NEOMED ACADEMIC POLICY	POLICY NO: 3349-AC-204
ACADEMIC POLICY TITLE: Examination Interruption Policy	EFFECTIVE DATE: September 24, 2018
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Office of Academic Services	APPROVAL AUTHORITY: Provost POLICY AUTHOR: Director of Academic Scheduling, Assessment and Evaluation

(A)   Purpose

The Office of Academic Services is committed to maintaining a well-designed and effective process for the administration of examinations. This Policy provides general guidelines in the event of an interruption during the administration of an examination.

(B)   Scope

This Policy covers examination interruptions that may occur due to a power outage, internet outage, emergency alerts (fire, tornado, or other natural disaster), and inclement weather, and includes interruptions of internal examinations using ExamSoft software and external National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) examinations that access the NBME testing website and any other examinations being administered by the Colleges at NEOMED.

(C)   Policy Statement

For all interruptions that occur during the exam, the Office of Academic Services (OAS) assessment staff will instruct students to refrain from talking. If students are permitted to remain in the testing room, OAS staff will instruct students to wait quietly until further instructions are provided. If students are required to exit the testing room due to the nature of the interruption, they will be instructed to refrain from discussing the exam. OAS staff will notify/consult with course directors in matters of non-compliant students.

    (1)   Internal Examination Outages – ExamSoft

        (a)   Power Outage

            (i)   If the power outage occurs prior to the start of the examination, OAS staff will contact Campus Operations staff to determine the possible cause and duration of the outage. Based on the

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estimated duration of the outage, OAS staff will determine whether to start the examination at a later time on the same day or to reschedule the examination on a later date. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the type of course and room availability.

(ii)   If the power outage occurs during an examination, OAS staff will instruct students to continue testing while simultaneously contacting Campus Operations staff to determine the possible cause and duration of the outage. Based on the estimated duration of the outage, the time remaining on the examination, and estimated battery charge remaining for the computers, OAS staff will determine whether to continue or stop the exam. If the decision is to stop the exam, OAS staff will instruct students to power-down the computers. This will stop the exam timer from continuing until the examination resumes.

(iii)   When power is restored, students will be permitted to re-start the examination. If the students have been out of the examination for more than ten (10) minutes, an ExamSoft universal resume code will be required to re-enter the exam. This code is unique to each examination and is readily available to OAS staff on the back of the examination password document.

(iv)   If the power outage is expected to last for thirty (30) minutes or longer, the examination will be terminated, and OAS staff will consult with the course director to determine whether the same examination will be administered or if a new examination will be created.

(b)   Internet Outage/Insufficient Bandwidth

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(i)   If the internet outage occurs prior to the start of the examination, and based on the estimated duration of the outage, OAS staff will consult with the course director to determine whether to start the examination at a later time on the scheduled day of the exam or to reschedule the examination for a later date. If the administration of a paper version is deemed appropriate, OAS staff will distribute paper versions of the exam along with and bubble-style answer sheets for completion by the students.

(ii)   If there is an internet outage during the exam, students will be able to continue taking the examination on the computer. While an internet connection is required to download and upload the examination, it is not required during the taking of the examination. If an internet connection has not been established upon completion of the examinations OAS stiff will complete the upload process when internet connection is restored.

(c)   Laptop Failure

(i)   If the laptop failure occurs at the start of the exam, an additional download of the exam will be permitted to a second laptop. Exam questions will appear in a new random order.

(ii)   If the laptop failure occurs during an exam and the completed portion of the exam cannot be uploaded to ExamSoft, students will be required to start a new exam on a working laptop. Exam questions will appear in a new random order.

(iii)   If the laptop failure occurs during an exam and OAS staff determine that the completed portion of the exam can subsequently be uploaded to ExamSoft, students will be provided with a paper copy of the exam that includes their answers

recorded prior to the failure. Students will have the remainder of the allotted exam time to complete the exam using bubble-style answer sheets.   All recorded answers will be uploaded to ExamSoft by OAS staff and the course director will be notified of the exam interruption and resolution.

(d)   Emergency Alerts

(i)   If an emergency alarm (fire, tornado, or other natural disaster) activates prior to the start of the examination, administration of the examination will be delayed. Depending on the duration of the alarm, the examination may be administered once the alarm has concluded or the examination may be postponed. OAS staff will determine whether to reschedule the examination following a review of the type of course, testing room availability and, when necessary, upon consultation with the course director.

(ii)   If an emergency alarm activates during an examination, OAS staff will instruct students to turn off computers in order to stop the examination. OAS staff will also instruct students to refrain from discussing the examination (see Appendix A for posted instructions). Depending on the nature of the alarm, OAS staff will instruct students to either stay in testing room or to exit the building.

(iii) When the emergency alarm ends, students will be permitted to re-start the examination. If students are out of the examination for more than ten (10) minutes, an ExamSoft universal resume code will be required to re-enter the examination. This code is unique for each examination and is readily available to staff on the back of the examination password document.

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(2) External Examination Outages – National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME)

    (a)   Power outage

        (i)   If the power outage occurs prior to the start of the examination, OAS staff will contact Campus Operations staff to determine the possible cause and duration of the outage. Based on the estimated duration of the outage, OAS staff will determine whether to start the examination at a later time on the same day or to reschedule the examination on a later date. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the type of course and room availability.

        (ii)   If the power outage occurs during an examination, OAS staff will instruct students to continue testing while simultaneously contacting Campus Operations staff to determine the possible cause and duration of the outage. Based on the estimated duration of the outage, the time remaining on the examination, and estimated battery charge remaining for the computers, OAS staff will determine whether to continue or stop the exam. If the decision is to stop the exam, OAS staff will instruct students to exit the online examination in order to stop the time.

        (iii)   When power is restored, students will be permitted to re-start the examination with a new start-up code. If the issue cannot be resolved within thirty (30) minutes, the exam will be terminated and rescheduled in consultation with the course director.

    (b)   Internet Outage/Insufficient Bandwidth

        (i)   If the internet outage occurs prior to the start of the examination, OAS staff will contact NEOMED IT staff and/or the NBME staff to

determine the possible cause and duration of the outage. As paper copies of the exam are not available, a determination will be made whether to delay the start or to postpone the examination upon consultation with the course director.

(ii)   If the internet outage occurs during the examination, OAS staff will instruct students to exit the online examination (see Appendix B for posted instructions), as the NBME examinations require a continuous internet connection while testing. OAS staff will instruct students to refrain from talking while the outage is being addressed. OAS staff will contact NEOMED IT and/or the NBME staff to determine if the outage is a NEOMED or an NBME issue. If the issue cannot be resolved within thirty (30) minutes, OAS staff will terminate the examination and it will be rescheduled in consultation with the course director.

(c)   Laptop Failure

If a laptop failure occurs, the student will re-start the exam on a working laptop. Answers that were entered prior to the failure are retained on the NBME server so students can resume testing where they left off at the time of the failure.

(d)   Emergency Alerts

(i)   If an emergency alarm (fire, tornado, or other natural disaster) activates prior to the start of the examination, administration of the examination will be delayed. Depending on the duration of the alarm, the examination may be administered once the alarm has concluded or the examination may be postponed. OAS staff

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will determine whether to reschedule the examination following a review of the type of course, testing room availability and, when necessary, upon consultation with the course director.

(ii)   If an emergency alarm activates during an examination, OAS staff will instruct students to exit the online examination in order to stop the examination. OAS staff will also instruct students to refrain from discussing the examination (see Exhibit A for posted instructions). Depending on the nature of the alarm, OAS staff will instruct students to either stay in testing room or to exit the building.

(iii)   When the emergency alarm ends, students will be permitted to re-start the examination. If, however, the exam has been suspended for thirty (30) minutes, OAS staff will terminate the examination and it will be rescheduled in consultation with the course director.

(3)   External Examination Interruptions – Pharmacy Curriculum Outcomes Assessment (PCOA)

The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) provides a Test Site Administrator (TSA) and proctors to administer the PCOA. The TSA will contact the NABP in the event of any testing issues. In the event of an internet outage, the present OAS staff person will contact NEOMED IT staff to determine whether the source of the outage originates from NEOMED or the NABP. If the outage originates from NEOMED, OAS staff will consult with the TSA to determine whether the exam should be rescheduled. If the outage originates with NABP, the TSA will provide instruction on how to proceed.

(4)   Off-Site Examination Interruptions – College of Graduate Studies

University laptops will be transported to the COGS testing sites for ExamSoft testing. Extra laptops, paper copies of exams and bubble-style answer sheets will also be taken to the testing sites in the event of an exam interruption. Should an interruption occur that cannot be resolved by OAS staff and/or site staff, a paper copy of the exam will be administered.

(5)   Inclement Weather

(a)   Delays or Cancellations

(i)   All examination delays or cancellations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and in collaboration with course directors and/or faculty. If the University is deemed closed, no examinations will be administered. OAS staff will consult with course directors and/or faculty to determine an appropriate date, time, and location to reschedule the examination, if necessary.

(ii)   OAS staff will communicate examination schedule changes or provide updates to students via NEOMED e-mail or through NEOMED's learning management system.