

USC Enrollment Management Division

Executive Briefing

Academic Continuity Planning: Fall 2026 Operational Readiness

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Executive Summary

Following the June 2026 faculty union election and the University's ongoing legal review, institutions across higher education have emphasized academic continuity planning as a best practice for maintaining instruction and student support during periods of operational uncertainty. While Fall 2026 registration and instructional planning remain on schedule, Enrollment Management should be prepared to support students if instructional disruptions occur.

This briefing summarizes strategic considerations to help maintain student success, registration stability, academic progress, and coordinated communications should instructional operations be affected.

Current Environment

- Fall 2026 registration and instructional planning remain on schedule.
- The University continues its normal academic planning processes.
- Peer institutions have published academic continuity guidance to prepare for potential instructional disruptions.
- Enrollment Management may be called upon to coordinate student communications and operational support should instructional changes occur.

Institutional Priorities

Institutional Priority	Enrollment Management Consideration
Student Success	Support timely progress toward degree completion.
Registration Stability	Maintain registration and advising operations with timely updates.
Academic Continuity	Coordinate with Academic Affairs to support instructional continuity.
Student Communication	Deliver clear, consistent, and centralized communications to students and families.
Operational Readiness	Monitor developments and coordinate cross-functional planning.

Executive Considerations

Should instructional disruptions occur, the following actions are recommended to support institutional continuity and student success:

- Coordinate with Academic Affairs regarding instructional continuity planning.
- Identify graduation-critical and high-demand courses that may require additional monitoring.
- Prepare student-facing communications, FAQs, and advisor guidance.
- Ensure grading, registration, and advising processes can continue with minimal disruption.
- Establish a regular executive update process to support coordinated decision-making across university leadership.

Executive Risk Assessment

Potential Issue	Enrollment Impact	Mitigation
Instructional disruptions	Delays in required coursework	Academic continuity planning
Increased student inquiries	Higher advising demand	Prepared FAQs and coordinated communications
Potential instructional modifications	Student uncertainty regarding course delivery	Timely student notifications
Grading delays	Financial aid and graduation impacts	Cross-functional planning with Academic Affairs and the Registrar

Key Message for Leadership

Academic continuity planning is not a prediction that a disruption will occur. Rather, it is a standard component of institutional readiness that enables the University to respond effectively to a range of operational scenarios.

Should instructional disruptions occur, Enrollment Management's role is to support students through clear communication, coordinated advising, uninterrupted access to essential services, and collaboration with campus partners to minimize impacts on academic progress and the overall student experience.

Portfolio Sample | Prepared to demonstrate executive briefing preparation, strategic analysis, and decision support.