University Student Services
Learning from the Past – Planning for the Future

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Hurricane Ike

Ike's tropical storm force winds stretched over 510 miles, about 70 percent larger than an average Hurricane.
8 Ft Storm Surge
LESSONS LEARNED
Academic Continuity Checklist

DEVELOPING A PLAN

• Work with your emergency planning and continuity officials to establish plans that include provisions for academic and research continuity. The plan should address how you will continue academic and research activities in case of a campus evacuation. Participate in the institution’s Incident Command System (ICS). The ICS should include key officials from Academic and Student Affairs departments. The lead official for Academic Continuity should be a member of the Incident Command. This person should participate in emergency planning, training, and exercises. Schedule meetings to discuss key topics in emergency preparedness.
Developing A Plan

• Be prepared to establish mutual aid agreements with outside entities, other colleges and universities and within your System. Be prepared to establish contracts with outside entities to support your academic continuity program. These contracts could include e.g. lecture capture technology, online education, and other communications technologies. Agreements with other academic institutions should contain provisions for library use, counseling services, health center services, recreation facilities, classroom services, food service, housing, remote access to enrollment services, financial aid, network/Internet access, and other services provided to students. It is critically important for academic continuity that institutions:
Developing a Plan

– Have a plan for Financial Aid. Know where you can implement/disperse funds from an offsite location. Have key individuals set up a plan for getting allocated funds to students. Determine the implications for financial aid programs if courses are canceled for the semester, and as well as any federal reporting requirements regarding financial aid programs that are suspended or canceled.

– Have a housing plan in place. Know where you plan on sending students, and know where they can stay in the case that campus housing is lost (hotel, apartment complex(s), other local/close universities and colleges). Establish mutual aid agreements for both short term sheltering of students in an emergency, and longer term housing if academic/research activities need to be moved off your main campus to another campus.
Developing a Plan

- Have a plan for resuming classes off campus or online. Work with academic departments to make sure good lines of communication are going back and forth between Student and Academic Affairs to ensure ease of student return/continuing course work. Plans for the emergency continuation of academic programs online are best accomplished when the use of online and communications technologies are regularly incorporated into teaching. The syllabus for each class should address how teaching and testing will be continued in the event of an emergency.

- Establish methods for students to contact both academic advisors and counseling center staff from the sending institution. Have cell phone access for the students to these staff. Many UT Institutions plan for emergency 1-800 number hosting and website hosting. Work with these programs to assure that information for students is available on these emergency sites.
Developing a Plan

- Have offsite locations planned for key staff well in advance. For example, have locations set up for all your departments and essential services. Have pre-determined clinic sites for the student counseling center and student health service. Work with the campus Recreational Sports office, local YMCA or fitness centers to have a plan for student activities. Information technology staff for essential functions may be able to set up remotely at Recovery sites, other Institutions, or at System Administration.

- Have a plan/system to track employee hours worked during recovery, while campus is officially closed. In some cases, the costs associated with staff working extra hours on an emergency response may be reimbursable. Detailed time records to include specific hours worked and specific activities will be required for reimbursement.

- Prepare for (limited) access to the campus for essential personnel. Work with your institution’s emergency preparedness officials and local officials to assure that your essential personnel will be allowed to reenter. Your local government emergency officials will have the final say on reentry questions.

- Arrangements for housing of key personnel needed in the recovery of the campus.

- Faculty should have all forms of communication in case of an emergency posted on their syllabi and websites.
Command and Coordination

- Establish communication between the office responsible for emergency preparedness at the University level and the offices of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The Vice President of Student Affairs or equivalent position should be involved in the coordination of emergency preparedness at University level as well as the Provost’s office.

- If a University command center is set up, make sure there are academic affairs and student affairs representatives in contact or in the University’s Incident Command Center.

- If an emergency occurs, establish a time to have daily meetings with the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs command staff via an established and predetermined link.
Communications

• Have access to electronic forms of communication (i.e. have a wireless card(s) set up for your department and/or leaders of your department), and make sure you have laptops available for checkout in case of an emergency.

• Utilize your campus emergency multimodal notification system to communicate with students and staff.

• Prior to an actual emergency, develop a specific student information web page.

• Establish a plan to send e-mail messages regularly to students and also operate a Twitter or Facebook account to give students up to date information as it happens. Be watchful for unauthorized social networking sites masquerading as official university sites (spoofing).
Communications

- During orientation, inform students of the emergency webpage where information can be retrieved in case of an emergency. Send out semester/annual email to advise returning students where information is housed and what to do in case of an emergency.

- Maintain an up to date contact information list of employees (home and cell numbers and update regularly) and establish a system for employees to check in.

- Establish a 1-800 number for employees to check in and establish a schedule for each group to call in.

- Be prepared for communication requests from local media.