I. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance for a safe and efficient response to disruptive events that impact Western Dakota Technical College’s (WDTC’s) faculty, staff, and students. Crisis and emergency management preparation is an essential function for WDTC. The College will mitigate the impact of crisis situations and operational disruptions on its campus community through implementing policies and procedures that provide for continuity of operations in cases of a catastrophic event.

II. General Statement of Policy

The policy of the College is to maintain and adhere to specific policies and procedures regarding crisis situations, catastrophic events, and program discontinuances in order to minimize the length of time that students’ educational activities are disrupted and, when applicable, minimize the length of time that students, faculty, and staff are displaced.

A. To help mitigate the impact of an emergency on College operations –

1. The College maintains an Emergency Plan that is reviewed and updated at least annually by the Safety Committee and approved by Cabinet.

2. The College leverages a cloud hosted student information system and a learning management system to minimize the likelihood of service interruption and data loss.

3. The College collaborates with local law enforcement, county emergency response, and state departments to guide the college during a catastrophic event.

B. The following WDTC policies are intended to help mitigate the impact of a catastrophic event on College operations –

- Policy 4006 – Student Records Retention
- Policy 5007 – Information Security
- Policy 6007 – Refunds
- Policy 6009 – Campus Safety

C. In the event of a Western Dakota Tech campus closure –

1. The College will comply with policy FDCR.B.10.010 from the Higher Learning Commission.
2. WDTC will provide equitable treatment of students by ensuring they are able to complete the educational program in which they are enrolled within a reasonable period of time. WDTC will also provide prompt notification of additional changes to students, if any. In the unlikely event that WDTC cannot deliver the instruction for which students have enrolled, the College commits to one or more of the following courses of action:

- Providing a reasonable alternative for delivering instruction and/or services for which students have paid.
- Providing assistance for transferring earned credits to other institutions.
- Providing reasonable financial refund for the education students did not receive.

WDTC students will be notified by college administration and then counseled about their options.

3. All permanent records of current and former students will be maintained by and available from Career and Technical Education, 700 Governors Drive, Pierre, South Dakota 57501.

D. In the event of a program closure –

1. The program will be in teach out status as of the date the formal decision is made to close the program.

2. Notifications will be made within 30 days of the formal decision to close the program as follows:

   a. The Program Director will notify any programmatic accreditor.
   b. WDTC will notify the SD Board of Technical Education and the Higher Learning Commission.
   c. WDTC will provide written notification to students currently enrolled in the program.

3. WDTC will provide equitable treatment of students by ensuring they are able to complete the educational program within a reasonable period of time. This will include working with the Program Director, academic advisor, and Registrar’s Office to finalize degree plans for completion of the program.

4. WDTC will provide prompt notification of additional changes to students, if any.

III. Definitions - None

IV. Reporting Procedures – None
V. Dissemination of Policy and Training

A. This policy shall appear on the WDTC website on the policy page.

Legal References: None

Board Approved 2/9/2022