

# Policy on Continuity of Instruction Due to Emergencies or Natural Disasters

*Rationale:* Maintaining student learning is central to the University of San Francisco's fundamental mission of academic excellence. All faculty members should prepare for the possibility of an interruption of face-to-face instruction and include in their course syllabi one of the plan options below to maintain instructional continuity in the case of an unforeseen disruption. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequent enhanced capability of maintaining instruction through different modalities, cancellation of in-person classes is no longer the default when face-to-face instruction is disrupted. This instructional continuity plan can include a shift to an online modality or a pre-planned remote instructional back-up plan to use when an in-person class is disrupted. However, if a shift to an online modality is not possible, all material missed during any canceled class sessions and other instructional activities associated with credit-bearing programs scheduled within an emergency, natural disaster or disruption must be covered before the end of the term. Note that essential services on campus may continue even when in-person classes are canceled.

Technological advancements in learning delivery methods have improved the ability to maintain instructional continuity during unforeseen emergencies or disruptions. Whenever possible, faculty members are encouraged to use Canvas and other campus supported technologies (such as Zoom, [Panopto](#) Lecture Capture, etc.) to continue with their teaching plans during such times. If a course is technology-enabled or hybrid, the syllabus can provide that the regular class time schedule will be honored even if an in-person class session is canceled. In those cases, students will remain available for those faculty members who wish to hold a class session online through synchronous distance instruction.

Faculty should engage in professional development of [skills](#) required to utilize technology-enabled teaching, so that continuity of instruction can be maintained.

This policy assumes that faculty and students have access to electricity and the internet. In the event that electricity and the internet are also disrupted, make-up classes may need to be scheduled for dates and time when the class does not typically meet, including on Saturdays, during fall/spring break, and the study/review days before finals.

In the event that an in-person class is canceled, please refer to the [Class Cancellation Chart](#) to determine whether the disruption in classes or other instructional activities associated with credit-bearing programs is considered minor or partial.

## Minor Disruption

See [Class Cancellation Chart](#) for *minor disruption criteria*: Online classes will proceed as scheduled. For a standard in-person course, instructors may choose to:

- Change modality to online to maintain continuity until classes resume in-person
- Absorb missed material throughout remainder of semester
- Use additional class assignments

- Post readings or activities online through Canvas with discussion questions
- Extend office hours
- Hold an online class to make up for missed classes

It is important that all of your students are able to participate in these changes to your courses. The material being made up must involve one or more of the supervised learning activities listed above.

### Partial Disruption

See [Class Cancellation Chart](#) for partial disruption criteria: Online classes will proceed as scheduled. In addition to the above strategies, for a standard in-person course, instructors will also choose one or more of the following strategies:

- Change modality to online to maintain continuity until classes resume in-person
- Add one or more class sessions, whether in-person or online, during the semester to make up for missed class sessions. Instructors who plan to schedule one or more times to make up a class should consult with their students as soon as possible to avoid scheduling conflicts. Instructors should work with the academic scheduler in their school's dean's offices.
- Develop, in advance of the start of the semester, an online module for a week or more of content to deploy in the event of a partial or temporary disruption
- Consider a discussion with the college or school dean about meeting at an alternative site for programs with teaching weekends or intensives impacted by a disruption

Example: This policy will come into effect in scenarios including when fires are burning nearby and the smoke impacts air quality such that it is not healthy or safe for faculty or students to travel to campus. For in-person class cancellations defined as a minor disruption, most of the missed material can be absorbed throughout the remainder of the semester and faculty can add assignments, readings or hold an online class to make up for the rest. Class cancellations defined as a partial disruption will require more action on the part of faculty. This action will include adding one or more classes over the remainder of the semester to make up for missed material or to change the modality to online during the disruption.

Faculty must be prepared to report plans for maintaining continuity of instruction in the event of a partial disruption.

### Major Disruption

*Class Cancellations with Indeterminate Resumption:* Implement MOUs with AJCU institutions.

USF Disaster

Preparedness Website <https://myusf.usfca.edu/public-safety-transportation/disaster-preparedness>