WHAT TO DO WHEN THE WEATHER STRIKES: CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO CAMPUS CLOSURE
My story:

- I have been at CCU for two and 1/2 years.
- My first year we closed one week for a hurricane and two days for an ice storm.
- My second year we closed for one week for a hurricane and two additional weeks for flooding in our region.
WHAT YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT WHEN MAKING PLANS

Will you have power?

What if some people have power and some people do not?

If your school loses power, then platforms like Moodle, Blackboard, etc. may not work. These are usually stored in your school servers and they do not work without power.

Timing – You should have a plan you can mail out quickly for rapidly approaching storms. Our last hurricane was a mere possibility on Wednesday and struck by Monday. There was not time for a ton of advanced planning. My time was spent packing up and getting everyone to Atlanta to share a hotel room for a week. Lesson learned - have something ready to go!
WHO DO YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT IN A STORM? YOU NEED TIME FOR THE HOME TEAM.
Creating an Alternate Assignment

Reading the class text chapters that were normally assigned is not an alternate assignment.

- Creating a graphic organizer that shows relationships between concepts in the book or several articles would be an alternate assignment.
- Having students phone conference about an article and then write a summary of items that they learned and new viewpoints were that were helpful in understanding the article.
- If you have a dream assignment that you always want students to do but never can fit it in your syllabus, you might send that as your emergency assignment.
- Your assignment should represent the amount of seat time in your class.

Have an emergency assignment ready to go on your lap top so you can take 30 minutes to send these off to classes before you evacuate. Once you leave you cannot be sure you will have excellent access to internet, if power will stay on, or if your students will have power. Also, if you are all stuffed into one hotel room and you have to walk pets and entertain kids, your time will not be your own.
ONCE YOU HAVE EVACUATED, OR THE STORM HAS PASSED — KEEP IN CONTACT

If you have a closure for more than a few days students get really worried about the implications and their grade.

Send a daily email in the morning with directions. Even if that direction is, we are working on a plan, hold tight.

Reassure them that you and the school are working to get them back to class when it is safe. In the meantime do the work they can on alternate assignments.

Have a plan for students with extended power outages and flooding — I would consider flexible deadlines such as get them to me as soon as you can and for some students that may be after we return to class.

If you have a firm date, make sure it is not the same as everyone else’s on campus. LMS systems slow down greatly when all students are on the LMS and are trying to turn things in at the same time. (Lesson learned in last hurricane.)
IF YOU, THE SCHOOL, AND YOUR STUDENTS MOSTLY HAVE POWER, ADD YOUR ASSIGNMENTS TO YOUR LMS

Make sure to send a follow up email with the assignment.

Remember to make deadlines flexible. One of my assignments I could not give a new deadline because I did not know when our local schools would reopen. My students were in two districts and some schools had water in them from flooding.
This is a stressful time

Even if nothing happens to your home, this is a stressful time for everyone.

Students who lose housing or property are under greater stress.

This is the time to be generous and forgiving, even if you are normally a stickler for deadlines.
YOUR TURN! Let's share ideas!