VCSU SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES:
Severe Weather Safety

North Dakota can be subject to a variety of weather risks including lightning, high winds, hail, flooding, tornadoes, freezing rain, heavy snow, etc. Be aware of the potential for threatening weather and take appropriate precautions. Avoid open areas when severe weather strikes.

Campus Information
Valley City State University’s zip code is 58072 and is located in Barnes County. Surrounding counties are Stutsman, Cass, Ransom, LaMoure, Griggs, and Steele. Campus weather conditions are available on various campus plasma screens and online at www.vcsu.edu/weather

Emergency Weather Closings
In Severe Weather Emergencies, the President can cancel or delay classes. VCSU is open, unless announced by the campus. Closing the University is a suspension of classes, examinations and all other activities with the exception of essential services. For further information, see VCSU Policy V916-2.

VCSU will notify local radio stations (KOVC 1490, KQDJ 101.1), and all employees by email and voicemail.

Campus Policy: Closings
V916.2 Severe Weather: Suspension of Classes; In the event of severe weather and in the absence of specific information to the contrary, it will be assumed that classes will meet on schedule. Faculty, students, and staff will be responsible for making their individual decisions to come to campus or not to come, carefully balancing the responsibility of attendance with the necessary consideration of personal safety.

That individuals will make responsible choices is assumed. When the institution remains open during inclement weather, employees unable to report for work will notify their supervisor and take annual leave or leave without pay. Extra compensation or time off will not be credited to those who attend on those occasions. If the weather is extremely severe and a decision is made to cancel classes and close offices, announcement will be made on voicemail, email and the following radio stations: KOVC, Valley City; KSJB & KQDJ, Jamestown; KQLX, Lisbon; and KFGO, Fargo. Only the President of the University is authorized to issue such an announcement and, in his or her absence, the Vice President for Academic affairs or the Vice President for Student Affairs. Only essential personnel* may be required to work during the period when the institution is officially closed. All other employees will be granted leave with pay for hours which they would normally work during a closure period. All employees properly authorized to work will receive additional pay for hours worked during the official closing.

*Essential Personnel: Employees who are necessary to keep the university operational during the time of closure (i.e. heat plant operators, may include Student Center employees, resident hall employees depending on the time of year).

Sponsored by: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Reviewed Fall: 1997
Revised Winter: 2006
Weather Warning Definitions

- **A WEATHER ADVISORY:** means actual or expected weather conditions may cause poor weather conditions, but will not pose a threat serious enough to warrant a weather warning.
- **A WEATHER WATCH:** is an alert that conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather. Watch the skies and listen for updated watches and possible weather warnings.
- **A WEATHER WARNING:** means that severe weather is occurring or is highly probable. Tune in to the radio for instructions and additional weather information.

Tornado Information

- **Tornado Watch:** Conditions are right for a tornado to develop in the area, and one should be on the alert for further weather developments.
  - Familiarize yourself with the lowest level and the emergency routes to designated primary and secondary shelter/safe areas.
  - A tornado watch will be announced to each department through telephone and email.
  - During the watch period, use the time to prepare for an easy transition to shelter areas.
  - When the tornado watch expires, an announcement will be made by radio (1490 AM), by phone, or by email.

- **Tornado Warning:** Either a sighted tornado or indicated by radar.
  - The city siren will announce the warning, and VCSU will follow with email and voice mail notifications. Remain calm and take immediate action.
  - Do not run, walk to the lowest level, designated shelter area.
  - Close the doors and windows of each room as they are evacuated.
  - Do not leave the shelter until the warning passes.
  - Avoid all glass areas, doors and entrances.
  - A BET member will notify individuals in person or via phone calls about the all clear. If a radio is available the radio announcer will announce an all clear.
  - Notify the campus nurse or BET if any individuals suffered an injury, or if the building suffered damage.
  - After the disaster or emergency:
    - Do not enter the building or area until the BET (See Appendix A) clears the area for people to enter.
    - Stay away from the disaster site. Do not sightsee; you may interfere with emergency teams.
    - Be aware of the possibility of gas leaks or electrical short circuits. If detected, notify the gas company, electrical company, the police, or fire department. Don’t go back into the building until you have been ensured it is safe by these officials.
    - Stay away from fallen or damaged electrical wires.
  - Facilities Services will conduct periodic severe weather/tornado drills throughout the year. However, treat every drill as if it there was an actual severe weather/tornado emergency. It is VCSU’s policy that participation in drills is mandatory and you may be subject to disciplinary procedures for non-compliance.

Flash Flood / Warning Information

Flash Flood or Flood Warning: Issued by National Weather Service, or Barnes County Emergency Management Agency when large amounts of precipitation cause hazardous condition or if the river rises to unusual levels.

- VCSU administration will issue information via email and phone messages.

In the event of a flood emergency warning or actual flood emergency on or near campus, the campus will receive advance notification from Barnes County Emergency Management Agency as to the extent and nature of the impending flood or weather emergency. The instructions and preparations for the University and
surrounding communities will be relayed from Barnes County Emergency Management Agency to the University through the Public Safety dispatcher and Department of Public Safety.

The President of the University or the Vice President for Business Affairs, or their designee, will initiate the appropriate announcements concerning the emergency flood warning and the instructions for preparation and/or evacuation when and if necessary.

In the event of a major weather emergency or disaster, the director of public safety will coordinate a timely notification procedure for all members of the university and surrounding communities with the members of the Emergency Response Team through the KOVC 1490 AM, local media communications networks or through the Public Safety dispatcher and the university telephone switchboard.

Any member of the University, who discovers a flood problem or potential flood problem, resulting from weather conditions or facilities damage, should follow these procedures:

- Stay out of the area. Do not enter until electrical power has been turned off. There is an extreme danger of electrical shock if the water has contacted any electrical devices.
- Call the Facility Services- 845-7705. After business hours, and on weekends and holidays, call the Powerhouse- 845-7708 and the Valley City Police- 911 and describe the nature of the problem.
- Post people at all entrances to the flooded area to prevent entry by unauthorized personnel.
- Identify a temporary shelter to house water-soaked materials.
- Do not return to the building or work area until instructed to do so by authorities and/or the Building Emergency Team (BET).
- The BET will initiate the proper notification procedure for contacting appropriate personnel when a flood occurs on or near campus.
- BET will respond with the appropriate authorities to evaluate the situation.

In all flood and emergency weather situations, the President’s Office will serve as the central coordinating center for all information and instructions within and outside the University.