

**Academic Continuity Planning**

In the event of a disaster, or other significant interruption, on campus it may be necessary for faculty to provide alternative means of instruction. The checklists below help faculty with ideas to improve their preparedness for online, hybrid, or face-to-face course formats.

***Prior to the start of classes:***

* Record and backup student names, email addresses, and phone contact information.
* Record email and phone number of department chair or other appropriate point of contact for your primary department or program.
* Backup critical teaching materials including lectures, assignments, instructions, quizzes, discussion topics, syllabus, schedule, and other important documents. You may be able to provide these materials to your students via internet in the event of a significant classroom interruption. You may not be able to save some materials such as reserved readings, library resources, etc.

***Once Class Has Begun:***

* Prepare a backup working copy of your gradebook to ensure continuity of grading and reporting to students and administration if your primary online gradebook is not available for an extended period of time.
* Send a test email message to students in your class. This test message will help you identify any possible problems with spam filter or firewalls that may block receipt of your emails. If this should occur, ask the students to add you to their approved recipient list. Create a group distribution list based on your students’ email contact information.
* Send students a welcome email blast with your contact information and ask them to save the email. Maintain a copy for your own records. This practice will ensure that both you and your students have each other’s current email address.
* Let students know that it is critical for them to provide you with current email and contact information throughout the semester.
* Remind students regularly about the importance of keeping backup electronic copies of their assignments.
* Download students’ assignments when they are submitted so that you will always have ready access to them in the event of a system failure.
* Download and maintain copies of online discussions if possible.
* Stay informed about other technologies you may need to use temporarily to continue teaching and learning activities if your classroom were to remain inaccessible for an extended period of time.
* Let students know of your plans for continuing instruction and communication in the event of a disaster or significant interruption. You may want to have students test their ability to access any external websites you have created in preparation for such events.

***Course Continuity During an Interruption:***

* Use the distribution list you created at the beginning of the semester to send an email to students reminding them of when and how they may contact you. Let them know of any changes to your syllabus.
* Continue timely sharing of lectures and supporting materials by using your backup copies and sharing via email or your department’s website.
* Post comments, materials and assignments on your external website if necessary.
* Consider excusing students from the requirement to interact, either online or through class participation, and ask them instead to submit individual contributions (especially if Web access is limited).
* If you adjust the requirements for interaction during the classroom interruption, prepare a synopsis of student submissions, add substantive comments, and send this information to all students via email.
* If you supplement assignment information with Web postings, send that additional information to students via email and also retain a copy.
* Consider setting up and learning how to use a telephone conference call or using an instant messaging/chat program.
* Use your backup grade book if necessary. Communicate individual grading and feedback information to each student via email and retain a copy.
* Consider posting classroom communications and lecture materials or conducting student discussions on Internet blogs or a wiki during classroom or system interruption. Ensure that viewing and writing access is restricted to members of the class. In a wiki, you may be able to create individual student pages with restricted page-level access so that each student has a private space for communicating with you and/or submitting an assignment.
* Encourage students to communicate with each other as support for class teams if appropriate.
* Backup or print all email and/or Web submissions and comments from students during the interruption.

***Explore Additional Technologies***

There are many optional technologies and tools you may want to investigate and/or use if your class is interrupted. You may want to consult CSUN’s [Faculty Technology Center](http://www.csun.edu/it/ftc), (http://www.csun.edu/it/ftc), extension 3443, for more information on teaching resources.

Source: The University of North Dakota. Guide to Business Continuity Planning. Retrieved from http://und.edu/emergency-management/\_files/docs/bcp-plan-builder.pdf