

## **1.0 Preamble**

SKG recognizes that certain events may be potential threats to the continuity of SKG's academic programs. Good stewardship requires SKG to undertake appropriate planning and preparation to promote continuity.

In the event of a threat to the continuity of its academic programs, SKG will do everything it can to maximize support for student learning and achievement of program outcomes.

## **2.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that will guide SKG in its ability to fulfill its academic mission in the face of potential threats to academic continuity.

## **3.0 Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy,

"Academic activity" means any work subject to evaluation or necessary for a student to meet the requirements of a course or program of study.

"Academic Advisory Circle" means the group of individuals appointed by SKG's board to provide guidance and advice to the board concerning SKG's academic mission and its services and supports to students.

"Academic continuity" means the process of preserving the operation of the academic core functions of SKG.

"Academic disruption" or "disruption" means an occurrence when academic activities are substantially interrupted or impeded as a result of hazardous weather, public health emergencies, natural disasters, prolonged service interruptions, ongoing labour disputes, or other like causes.

"Board" means SKG's board of governors.

"Director of Academics" means the President of SKG, or an individual designated by the President, who is responsible to administer SKG's academic mission, regardless of the title of that position.

"Instructor" means an employee of SKG who is responsible for teaching, evaluation, academic supervision, and/or related activities for credit and non-credit courses, and/or responsible for evaluation of students in any other activity that is part of SKG's academic mission. It includes all such employees, whether faculty members or contract employees.

"Long disruption" means an academic disruption lasting longer than seven consecutive days.

“Short disruption” means an academic disruption lasting up to and including seven consecutive days.

"SKG" means Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig.

“Student” means an individual registered in a course or program of study at SKG, whether full-time or part-time.

## **4.0 Determination of an academic disruption**

### **4.1 Declaration of an academic disruption**

The Director of Academics may declare that SKG is experiencing an academic disruption.

Prior to making a declaration of academic disruption, the Director of Academics shall:

- Consult with the chair of the board and the chair of the Academic Advisory Circle, at a minimum; and
- If practicable, consult with the board and the Academic Advisory Circle.

An academic disruption may be declared to affect one or more courses, programs, or departments, or to affect the whole of SKG.

In determining whether an interruption or an impediment is substantial and thus declared an academic disruption, the Director of Academics shall consider the following factors:

- The point at which the interruption or an impediment occurs in the term or session;
- The duration of the interruption or an impediment;
- The availability of physical and instructional resources;
- The impact on the attendance of students, instructors, and other necessary participants; and
- The impact of timing and sequence of evaluations such as examinations, practica, and other assignments.

The Director of Academics shall make a determination either that an academic disruption is a short disruption or a long disruption.

## **5.0 Response to disruptions**

### **5.1 Principles guiding response to academic disruptions**

The integrity of academic programs must be honoured.

No lowering of standards normally expected of students should be permitted. Remedies under this policy shall not alter academic standards nor shall remedies relieve the student of the responsibility for mastering materials covered.

There should be as little interruption as possible in the instructional or supervisory support given to students.

## **5.2 Short disruptions**

Disruptions of academic activities lasting no longer than seven consecutive days shall generally be considered short disruptions and, where reasonably possible, will be governed by normal academic regulations.

In the case of such brief disruptions, instructors and academic units are in the best situation to determine, in the first instance, the extent to which their courses, seminars, student supervision, labs, practica, and so forth have been affected by a disruption and what remedial action is required. In the absence of the instructor, such changes in course procedures will be made by the Director of Academics or designate.

If, in the opinion of an instructor of a course, remedial action ought to include rescheduling of missed contact hours (such as lectures, seminars, labs or practica) in order to preserve course integrity, the instructor shall take actions consistent with the principles of academic integrity, fairness to students, and timely information to students, after consultation with the Director of Academics or designate.

## **5.3 Long disruptions**

As soon as practicable, on or soon after the eighth consecutive day of an academic disruption, the Director of Academics shall bring a report to the Academic Advisory Circle. The report shall include recommendations concerning remedial action to mitigate the impact of the disruption on students' progress through their program, with due regard to academic integrity.

- The Director of Academics shall provide a copy of this report to the board for information.

The Academic Advisory Circle shall oversee the process of determining and implementing the necessary remedial action in cases where substantial amounts of instructional time have been lost due to a long disruption.

- The board may delegate the responsibility for decisions concerning remedial action to the Academic Advisory Circle.
- Where the board has not delegated decisions concerning remedial actions to the Academic Advisory Circle, the Academic Advisory Circle shall make recommendations to the board concerning remedial actions. The board shall meet expeditiously to reach timely decisions to address the disruption.
- If more than ten per cent of instructional time is lost in a term or session, the Academic Advisory Circle and board shall presume the need for a modification of the teaching term with any concomitant changes in examination scheduling.

Where possible, the Academic Advisory Circle and board shall meet in person; however, in urgent circumstances a meeting by telephone or circulation of material electronically shall constitute an appropriate meeting.

Implementation of remedial action and/or changes to the academic term will be coordinated by the Director of Academics in consultation with instructors.

When a disruption ends, the Director of Academics shall:

- Give notice to students, instructors, and staff,
- Bring a report to the Academic Advisory Circle and the board, within a reasonable period of time, all of remedial action undertaken during the disruption.

#### **5.4 Information about disruptions**

The Director of Academics shall ensure that:

- Information about decisions that have been taken by the Academic Advisory Circle or board concerning the disruption and remedial action is widely shared in a timely way with students, instructors and other SKG staff.
- SKG announces any changes in course procedures or deadlines, including on the SKG's home webpage (if possible).
- Information is provided to students about the impact of a disruption on access to library collections and services as early and as frequently as possible via print notices, messages on websites, and other means.
- Where required by the duration of a disruption, SKG uses best efforts to have externally imposed deadlines extended, especially where, for example, the lack of transcripts or the unavailability of letters of recommendation would impose a hardship on students.

#### **6.0 Fairness to students**

Students who do not participate in academic activities because of a disruption are entitled to:

- Reasonable alternative access to materials covered in their absence,
- Reasonable extensions of deadlines, and
- Such other remedy as the Academic Advisory Circle and board has deemed necessary.

The availability of a remedy under this policy does not guarantee students the same learning experience that they would have received in the absence of a disruption.

#### **7.0 Responsibilities of instructors and students**

Instructors are responsible for:

- Altering course procedures, requirements, and methods of evaluation in consultation with the Director of Academics to help ensure academic continuity; and,
- Making reasonable accommodations for students who are unable to attend classes or complete academic requirements due to a disruption.

Students are responsible for:

- Completing all coursework and academic requirements; and

- Staying informed about academic disruptions and changing academic requirements and procedures.

## **8.0 Related Policies, Procedures & Documents**

SKG's policies and procedures may be found on its website.

## **9.0 Responsible Officer**

Director of Academics

## **10.0 Version history**

Board's approval pending recommendation of Academic Advisory Circle: December 2023

Recommended by Academic Advisory Circle:       ADD DATE when completed

Approved by Board:               ADD DATE when approved

Original Approval Date:       ADD DATE of first approval

Current Approval Date:       ADD DATE when approved

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SKG gratefully acknowledges that this policy is patterned on those of Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Guelph.