

Guidelines for Instruction during Inclement Weather and Campus Closures

During periods of inclement weather and cancellations or suspensions of on-campus operations, the Division of Academic Affairs asks the Tech community to be flexible and responsible regarding classes and assignments. Below please find guidelines for students and faculty.

Commuter Students

Commuter students are encouraged to use good judgment in deciding whether to drive to campus during inclement weather (in situations where the University remains open). Student safety is important to NMT and we cannot account for the local circumstances of every student when a decision to open or close the university is made.

Student Communication Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student to immediately contact each professor if they decide not to travel to campus to explain the circumstances and to determine the need to complete any missed assignments. Any changes in due dates, or completion of missed assignments, is at the discretion of the instructor.

Missed Assignments and Coursework

Students are responsible for all missed assignments during inclement weather (in situations where the University remains open) within a timeframe to be determined by the professor. When notified by a student, professors are asked to honor the absence as excused and not count against any attendance penalty for the coursework.

Instruction via Online Channels

If the university closes or suspends on-campus operations due to inclement weather, faculty may offer voluntary, online instruction (including help sessions) through NMT's online capabilities. Faculty should recognize that not all students may have access to appropriate technology to participate. Assignments that were due shall be extended to when the university re-opens or at the next class meeting, as determined by the instructor. It is incumbent upon both the faculty to communicate the change and for students to monitor their official NMT student email account so that they can receive notifications.

These guidelines apply to all class modalities; online courses are not exempted.

Closures and Delays

A "closure" means that the University will not be opened for the day or will be closed before the end of the regular workday.

A "delay" means that:

- Classes and labs normally scheduled to begin and end before the time specified in the delay announcement will not be held;
- Classes and labs normally scheduled to be in progress at the time specified in the delay announcement will begin at the delayed start time and end at their normally scheduled time; and
- Classes and labs normally scheduled to begin at or after the time specified in the delay announcement will meet as usual.

These guidelines apply to all class modalities; online courses are not exempted.

- In situations of inclement weather, the University will attempt to coordinate delays and closures of the campus with actions taken by local K-12 schools.
- University departments and offices hosting events will be responsible for advising participants about events' status when closures or delays have been declared.

Final Exams affected by Closures and Delays

In the event of delays or closures during final exam week, faculty whose final exams are affected by the delay or closure may elect one of following options:

- Faculty may assign, as final grades, students' current grades going into final exam week.
- Faculty may make provisions for students whose exams are canceled to contact them to schedule a make-up exam (e.g., written or verbal; taken on-campus, online, or at a local testing center) or alternative arrangements (e.g., take home exam, project, report).

Delayed Opening

If a delay is announced, all classes scheduled to run in their entirety before the announced opening time are canceled (e.g., a 9:00 – 9:50 am class is cancelled if the opening time is 10 am). However, students should plan to attend all classes that begin at the announced opening time or would normally be in progress as of the announced opening time. On days when the University delays its opening, classes that are scheduled to meet for an abbreviated/partial period will meet at the discretion of the instructor. It is incumbent upon both the faculty to communicate this information and for students to monitor their official NMT student email account so that they can receive notifications.

For example, if the University announces a delay until 10 a.m.:

- All classes regularly scheduled to end by 10 a.m. are canceled.
- All classes regularly scheduled to start at 10 a.m. will be unaffected and held as usual.
- All classes regularly scheduled to end **after** 10 a.m. will meet for a shortened session from 10 a.m. to their **normal** end times, at the discretion of the instructor. For example, the instructor for a 9:30 – 10:45 am class could hold their class from 10 – 10:45 am if the opening time is 10 am).

Faculty Cancellation

If a faculty member cannot travel and cannot conduct their on-campus class, they should alert their chairperson and academic dean as soon as possible and notify students of changes.

Cancellations and Inclement Weather Related Announcements and Updates

Official announcements will be made only through official university communications. The official university homepage, nmt.edu, is supplemented by email communication and notifications sent through RAVE Emergency Notification System. Please [signup](#) for the RAVE Emergency Notification System to receive these alerts.

FAQs

Question 1: What does it mean when the University has a “delayed” opening (e.g., 2 hour delay, opening at 10 am)?

- *This indicates the University will not open until 10 am, two hours after the standard opening time of 8 am. Consequently, all events and classes prior to 10 am are cancelled.*

Question 2: In the case of a '2 hour delay,' will classes be held two hours later, or will the first two hours of classes be cancelled?

- *The first two hours of classes will be cancelled.*

Question 3: In the case of a delay where the University opens at 10 am, may an instructor move their 9:00 – 9:50 am in-person class online?

- *Yes. However, attendance is voluntary and no new material may be covered because not all students may have access to appropriate technology to participate. The instructor may review prior material, hold discussions, work through examples, etc.*
- Follow-up: Does the response change if it is a hybrid course? *No.*
- Follow-up: Does the response change if it is an online course? *No.*

Question 4: I have a class that is scheduled from 9:30 to 10:45 am. What happens to my class if the University opens at 10 am?

- *Your class would begin (resume) at 10:00 am and continue until its regularly scheduled end time of 10:45 am.*
- *Instructors have the discretion on how to manage their class. Depending on the time available, they may choose to cancel their partial class meeting. It is imperative for faculty to communicate to students what they will be doing.*

Question 5: An exam was scheduled for my 9:00 – 9:50 am class. What happens in my class if the University opens at 10 am?

- *Your instructor would reschedule the exam to another regularly scheduled class meeting or would provide an alternative opportunity (e.g., a comparable take-home exam).*
- Follow-up: May they move the exam online? *No.*
- Follow-up: What if instead there was an assignment due in class? *The due date for the assignment will be extended until after the University is opened. It is at the instructor's discretion to determine a reasonable due date (e.g., later that day, at the next class meeting) taking into account the circumstances of the situation. It is incumbent upon both the faculty to communicate this information and for students to monitor their official NMT student email account so that they can receive notifications.*

Question 6: My class today begins at Noon. Is it affected in any way by the University's delayed opening at 10 am?

- *No. Your Noon class would begin and end at its regularly scheduled time.*

Question 7: May faculty go to campus earlier than the official opening time of the University (e.g., 10 am in the above examples)?

- *Yes.*

Question 8: How does a campus closure affect classes?

- *All classes are cancelled when the campus is closed.*
- Follow-up: May an instructor move their in-person class online? *Yes. However, attendance is voluntary and no new material may be covered because not all students may have access to appropriate technology to participate. The instructor may review prior material, hold discussions, work through examples, etc.*

- Follow-up: May an instructor move their hybrid class online? *Yes. However, attendance is voluntary and no new material may be covered because not all students may have access to appropriate technology to participate. The instructor may review prior material, hold discussions, work through examples, etc.*
- Follow-up: Does the response change if it is an online course? *No.*

Question 9: Are campus offices closed during a campus closure?

- *Yes. Only essential personnel and offices (e.g., Dining in Joseph A. Fidel Student Services Center, Campus Police) will be required to be on campus to ensure students in the residence halls have access to essential services.*

Question 10: Are faculty and staff prohibited from coming to campus during a campus closure?

- *No. Faculty, for example, may voluntarily come to their office or lab (to grade, join a scheduled zoom NSF Panel Review, etc) but should not expect staff assistance. This would be no different from when offices are closed on weekends, holidays, or between December 25 and January 1.*

Guideline History

- Presented at October 17, 2023 Council of Chairs (only discussion was whether online and in-person courses should be treated the same or differently; kept the same at this time but could be revisited in the future).