

## University Policy: Operating Status

**Policy Category:** Facilities

**Subject:** University Operating Status

**Responsible Executive:** Chief Financial Officer, Vice President & Treasurer

**Office Responsible for Review of this Policy:** Office of Finance and Treasurer

**Related University Policies:** Personnel Requirements During Modified Operating Status Policy, Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Policy, Schedule and Work Modality Policy

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### I. SCOPE

This Policy is in effect seven days a week and applies to all University operations, academic and administrative activities.

### II. POLICY STATEMENT

American University (“AU” or the “University”) strives to protect the safety of its community members and facilities while maintaining instructional, research and operational continuity during inclement weather and other emergency events. To that end, it may be necessary at times for the University to modify its operating status in a flexible manner to accommodate changing conditions and to implement actions for sustaining research and the delivery of educational programs.

### III. DEFINITIONS

*Essential Services:* Services that are required to maintain the health, safety, security or wellbeing of students, faculty, staff, facilities, university grounds or other functions critical to campus operations.

*Essential Staff:* Personnel who provide Essential Services and are required to report to work at times when the University’s standard operating status has changed. Essential Staff are generally defined by departmental operating plans and by their respective job descriptions. Their designation may change depending on operational needs and safety assessments, as applicable.

*Instructional Continuity Plan:* A course-specific explanation that details how instruction and assessment will proceed when the University’s operating status has changed.

*Operating Status:* Operating Status indicates whether standard campus activities are in effect or

modified due to conditions such as inclement weather or other emergencies.

## **IV. POLICY**

### **A. OPERATING STATUS**

American University may change its operating status as a precautionary measure or in response to inclement weather, non-weather emergencies, or other conditions, at the University's discretion. Academic and administrative units are expected to abide by any decision made by the University regarding operating status changes. The decision to change the University's operating status will be made by the President or their designee in consultation with Facilities, Public Safety, and Risk Management. The University has six distinct operating statuses as set forth below.

#### **1. Open**

The campus is operating in its regular status, with university business, academic and research activities continuing as normal. Employees are expected to work as scheduled at their designated work locations. Unless otherwise communicated, the University's standard business operating status during normal business hours is Open.

#### **2. Open with Liberal Leave**

The campus is operating in its regular status, with university business, academic and research activities continuing as normal. Employees are expected to work as scheduled at their designated work locations but may be eligible for expanded leave options in accordance with the Personnel Requirements During Modified Operating Status Policy.

#### **3. Closed with Instructional Continuity**

The campus is closed with classes being held as scheduled in accordance with their individual Instructional Continuity Plans.

- a.** Classes will continue as scheduled but will not be held in person. Faculty are required to communicate any changes to students pursuant to the Instructional Continuity Plan for each class.
- b.** All employees are expected to work in accordance with the Personnel Requirements During Modified Operating Status Policy.

#### **4. Early Departure**

After opening, the campus will transition to a different operating status (Closed or Closed with Instructional Continuity) before the end of normal business hours. A designated departure time will be communicated to the AU community. In-person classes that normally conclude after the designated departure time should either end at the designated departure time or should be held according to the faculty member's Instructional Continuity Plan (i.e., virtually or in another mode that is not in-person). Classes scheduled to begin at or after the designated departure time should be held according to the faculty member's Instructional Continuity Plan.

## **5. Delayed Opening**

The normal morning business hours for campus are modified, resulting in the campus remaining Closed (with campus operations suspended except for Essential Services) until a designated later opening time, when the campus will transition to an Open operating status before the end of normal business hours. A designated arrival time will be communicated to the AU community.

## **6. Closed**

Campus operations are suspended, with the exception of Essential Services.

- a. Essential Services will be provided by Essential Staff. All employees are expected to work in accordance with the Personnel Requirements During Modified Operating Status Policy.
- b. All classes are canceled.

## **B. NOTICE OF CLOSING OR DELAY**

The University has a process for evaluating conditions based on relevant factors and will communicate any operational changes to staff, faculty, and students.

1. Notice regarding a change in operating status will be made through one or more of the following means of communication: e-mail, AU's website, social media, and AU's telephone information line (202-885-1100). This communication will provide general information on the University's operating status, and detailed schedule information for Essential Services, instructional and operational responsibilities.
2. The effective time for all closures shall be 6:00 a.m. until 5:59 a.m. the following morning, unless notice is provided otherwise. To the extent possible, operating status announcements will be made no less than 1.5 hours prior to the time of scheduled classes and events so that students and employees can make appropriate arrangements. Department heads must coordinate with the Office of Finance and Treasurer to ensure proper dissemination of operational expectations and timekeeping procedures.

## **C. EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES DURING MODIFIED OPERATING STATUS**

1. Unless otherwise announced, all special events and extracurricular activities are canceled when the campus is closed, with or without instructional continuity.
2. In the event of an early departure, no special events or extracurricular activities will be held in person after the designated departure time. In-person events or extracurricular activities that are scheduled to conclude after the designated departure time should end before or at the designated departure time. In person

events or extracurricular events scheduled to begin at or after the designated departure time should be canceled.

3. In the event of a delayed opening, in-person special events or extracurricular activities that are scheduled to be held in person before the designated arrival time will be canceled or will be rescheduled to take place after the designated arrival time, or at an alternative time or date, as determined by the University sponsor.
4. Exceptions for special events will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the request of the cabinet-level responsible executive who is the University sponsor. For the purposes of this policy, a special event is one that involves significant financial impact, planning and coordination, and is time sensitive. The University sponsor is responsible for ensuring adequate support and resources for the event to be held safely as scheduled. Decisions on whether to allow for an exception to this Policy for a special event shall be made by the President or their designee, with consultation from the Chief Financial Officer, Vice President and Treasurer.

## **V. EFFECTIVE DATE AND REVISIONS**

This Policy is effective as of January 22, 2026.