial aid, teach-out arrangements that minimize additional student expense, state-required tuition recovery mechanisms, and, where required by law or authorization requirements, tuition assurance funds, surety bonds, irrevocable letters of credit, or other approved financial protection mechanisms.

Communication

The University will communicate timely information regarding instructional status, academic continuity, teach-out options, transfer assistance, financial implications, and available support services through official University communication channels.