

Professors Forced To Tweak Syllabi

Some UNC professors say they have already scheduled additional class sessions to make up missed lectures.

By GEOFF WESSEL
Staff Writer

The loss of three class days might have been a cause for student celebration, but many University professors say snow days are a mixed blessing.

Officials closed the University on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday after more than 16 inches of snow and ice blanketed the campus.

The University has no official policy for making up classes lost to snow cancellations, Provost Dick Richardson said.

Professors at the University do have the option of scheduling meetings for their classes to go over missed material, he said.

But philosophy Professor William Lycan said some classes would be difficult to reschedule.

"My undergraduate class has a hundred-plus people in it," Lycan said.

"I do hate losing that one class because it was a rather important one, so I'll probably just have to cut a day of my syllabus."

Forced to stay home during the storm, professors like Alan Neebe, an associate dean in the Kenan-Flagler Business School, spent their time off adjusting their semester syllabi.

"We'll probably have to reschedule some of our classes," Neebe said.

"It's inconvenient, but the faculty will work around the schedule."

Economics Professor Boone Turchi said he agreed with the University's decision to cancel classes but was frustrated by the lost time.

"I don't want to lose a full week of class," Turchi said.

He said he would make two additional lectures available to students outside of the scheduled class time, as well as several review sessions over the next few weeks.

"I will try to make myself available for students who have questions," he said.

"Now we have to catch up. I'll do my part, hopefully (students will) do theirs too."

Assistant music Professor Scott Warner said he spent his time off trying to utilize the Internet to allow his students to stay updated with his course plans.

"I'm trying to get a Web site up to communicate with (my students)," Warner said.

"It's possible I can do something on the Web for them, but I'm not sure."

For his music students, Warner plans to schedule extra rehearsals to prepare for upcoming concerts.

Political science Professor Jim Stimson said he would be doubling up the homework assignments for his graduate students next week to catch up with his syllabus.

In his lecture classes, however, Stimson said he would resume class where he left off in Monday's lecture.

"With 200 or more students, there are no spare spots (in the sched-

ule," he said.

"There's no way to make it up."

Despite the problems associated with the closings, some professors said they agreed with the decision to cancel classes.

"I was out in the roads a little bit (Wednesday), and it was a mess," said Thomas Oatley, an assistant political science professor.

"I think if (officials) hadn't (closed the University) I probably wouldn't have been able to get to class at 9 a.m. today,"

Assistant University Editor Kim Minugh contributed to this story. The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.



Provost Dick Richardson said the University had no official policy in place for missed classes.

Cancellations Buck UNC Tradition

Former UNC-system leader Bill Friday says the school's three consecutive snow days are 'unprecedented.'

By JERMAINE CALDWELL
Staff Writer

With UNC's track record of hesitating to cancel classes, students might find that their high school days had administrators more willing to cancel school than University officials.

But with the arrival of Monday night's 16 inches of snow, students received three seemingly unprecedented days off due to adverse weather.

Interim Chancellor Bill McCoy and his team of advisers had the decision in their hands to hold classes.

And McCoy and company have had their hands full since Monday night, with deciding the fate of the following three days' classes.

University Senior Counsel Susan Ehringhaus said McCoy consulted with advisers, colleagues such as Director of Public Safety Derek Poarch, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facility Services Bruce Runberg and others, before making his final decision.

Historically, the cancellation of classes is surrounded with legends and rumors.

One legend says the University has not closed since the Civil War. The legend is only partly true, because it actually refers to the closing of the University over an extended period of

time.

But the University's actual reputation concerning the cancellation of classes has been to remain open if at all possible.

Snow fell for 36 hours straight in January 1996 when students were returning from Winter Break, causing neighboring Duke and N.C. State universities to postpone their resumption dates.

UNC classes were deemed optional, but the University officially remained open.

Both Hurricane Fran in September 1996 and Hurricane Floyd in September each led to one day of class being canceled.

But outside of the two hurricanes, cancellations have been few and far between.

Even today, while N.C. Central University continues to be closed due to snow and ice, University officials decided to resume classes and operations at 9 a.m.

With UNC's famous hesitation to call off classes comes the question of the reasoning behind wanting to keep students' noses to the grindstone.

"I think there is always a reluctance to close unless safety conditions require (it)," Ehringhaus said. "And this time, the safety conditions were quite clear."

Former UNC-system President Bill Friday has a unique look on the history of cancellations.

"This is an unprecedented event to have the University closed for three consecutive days," Friday said.

"I've not in 50 years seen this hap-

Mark Your Calendars

The following meetings, deadlines and events have been postponed and rescheduled because of the past week's record-breaking winter weather.

- The CAA basketball ticket distribution has been moved to Feb. 5. Bracelets will be distributed next week.
- The Bobby McFerrin concert scheduled for Jan. 26 has been postponed. Time and date TBA.
- The UNC Student Jazz Combos concert has been canceled. The groups will give another free concert in the Union Cabaret on March 23.
- The filing date for student organization budget requests is 5 p.m. Saturday.
- The Student Supreme Court trial regarding the U.S. Student Association referendum has been postponed. Time and date TBA.
- The Congress Finance weekend will still be held Feb. 4-6.
- The deadline for freshmen or sophomores interested in applying to be in the Honors Program has been extended to 5 p.m. Jan. 28. Applications are available in 225 Graham Memorial.
- In the wake of North Carolina's severe blood shortage, students are asked to donate their blood today at Morrison Residence Hall from noon to 4:30 p.m.
- Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools are closed today — it is an optional workday for teachers.
- Chatham County Schools are closed today.
- Chapel Hill Transit is operating on a modified schedule as conditions allow. The T, F, D and J routes are running on modified fixed routes.
- Commercial refuse collection is suspended until further notice. However, residential refuse will still be picked up curbside today and Saturday, as conditions allow.
- Area grocery stores are operating on modified schedules.

pen, but neither have I seen a 20-inch snow like this."

Friday said he believed the importance of holding classes went along with the University's obligation to educate and having classes was what students were paying for.

"(Classes should continue) unless you have to reckon with uncommon and

unnatural conditions," Friday said.

"The tradition has always been, we teach school." And with the record-breaking snowfall, the University has had to break its long tradition.

The Features Editor can be reached at features@unc.edu.

Storm-Stranded Flood Local Shelter

By ROBERT ALBRIGHT
Staff Writer

While many residents huddled in their houses following this week's record-breaking snowstorm, the freezing conditions forced an unfortunate few to seek cover at local shelters.

Area organizations such as the Inter-Faith Council, the Orange County American Red Cross and local churches welcomed Chapel Hill's homeless and those stranded without power during Tuesday's winter storm.

Raney Norwood, senior manager of the IFC shelter at 100 W. Rosemary St., said the shelter had nearly reached capacity after accommodating more than 70 people.

"We always accept people in this type of weather," he said. "Some people have had to sleep on the floor, but we aren't going to turn anyone away."

Because the shelter only had 32 beds for men and 18 beds for women, Norwood said the shelter offered sleeping pads for some so they could sleep on the floor.

Johnnie Walsh, an employee at the shelter, said the need for shelter space always increased during damaging and cold weather. "We'll make space even if we don't have a lot of room," he said.

Despite the large number of shelter inhabitants, Norwood said the IFC was prepared for the influx of homeless and stranded people looking for cover away

from the harsh winter conditions.

"The shelter is pretty well stocked with food and water," he said. "Regardless of the weather, we will continue to give people three meals a day."

Josh Diem, director of IFC's local housing program Project Homestart, said many people came to the shelter because of its central location. "There's always a big number of people seeking shelter during bad weather," he said.

Along with the IFC shelter, other organizations also set up accommodations for the homeless and the stranded.

Diane Ellis, director of emergency services for the Orange County American Red Cross, said shelters were set up at First Baptist Church in Hillsborough and at the Red Cross office on Estes Church Road.

While the IFC struggled to accommodate people at a nearly full shelter,

Ellis said only seven people stayed at the Red Cross' shelter on Estes Church Road on Tuesday, and no one used the shelter in Hillsborough.

Diem said the low turnout at the Red Cross shelters was because of their distance from downtown Chapel Hill, making them more inconvenient for many to get to.

Both Red Cross shelters opened early Tuesday morning and closed Tuesday afternoon. Ellis said the only people who used Red Cross shelter were those stuck on Interstate 40 and those without power.

She said, "Even though the people (that came to our shelter) have left, the Red Cross is still available if anyone needs help."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

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