

UNIVERSITY FLU PANDEMIC PLAN Preparation, Management and Recovery

Objectives

The objectives of establishing and implementing a University Flu Pandemic Plan are:

- 1. to protect the physical, mental and overall well being of our students, faculty and staff; and**
- 2. to preserve the academic, research, physical, reputation and financial integrity of the University, in the delivery of its mission.**

Plan Working Assumptions

The following planning assumptions have been determined through examining risk scenarios of reduced capacity and potential shut down of University operations and their impact on the plan objectives, due diligence and relationships with external partners:

Plan Parameters

- It was recognized that the planning process should address the immediate preventative stage, the period of time when early indicators of a pandemic are emerging and the actual pandemic phase.
- Any plan must respond to two possible risk scenarios: a total externally imposed shut down and a substantially reduced workforce condition (30% reduction).
- Our fundamental driving principle is to protect the physical and mental health and overall well being of all faculty, staff and students.
- Implementation of certain aspects of the plan *may be over the long term*.
- Upon declaration of the University plan activation by the University Executive Group, the University will operate under a crisis mode. As such, the Executive Group will reserve the right to suspend certain policy and other decision-making conditions which could negatively impact the objectives of the pandemic plan.
- Measures to minimize the University's financial liability in all business risk scenarios should be examined.
- Each area must identify their highest priority services so that essential functions can be determined.

Communicating

- Community communications must be early, regular and frequent.
- The University will be proactive and as transparent and open as possible in the timely delivery of information to the Ryerson community, and beyond. We want members of the community to hear news about Ryerson *from* Ryerson first.
- Access to the University's communications vehicles by the Office of Public Affairs, Marketing and Communications must be maintained whatever the status of the campus. These vehicles include the web, Infoline, broadcast phone messages and recorded phone message from the main number.
- The Office of Public Affairs, Marketing and Communications will take the lead in and the responsibility for internal and external communications.
- There will be a protocol for approval of communication messages that is rapid and which does not inhibit the timely delivery of information to internal and external audiences.
- The University will not be a source of medical information, but will direct members of the community to existing expertise.

Preserving the University Mandate and Community Care

- An approach to academic program continuity, such as *encouraging faculty to enable enhanced self study or course/term extensions* should be explored.
- It is unlikely that the student residences could be closed and therefore, measures must be in place to the extent that critical external conditions such as public utilities, are available to support critical student needs. However, if feasible, all efforts will be made to relocate students to their families or other safe refuges, in the event of a shutdown. A crisis management plan for addressing students in residences and care of international students must be established.
- Students may stay in their placements where the integrity of the learning experience is not compromised.
- Current requirements and processes for students reporting absences due to illness must be streamlined to reduce administrative barriers in a University crisis declaration condition.
- Critical external professional associations, examination Boards etc., which currently control graduating students' requirements for professional licensing, certifications, registrations, etc should be identified and where possible, alternative means for accommodating the achievement of such requirements should be negotiated on behalf of the students.
- Essential services must be defined to preserve community care and continuity of the organizational priorities during all stages of the plan or of the pandemic.

External Considerations

- There will be high absenteeism in both classroom and practicum experiences throughout the University.
- Many community agencies will close due to absenteeism, causing disruption in placements for many students doing their practicum experiences.
- The closure of placements and differing policies regarding students will cause inconsistency about completion of required practice placement hours. This may result in some students having the opportunity to complete required placement hours while some are excluded. The impact of such inequities will be addressed in the recovery phase.
- There is impact for students employed in health care settings if there are closures. Loss of income may be significant for some students trying to meet the cost of education.

Roles and Responsibilities

■ The Executive Group

The University Executive Group is responsible for declaring the activation of the University Flu Pandemic Plan and for decisions related to its integrity and continued implementation.

The role of the Executive Group is to receive information from internal and external sources regarding changing conditions for their on-going review of factors which could lead to their decision to declare the closure of University facilities or the interruption or suspension of academic activity.

■ Deans and Senior Directors

Deans and Senior Directors are responsible for ensuring the implementation of University pandemic procedures and practices affecting their students, faculty, staff, guests and visitors, and for the development of local plans to support the delivery of essential academic and administrative services.

Their role is to monitor conditions which could affect the delivery of essential services to students, faculty and staff in their Faculty or department and advising the Provost and Vice President, Academic and the Vice President, Administration and Finance respectively, of these conditions.

■ **Chairs, Directors and Managers**

Chairs, Academic Directors and Managers are responsible for implementing University and department specific pandemic procedures and practices.

Their role is to monitor and advise the respective Dean or Senior Director of any lapses or changing conditions affecting the delivery of essential academic and administrative services to their students, faculty and staff.

■ **Faculty, Instructors and Staff**

The responsibility of faculty, instructors and staff is to support the delivery of academic programs and essential services to students, *as directed by the University*.

Their role is to implement pandemic related measures and procedures outlined by their respective Chairs, Academic Directors and Managers.

■ **University Emergency Management Team**

The role and responsibilities of the University Emergency Management Team are outlined in the University Emergency Awareness, Preparedness, and Response Procedures “the Yellow Book”, and related policies.

As they pertain to the University Flu Pandemic Plan, the Chief Emergency, Utility and Communications Officers shall liaise with the Executive Group throughout all phases of the University’s flu pandemic preparation, response and management, to ensure the on-going integrity of the pandemic plan decision making process. This process is outlined under *Pandemic Phase Management Process* on page 8.

■ **Flu Pandemic Task Force**

Under the direction of the Chief Emergency Officer, the University Flu Pandemic Task Force is responsible for reviewing the performance of the University Flu Pandemic Plan and making recommendations for enhancements to the Provost and Vice President Academic and the Vice President, Administration and Finance.

Their role is to advise the Chief Emergency Officer of the status of local pandemic plans and external conditions, with a view to their impact on the University plan as a whole, throughout all phases and make recommendations accordingly.

Organizational Priorities

In the event of a disruption or shut down, the University recognizes the need to support the following organizational priorities and critical functions:

- communications;
- *where feasible*, delivery of the teaching/learning process and essential student related services;
- continuation and maintenance of research activity;
- preservation of buildings and facilities;
- maintenance of critical security services and first-line medical response;
- financial and human resource management, including the delivery of payroll, payments to critical suppliers

Communications

The Chief Communications Officer is responsible for the establishment of a Flu Pandemic Communications strategy and implementation plan.

This plan will include measures for:

1. building community awareness in the pre-pandemic phase,
2. declaring the activation of the University Flu Pandemic Plan,
3. maintaining community communications through all phases of the University Flu Pandemic Plan, and
4. maintaining external communications.

Business Continuity

■ Decision to Close University Facilities

The decision by the Executive Group to close University facilities will be based on the status of critical internal and external conditions impacting the health, safety and security of the Ryerson community and the capacity of the University to continue to deliver essential services on campus.

As outlined in Figure 1, these conditions include absenteeism levels, availability of transportation systems, sustainability of life safety and security infrastructure and pandemic flu incident rates in the greater Toronto area.

In all likelihood, closure of the University would result in suspension of the delivery of academic programs.

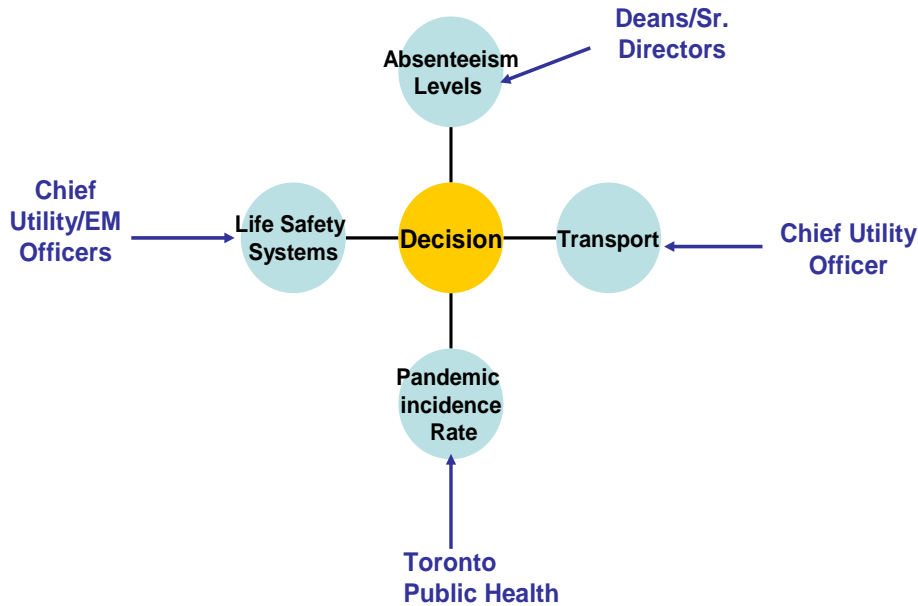


Figure 1 University Closure Decision Making Factors

While University facilities may close, continuity of research activity on campus, where feasible, may proceed pending the approval of the Executive Group.

■ Maintaining Essential Functions and Services

The University’s organizational priorities will be supported by the following essential functions and services:

- ▶ the presence of a University executive decision-making capability;
- ▶ two redundant communications vehicles: the Ryerson website and phone line;
- ▶ CCS support for the integrity of essential services;
- ▶ an off site emergency communications call system;
- ▶ a course status communications centre;
- ▶ essential staff to operate the Health Centre for student and essential staff care;
- ▶ provision of off campus mental health counseling care service for students;
- ▶ a core Security unit, including first line medical response;
- ▶ CPF staff to maintain life safety and HVAC systems;
- ▶ residence operations support and staff including provision of food and water;
- ▶ custodial services for hygiene services and infection control;

- ▶ on or off campus payroll and payment to critical suppliers support; and
- ▶ support for preservation of vulnerable research activity.

■ **Maintaining Essential Care for Community Members**

A pandemic plan for addressing essential services of the Health Centre, the Health Promotion unit, the Centre for Student Development and Counseling and Housing has been developed by Student Services.

Student Services is responsible for providing health care guidance, emotional support, and advice; creating and communicating health information; and maintaining accommodations for students and staff unable to return home.

Specifically, Student Services will:

1. through the Health Centre, provide medical care;
2. review and create medical content for communication through Health Promotion;
3. maintain residences for students unable to return home and for essential staff requiring accommodation; and
4. through the Centre for Student Development and Counseling, organize and staff a call center to provide emotional support and advice to students.

■ **Ensuring Academic Integrity**

Discussions or resolution of matters of academic integrity and course management shall be deferred to the recovery phase.

■ **Ensuring Financial Integrity**

The University will continue to manage its financial affairs in a responsible manner to the extent that our financial institutions can support such service during a pandemic event.

This includes as a minimum:

1. maintaining accurate financial records,
2. recording payments made to the University from government agencies and other sources,
3. ensuring there are sufficient funds available to cover payroll costs.
4. payments to critical suppliers.

■ Human Resource Management

Human Resources will provide advice and consultation on matters relating to the establishment and maintenance of core essential functions during all pandemic phases.

In the event of a pandemic, the University will continue to manage essential human resource activity, which will include as a minimum, the delivery of payroll and facilitation of benefits and pension administration, to the extent that related external providers and systems can support.

During a pandemic event, matters of policy, regulatory affairs and labor relations, will be deferred to the pandemic recovery phase.

Pandemic Phase Management Process

Figure 2 outlines the flu pandemic event management process. This process is driven by information provision and flow to and from designated groups. These groups include the executive Group, the Flu pandemic Task Force, the Academic Planning Group, and the Senior Directors Group.

The overall integrity of the process is guided by the Chief Emergency, Utility and Communications Officers who track the plan status and continually liaise with the Executive Group.

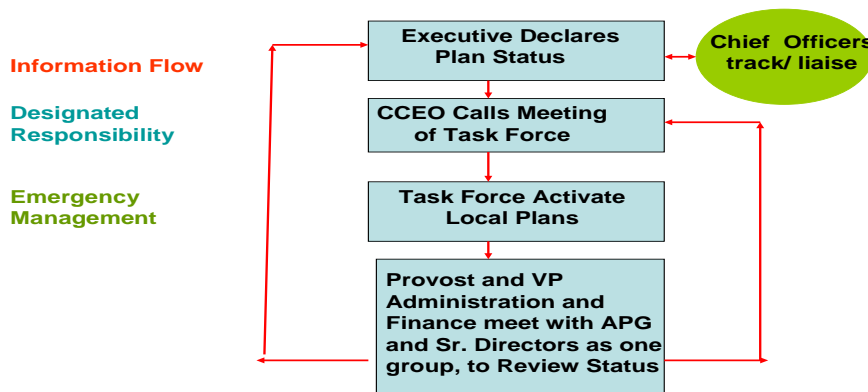


Figure 2 Pandemic Event Management Process

Preparation, Management and Recovery Process

The following table outlines the activities and accountability for implementing each phase of the University Flu Pandemic Plan.

Phase 1: Preparation for a Pandemic Event		
Activity	Accountability	Timeline
1. Development and launch of community awareness and wellness campaign	Vice Provost, Students and Executive Director, Public Affairs, Marketing and Communications	September
2. Development of Contingency Plans for Maintaining Essential Functions:		February
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Board and Senate Decision Making Process ■ Executive Group Decision Making Process ■ Human Resource Management ■ Financial Services ■ Computing and Communications Services ■ Student Services ■ Security Services ■ Campus Planning and Facilities ■ Public Affairs and Communications ■ Maintaining Research Integrity ■ Food Services 	Board and Senate Chairs President Executive Director Executive Director Director Vice Provost Director Director Executive Director VP. Research and Innovation, Deans Director, Ancillary Services	November
3. Tracking of conditions for predicting a pandemic event or taking pre-pandemic action by the Executive		On-going
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ WHO and Toronto Public Health (TPH) communications ■ Internal Absenteeism Levels 	Task Force Members Deans and Sr. Directors	

Phase 1: Preparation for a Pandemic Event

Activity	Accountability	Timeline
4. Development of local contingency plans in support of essential functions ■ Faculties ■ Departments	Deans Sr. Directors	February On-going
5. Plan performance review (through table top exercise) and enhancements	Task Force and Chief Emergency/Utilities/Com. Officers	

Phase 2: Pandemic Management

Activity	Accountability	Timeline
1. Declaration of Pandemic Phase and Contingency Plan Activation	Executive Group	Event may last 3 months
2. Community Communication	Chief Com. Officer	
3. Implementation of local contingency plans	Deans and Sr. Directors	
4. Tracking of Conditions for Continuity Planning ■ WHO and TPH communications ■ Absenteeism Levels ■ External Transportation Conditions ■ Life Safety and Security	Task Force Deans and Sr. Directors Chief Utilities Officer and Chief Emergency Officer	
5. Assessment of conditions and decision to close University facilities or suspend academic activity	Executive Group	
6. Issuing of regular updates to the Ryerson community	Executive Director, Public Affairs, Marketing and Communications	

Phase 3: Recovery		
Activity	Accountability	Timeline
5. Assessment of impacts and required response/actions	Executive Group	

External Partnerships

■ Emergency Management

During the pre-pandemic phase, the University will consult with local EMS representatives, to review respective Flu Pandemic Plans to clarify expectations and determine opportunities to enhance response.

■ Public Health

The University will partner with Toronto Public Health to proactively identify university specific pandemic related issues, needs and mutual emergency response and communication measures.

■ Academic/Professional Associations and Boards

Critical external professional associations, examination Boards, and other external bodies which currently control graduating students' requirements for professional licensing, certifications, registrations, etc should be identified and where possible, alternative means for accommodating the achievement of such requirements should be negotiated on behalf of the students.

Plan Performance

Prior to communicating the plan, a table top exercise will be conducted to identify any lapses or deficiencies in performance. The final plan will subsequently be distributed to the Ryerson community, through the communications plan outlined by University Advancement.

To ensure its on-going currency and relevancy, the plan shall be reviewed by the University Task Force on Flu Pandemic Planning through yearly table top exercises and in consultation with the Vice President, Administration and Finance and the Provost and Vice President, Academic.