



60.205: Mass Crisis/Emergency Communication System

Responsible Executive: VP for Research and Technology
Responsible Office: Office of Communications and Marketing and
Office of Information Technology
Related Policy: 45.004; 51.001; 60.201; NSU Emergency Response Plan
Approved-On Date: August 27, 2007
Effective Date: August 27, 2007
Revision Date:

Policy Statement

Norfolk State University (NSU) reserves the right to use text messaging service of its choosing as one of various official means for communicating with faculty, staff and students in case of an emergency situation. When the university so chooses for mass communication, it will send official text alerts to faculty, staff, and students who voluntarily “opt in” to participate in the mass crisis/emergency notification system. The system will notify participants via any of their mobile phones, pagers, email, web browser, and other wireless data devices for which appropriate and accurate communication data have been provided. Faculty and staff with wireless devices and services paid for by the university are required to register the said devices and participate in this communication plan.

Purpose

Text messaging has become an efficient, fast, and cost-effective method of communication with many advantages. It empowers the university to rapidly communicate with faculty, staff, and students. This policy establishes expectations for use of text messaging service in emergency situations.

The text messaging mass notification system is a service for all NSU faculty, staff, and students. More importantly, the service is intended to provide all registered text messaging service users appropriate information in an emergency. Please note, for receiving messages, standard text messaging rates apply and are based on the individual’s service contract with their respective service provider/carrier. Users should check with their provider/carrier for absolute clarification. In any event, NSU will not charge text message recipients for rendering and administering this emergency service. Furthermore, NSU will not be responsible for charges incurred by the participants from their wireless service provider for text messaging.

Procedures

I. Declaration of Campus State of Emergency

As specified in the Norfolk State University Emergency Response Plan, the authority to declare a campus state of emergency rests with the President or his/her designee. The President or the designee, working with the Norfolk State University Emergency Response Team, will decide what action must be taken and when.

II. Text Messaging for Crisis/Emergency Communication

When the campus community is to be notified during an emergency, the President or the designee will notify the Office of Communications and Marketing. The Executive Director of Communications and Marketing will prepare and send the required notification via the text messaging web portal. When technical issues arise, the Executive Director of Communications and Marketing will call upon the Office of Information Technology (OIT) for support.

It is the intent of the University leadership that the text messaging service be used in conjunction with officially declared emergencies as outlined in the NSU Emergency Response Plan.

The following text messaging codes will be used:

Closed—NSU is closed today. For more information visit www.nsu.edu.

Delayed Opening—NSU will open at ___ today. Visit www.nsu.edu or www.nsualert.com when the primary site is down.

Early Closing—NSU will close at ___ today. Visit www.nsu.edu.

Urgent—NSU lockdown situation at _____. Visit www.nsu.edu or call

1. NSU Operator 823-8600
2. NSU Security 823-8102

Evacuation— Message 1: NSU ___ Bldg. is closing immediately. Go to _____ Bldg. **Message 2:** NSU ___ Bldg. is closing immediately. Leave campus. For more information visit www.nsu.edu.

III. Glossary

All Clear— after an emergency has been deemed secure by campus police/security. It is safe to return to the building and/or campus.

Evacuation— to remove (persons or things) from a place, such as a dangerous place or disaster area, for reasons of safety or protection.

Lockdown— all buildings are secured. Stay where you are. Secure yourself until campus police/security state the building/situation is resolved. If you are off campus, do not come on campus.

Policy Coordination Sheet

Policy: 60.205: Mass Crisis/Emergency Communication System

Initial Preparation: May 9th, 2007 [Harry Faircloth]

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Pamela F. Boston	University Legal Counsel	Y	8/23	Meets legal sufficiency with no conflicts.
Executive Cabinet	Executive Cabinet	Y	8/27	Approved with clause "Faculty and staff with wireless devices ..." added to the end of the policy statement.