

# Continuity of Operations Slippery Rock University Planning (COOP) Emergency & Risk Management Tool



## **PURPOSE**

The primary purpose and ultimate goal of continuity of operations planning (COOP) is to ensure an organization can continue to perform essential functions towards fulfilling its mission. Slippery Rock University has developed this planning tool to assist divisional/departmental units in facilitating such functions during significant disruptions to include a natural disaster, act of violence, cyber-attack, utility and technology loss, or other emergency situation by maintaining critical operations and services with as minimal interruption, through pre-planned strategies and processes.

## **SCOPE**

A continuity of operations plan applies to any emergency incident that could potentially interrupt an office/departmental service for the campus for twenty-hour (24) hours or longer. Such emergencies are further classified as a Level 1 or Level 2 emergency in SRU's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

Direction regarding opening of a campus emergency operations center, or any other reprogramming of space will be provided by the Executive Leadership Group (ELG) as set forth in SRU's EOP, through established organization structures. Categories of levels of emergency are provided under the Planning Scenarios section of this document.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Priorities

- Protecting the health, safety and welfare of persons on campus
- Maintaining essential buildings and operations
- Continuing to fulfill University goals and objectives as set forth in SRU's Strategic Plan

## **PROCEDURES**

In order to develop an effective COOP, University leaders will focus on two primary concepts to department/office plan developers, set forth in the questions below:

1. What are the University's critical operations (essential functions) performed by this division/department for the campus? Examples include but are not limited to academic instruction, technology, food, housing, utilities, life safety and security, payroll, etc... Critical operations are those functions and services that must continue to be performed off campus or, if necessary, by essential personnel on campus. An operation is considered critical if its loss would prevent the university from completing its mission.

With respect to campus events, it is recommended departments/offices involved in the event coordination should include provisions for possible relocation if feasible, and cancellation/re-scheduling if directed by the ELG.

## **PROCEDURES (CON'T)**

2. What resources are needed to continue providing these critical operations. While resources can be human (faculty/staff) or non-human (services, equipment etc..), all resources have a financial impact to the University.

Departments that provide critical operations should engage in continuity of operations planning that culminates in a written division COOP plan, to be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis.

Three primary considerations in developing a written COOP plan are:

- Loss of access to the assigned physical workspace – campus building and/or departmental/office space
- Loss of infrastructure i.e. utilities, technology, life safety systems in campus facilities
- A significant decrease in staffing

## **PLANNING SCENARIOS**

Interruption of University services that result may result from an emergency on campus – hence it is impractical to attempt to “script” any specific response. As set forth in SRU’s EOP, levels of emergencies are categorized as follows:

- Level 1: A major disaster or imminent threat involving the entire campus and/or surrounding community. Immediate notification is mandatory during a Level 1 event. Normal University operations are reduced or suspended. A Level 1 incident normally requires activation of the University EOP and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Examples of Level 1 Incidents include but are not limited to: tornado, multi-structure fire or major explosion, major hazardous materials release, major earthquake, or an act of terrorism
- Level 2: A major incident or potential threat that disrupts a sizeable portion of the campus community. Emergency management personnel shall provide situational updates and make recommended actions to the ELG for campus operations and issuing emergency notifications. A Level 2 incident may or may not require activation of the University EOP and the EOC. Examples of Level 2 Incidents include but are not limited to: fire, structural collapse, extensive power or utility interruptions, severe flooding, a multi-facility fatality or pandemic illness.
- Level 3: Minor, localized department or building incident that is quickly resolved with existing University resources or with limited external assistance. A Level 3 incident has little or no impact to operations or personnel outside the affected area. A Level 3 incident does not require activation of SRU’s Emergency Operations Plan or the EOC, or departmental emergency plans. Examples of Level 3 Incidents include but are not limited to: localized chemical spills, small fires, localized power or utility failures, or water leaks/intrusion.

## **PLANNING SCENARIOS (CON'T)**

Possible scenarios as examples that could disrupt critical (essential) campus operations are provided below. It is recommended to include in a COOP if any of the below occur beyond a 24-hour period:

- Loss of critical infrastructure i.e. utilities, technology and life safety systems
- Loss of use of a campus building
- Supply chain interruptions of regular deliveries of equipment and resources
- Major disaster including acts of campus violence
- Employee absenteeism greater than thirty percent (30%) or above i.e. strikes, illness etc...

## **DEPARTMENTAL COOP**

A COOP recognizes emergencies may occur at any time and with little or no advanced notice. Identify specific positions (and alternate positions) of department staff that will perform specific functions and tasks developed and set forth in the COOP. Specify whether these individuals are required to be on campus, or if staff are able to perform their essential tasks remotely and include any technology needs to do so.

Identify and obtain specific emergency supplies and equipment necessary to provide the critical/essential functions and services. Written procedures and/or checklists are helpful in successfully implementing a departmental COOP.

Considering these possible scenarios and assumptions, departmental COOP plans should identify other university department they provide campus services to, and actions to take to perform critical functions and responsibilities. Included should be a description of the range of continuity services, with a prioritization of critical (essential) functions.

It is recommended departmental staff use information identified in its Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan (FSEP) for COOP plan responsibility, primary and alternate contacts, emergency contact information for staff, etc...to ensure effective communication during emergency situations.

The call tree communication developed in the departments' Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan (FSEP) can be used, but not required to be used and, if appropriate, an alternate communication plan may be needed. Methods of internal departmental communication should be clearly identified and shared with all staff.

To reasonably plan for maintaining and identifying operations deemed critical/essential, a Business Impact Analysis worksheet has been created to assist departments as part of the COOP process. The worksheet facilitates an evaluation process to list and prioritize critical/essential operations based in institutional risk potential, who will perform them and how, technology needs, space needs, internal and external stakeholders, and any additional resources needed that are not during normal operations.

As some or possibility all of campus may be not be accessible, COOP planning should include technology solutions in continuing certain critical operations. It is prudent to plan with the understanding that University closure may occur for an indefinite time period.

## CRITICAL STAKEHOLDERS

Identify and include in each COOP those internal SRU stakeholders on which your critical operations rely i.e. Facilities, IATS, Housing, etc... Also identify and provide lists of any external stakeholders, which include but are not limited to outside contractors and suppliers of labor and materials (dining services, custodial services in residence suites), regulatory agencies (Department of Education for Financial Aid, PA Human Services for the Child Care Center, PA Labor & Industry and Department of Environmental Protection for Facilities and Safety, etc...).

## PRIORITIZING CRITICAL (ESSENTIAL) FUNCTIONS

Success in prioritizing a department/offices' critical functions are to utilize the best practice of performing a risk assessment for each identified critical function and prioritize processes, functions, services and operations overall. The following template is provided as a point of reference to assist SRU offices in this process:

Likelihood	Consequences				
	<b>Insignificant</b> <i>Risk is easily mitigated by normal day to day process</i>	<b>Minor</b> <i>Delays up to 10% of Schedule Additional cost up to 10% of Budget</i>	<b>Moderate</b> <i>Delays up to 30% of Schedule Additional cost up to 30% of Budget</i>	<b>Major</b> <i>Delays up to 50% of Schedule Additional cost up to 50% of Budget</i>	<b>Catastrophic</b> <i>Project abandoned</i>
<b>Certain</b> <i>&gt;90% chance</i>	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Likely</b> <i>50% - 90% chance</i>	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Moderate</b> <i>10% - 50% chance</i>	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Unlikely</b> <i>3% - 10% chance</i>	Low	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
<b>Rare</b> <i>&lt;3% chance</i>	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High

## PHYSICAL RELOCATION

Depending on the extent and duration of the campus emergency, existing space assignments in campus buildings may not be available for a brief or extended period of time.

Relocation of campus community members overall as part of critical/essential services may be indicated. Include in a departmental COOP a written procedure/process for accomplishing physical relocation of faculty and staff from offices/classrooms, students from classrooms, dining halls, residence halls etc... Planning considerations for relocation should include:

- How much alternate physical space is needed for critical/essential operations
- Specialized needs i.e. refrigeration, a controlled environment (temperature and humidity)
- Specific security needs if applicable (access control)
- Parking implications

## **PHYSICAL RELOCATION (CON'T)**

Maintenance of high value materials and equipment in spaces evacuated i.e. academic and research laboratory applications, animal care facility should be addressed in a departmental COOP, as should receiving of supplies and equipment on campus, to include mail and package receipt.

Critical operations are recorded in a department Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan (FSEP) Section IV that apply to internal staff/employees. It is recommended both be included in a department COOP.

## **TRAINING SKILL SETS**

Performing tasks associated with campus services in a continuity environment likely will be much different than under normal operating conditions. Departmental leaders and staff should be provided both cross-training and vertical training as needed so applicable employees are able to perform functions of their peers and the person above and below them in an emergency.

## **RECOVERY**

The reopening of campus and resumption of normal university operations may be gradual, with certain operations returning before others. Recovery operations may involve restarting essential operations in the same priority order as they are ranked, with the most critical operations will restarted to normal operating conditions first. The goal of the recovery portion of the COOP is the orderly and systematic restart of all normal university business, activities, and operations.

## **COOP REVIEW**

Periodically perform a review (annually is recommended) and if necessary, facilitate an update of departmental COOP processes and procedures.

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