Faculty Senate Routing Form
(action/proposal attached)

I. Item Title: _5.03 Cancellation of Classes

a) Brief Description: _The APRC approved the revisions in the Handbook regarding the policy for cancellation or disruption of classes. This came originally as cancellation or disruption due to inclement weather and expanded to a general policy._

b) Initiated by: __APRC__

II. Faculty Senate Action: __ approved  __ not approved  __ other  date: _4/6/2011___

Comments: __________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

FS Secretary signature: __Laura Wright__ date _4/6/2011_ __________

III. Provost: __for information  __ Recognition of receipt  
[✓] for action_______________  __ approved  __ not approved

Comments: __________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Person responsible for Implementation: __Peter Gipson__

Provost signature: __Peter Gipson__ date _4/27/11_ __________

IV. Chancellor: __✓ for information  __ Recognition of receipt  
__ for action_______________  __ approved  __ not approved

Comments: __________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Chancellor signature __W. Banks__ date _5/23/11_ __________

Once finalized copies will be returned to Nancy Gordon who will scan and distribute electronically to:  
Chancellor  
Provost
5.03 Cancellation/Disruption of Classes

Since Western Carolina University is a residential university with more than 3,000 students in residence halls, the university does not, as a matter of general practice, close its operations or cancel classes in Cullowhee because of bad weather. Exceptions to that practice are rare and occur only when the weather is particularly severe or there are unusual circumstances such as bad weather, or when the entire student body is away from campus (usually during an extended break such as the Christmas/New Year’s period between semesters) and would face difficulty in returning. Classes taught off-campus (e.g., Asheville, Cherokee) will be held unless conditions at those sites are hazardous. Should the host administration cancel classes or close campus, Western will abide by that decision.

Many Western students commute from different distances and directions, and weather conditions for those students may vary greatly from conditions on the Cullowhee campus. Students are advised to check road conditions in their areas and determine whether it is reasonable for them to drive to campus. The university expects students to make every effort to attend class but not to place themselves in dangerous driving conditions. Faculty members will accommodate those students who are unable to attend class because of hazardous weather conditions. Faculty members who are commuting to the Cullowhee campus or to one of Western’s off-campus sites should assess driving conditions and notify their department head or dean if they are unable to meet their classes. Arrangements should be made as early as possible to allow for student notification.

The Provost will evaluate weather conditions and determine whether conditions require modifications to the regular campus class schedule. Should the decision be reached to modify daily operations, Public Relations will announce modifications to the university schedule via media outlets, the university website, and email. In addition, students, faculty and staff are encouraged to check the university website (www.wcu.edu) when the possibility of adverse weather cancellation arises. Updates about the status of university operations will be posted on a continuing basis. Students are expected to contact their instructors for any alternative plans for the class (see Section 5.03.02D). Faculty are expected to notify students concerning any alternative plans.

5.03.01 Cancellation/Disruption of On-Campus Classes Due to Inclement Weather

When the possibility of disruption to the on-campus academic schedule occurs in winter because of road conditions, the following general guidelines apply.

Each occurrence will be evaluated separately. However, if snow or ice occurs when resident students are present on campus, the university usually will elect to continue with the regular schedule of on-campus classes even though some commuting students may be unable to reach the campus. In such cases, we will attempt to notify off-campus students of our decision by local media and the WCU website (www.wcu.edu), with the expectation that they will use their best judgment about whether or not they are able to attend classes. The University expects students to make every effort to attend classes, but not to place themselves in dangerous driving conditions. Students are expected to contact their instructors for any alternative plans for the
class (see Section 5.03.02D). Faculty are asked—expected to take weather conditions into consideration in working with students who were unable to attend classes and to notify students concerning any alternative plans. Faculty members will accommodate those students who are unable to attend class because of hazardous weather conditions.

Under this policy, there also may be times when road conditions prevent individual faculty members from reaching the campus to teach their classes. Faculty members in that situation should notify their department head or dean as soon as possible so that the individual class may be covered or canceled. Deans and department heads are responsible for arranging for their telephones to be covered by someone who can get to the campus beginning about 7:30 a.m. in order to handle 8:00 a.m. class arrangements.

5.03.02 Cancellation/Disruption of Off-Campus Classes Due to Inclement Weather

When the possibility of disruption of the off-campus class schedule occurs in winter due to road conditions or conditions at the host site, the following general guidelines apply.

A. Off-campus Classes—All Locations

1. Each occurrence will be evaluated separately for each class location.
2. Cancellations (or continuation) of a schedule is a university-level decision and all such decisions are made by the Office for Academic Affairs in consultation with the appropriate administrative offices. For WCU classes hosted at other locations, please refer to decisions concerning class cancellation made by that specific host campus administration. Online classes will be conducted as determined by the instructors of those course sections.
3. Faculty will be notified of decisions through their deans, department heads, or by the director of the program of which their courses are a part.
4. Faculty members whose individual situations prevents them from reaching the class site are responsible for notifying their department head or dean or the director of the program as soon as possible. The director of the program, in consultation with the instructor, of which the course is a part will make the decision as to whether the individual class can be canceled. If the director decides to cancel a class, the faculty member also is responsible for notifying the students in the class by telephone.
45. We will attempt to notify students of any cancellation by means of local radio-media and website (www.wcu.edu) announcements throughout the region affected. The Office of Public Information is responsible for making these arrangements when a decision has been reached.
46. When classes continue to meet under adverse weather conditions, students will individually use their best judgment about whether they are able to attend class. The faculty are asked—expected to take these conditions into consideration in working with students who are unable to attend.

B. Asheville Program

Decisions affecting courses offered in Asheville are managed by the division of educational outreach in consultation with the Director for WCU programs in Asheville and the Provost at UNC Asheville. Faculty residing in Asheville will be notified of decisions by the Director for WCU programs in Asheville. Cullowhee faculty teaching courses in Asheville will be
notified by their dean or department head. If adverse weather conditions should develop after
the faculty and students have reached Asheville, the Director for WCU programs in Asheville
will make decisions about the continuation or cancellation of classes and notify all the
students and faculty. When UNC Asheville announces cancellation of its classes, WCU
classes held on the UNC Asheville campus are cancelled. When A-B Tech cancels classes,
Western’s classes on their campuses are also cancelled.

C. Cherokee Program

Decisions affecting courses offered in Cherokee are managed by the Director of the
Cherokee Center in consultation with the Dean of Educational Outreach. Faculty and
their department head will be notified of the decisions by the director of the
Cherokee program.

D. Courses at All Other Locations

The division of educational outreach coordinates arrangements for classes at all locations
other than Asheville and Cherokee and informs the Provost. Distance-learning programs
whether offered on-site or through distance-learning technologies are determined by the
sponsoring academic unit in collaboration with the division of educational outreach. Each
instructor is expected to develop a plan for making up class time cancelled due to inclement
weather or any other pertinent reason—a plan that integrates well with course objectives. It
may be an extra class meeting (face to face or on-line), but it could also be an extra
assignment, a supplemental discussion, etc.). Any required make-up activity needs to take
place during the regular academic week unless the course, in general, stipulates otherwise.
Chair of Faculty Senate
Secretary of the Faculty Senate
Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (for catalog and handbook)
Associate Dean of Graduate School (for catalog)
Others (i.e. person responsible for implementation)