

# **Mass Communication Procedures and Crisis Communication Plan**

## **Annex B UW-Superior Emergency Response Plan**

**Revised January 2008**



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# Internal and External Mass Communication Methods

UW Superior may utilize any or all of the following internal and external communication methods to alert the campus community to a potential emergency or provide updated information about the status of an incident. New methods and technology may be used as it becomes available.

## ***Email***

Emergency messages may be sent by email using “Everyone” and / or group message lists. Watch the subject line of the email message for words that describe an urgent situation, such as “Important ....” or “Emergency.....” When emergency messages are received, open the email message at once and follow the instructions promptly.

Updates on the status of an incident may be sent either through the use of “everyone” emails, the digest, or group message lists.

## ***Web Pages***

Check the [UW-Superior home page](#) under the News section for weather- or emergency-related messages.

## ***Phone Messaging***

Group phone messaging may be used to send emergency communications to the voice mail boxes of campus phones. If an emergency message is received as a voice mail, listen carefully for instructions on how to get additional information. Do not attempt to call the originator unless the voice mail instructs you to, as it will tie up the phone system.

## ***FIRSTCALL Alert System***

FIRSTCALL is a unique 24-hour telephone warning system used by the City of Superior and Douglas County Wisconsin to provide citizens and local businesses with critical information, warnings and advisories concerning an emergency affecting their location. FIRSTCALL is not used to warn of approaching tornados or fast moving storms. Authorities recommend using weather radios to receive severe weather warnings.

Once the FIRSTCALL system is activate by authorities, a recorded message will be sent by computers to telephones at addresses within the area affected by the emergency. FIRSTCALL is programmed only to dial numbers that are published in the local phone book. FIRSTCALL is not programmed to dial cellular phones. UW Superior offices and residences with phone numbers that are published in a local phone directory may be contacted by the FIRSTCALL system.

When a message is received, follow the instructions carefully. The instructions may require you to take action, such as prepare to evacuate or shelter in place, or it may instruct you to tune to a local television or radio station for more information.

### ***All-Hazard Weather Alert Radios***

All UW Superior buildings are equipped with one or more weather alert radios that are programmed to provide severe weather warnings and all-hazard emergency information for Superior and Douglas County Wisconsin. The message from the weather alert radio may provide short concise directions on actions to take, or it may include instructions to tune to a local radio or television stations for more information. The radios are equipped with back up battery power.

The radios are programmed to receive alert tones for specific emergencies that may occur in Douglas County/Superior Wisconsin. These events include severe weather, amber alerts, evacuation warnings, and other community wide emergencies.

Listen carefully to the message from the radio. **If the affected area includes Superior**, respond immediately and follow the directions as provided over the radio. Unplug the radio and take it with you. Remember: the message may include directions to tune into a local television or radio station for detailed information. Use the AM/FM radio on the alert radio to tune in to local stations.

### ***Building Fire-Alarm Public Address Systems***

With the exception of Barstow Hall, all campus academic and residential buildings are equipped with a public address system; in most buildings the public address system is part of the building's fire alarm system. The speaker systems are normally located in the corridors.

When the public address system is used to deliver an emergency message, there will be one or two short tones emitted from the speakers of the fire alarm system to attract occupant's attention. This tone is different from the continuous tones produced during a fire alarm. After the tones, a verbal message will be delivered via the public address system.

When the initial tones are heard, stop what you are doing and be prepared to receive the emergency message. Respond quickly and safely to the message.



## **Local Media Broadcasts**

Local radio stations or TV stations will report emergency information concerning UW Superior; however, the most accurate information will be available through UW-Superior's hotline or its home page. ***Changes or cancellations of individual classes must be communicated by the instructor to students in a pre-arranged manner.***

Television Stations: [KBJR-TV](#) (Ch. 6, 3) and [WDIO-TV](#) (Ch. 10 and 13)

Newspaper website: [Duluth News Tribune](#)

### Radio Stations

- KDAL 610 AM or
- KDAL 96 FM
- KISS 92.1 FM
- KKCB 105 FM
- KLDJ 101.7 FM
- KRBR 102.5 FM
- KTCO 98.9 FM
- WATW 1400 AM (Ashland, Wis.)
- WBSZ 93.3 FM (Ashland, Wis.)
- WJJH 96.7 FM or 102.3 FM (Ashland, Wis.)
- WNXR 107.3 FM (Iron River, Wis.)
- KQDS 94.9 FM
- [KUWS 91.3 FM](#)
- KZIO 94.1 FM (in the Twin Ports)
- KZIO 104.3 FM (outside the Twin Ports)
- WEBC 560 AM
- WJJH 96.7 FM
- WPNT 107.7 FM
- WWAX 92.1

## ***Emergency “Call Tree” Procedures***

The most critical part of any emergency is to provide brief, concise information and instructions out to the campus community quickly and accurately. This communication procedure utilizes two common means of mass communication of emergency information: email and “call trees”.

Calling trees will be initiated for times other than normal working hours (such as weather emergencies) or when email is not available. Departments are expected to maintain up-to-date information in their call trees, and forward copies to the emergency coordinators as they are revised. Local broadcast media will also be notified of a campus wide situation as needed.

### ***Preparation and Maintenance of the Communication Tree(s)***

1. Complete one of the enclosed templates to create a “call” tree. Click in each cell to complete the information.
  - a. Template A was created using Microsoft Word Organization.
  - b. Template B was created using Microsoft Word Tables feature.
2. Fill in all of the requested means of communication for each member of the work unit, including student employees and LTE’s.
3. Keep the membership list on the “tree” accurate and up to date; the recommended time frame is to update the list at the start of every semester and on June 1.
4. Print a copy of the “Call Tree Procedure – Abbreviated Directions” on the back page of the phone tree and then distribute several copies of the “tree” to each member of your work unit.
5. Send one copy of the “tree” to the following departments each time a revision occurs:
  - a. Human Resources
  - b. Campus Safety office
  - c. A call tree will be built for notifications of all primary/secondary contacts within each department.
6. The membership should keep one copy at home, in their car and at work; a good place to keep copies are your car trunk or glove box, phone book or on a bulletin board near your phone.
7. Create a group email list for each work unit that can be used to transmit the message to all members on the tree. Be sure to make this list available to anyone in the department.

### ***Using the Communication Trees***

#### **Step 1 – Prepare the Emergency Message Script**

- a. Communicating emergency information can only be effective if the message is conveyed accurately. Under normal situations, this is easy to do; however transmitting accurate information during intense moments such as emergencies is best done by reading a prepared script to ensure that all information is transmitted.
- b. Use the exact same message for both email and telephone communications.

- c. Use the form included with this procedure to prepare a written “script” so the information is accurately transferred from person to person.
  - The “script” should be concise and to the point, and written so the message can be delivered via phone call in less than 60 seconds.
  - Start the verbal message with a signal sentence about the situation, such as “This is an Emergency Message from UW Superior .....
  - Use signal words in the subject line of the email to get immediate attention, such as: “Important Emergency Message–Prepare to ...” Send the message with high importance.
  - The script should include a very brief statement of what has happened, the immediate actions that should be taken, and where to get additional information.

Example of a written emergency message script: *Hello, this is (your name) with an emergency message from UW Superior. A transportation accident has created a toxic release on campus. If you are on-campus, stay in the buildings and follow the Shelter-in-place directions in the campus phone books. If you are off campus, do not report to campus until the all-clear is given. Further instructions will be posted on the campus weather hotline, 715-394-8400.*

## **Step 2. Activation of the Call-tree process**

- a. The call-tree process will be activated when an administrative office contacts each Primary/Alternate Primary Contact. This will require a recent/accurate department call tree to be on file at the Human Resources office.
- b. The Primary/Alternate Primary Contacts should copy the information precisely as provided on the message form on the back of the call tree. Verify the accuracy of your written message with the caller before hanging up.
- c. The Primary/Alternate Primary contacts should also distribute the message via email utilizing the email group list prepared for the work unit.

## **Step 3 – Delivering the Emergency Message via Phone or Cell Phone**

- a. The Primary/Alternate Contact on the list calls the secondary contacts/alternate. The secondary contacts call each person on the list below their name.
- b. Call all numbers listed until the person answers the phone. If the phone is answered by voicemail or an answering machine, provide the message, then hang up and call the other phone numbers until contact is made with the individual.
- c. The last person on the list should contact the originator to let them know the calls were made.
- d. Limit the conversation to the emergency message so all calls can be completed in time.

## **Step 4 – Delivering the Emergency Message via Email**

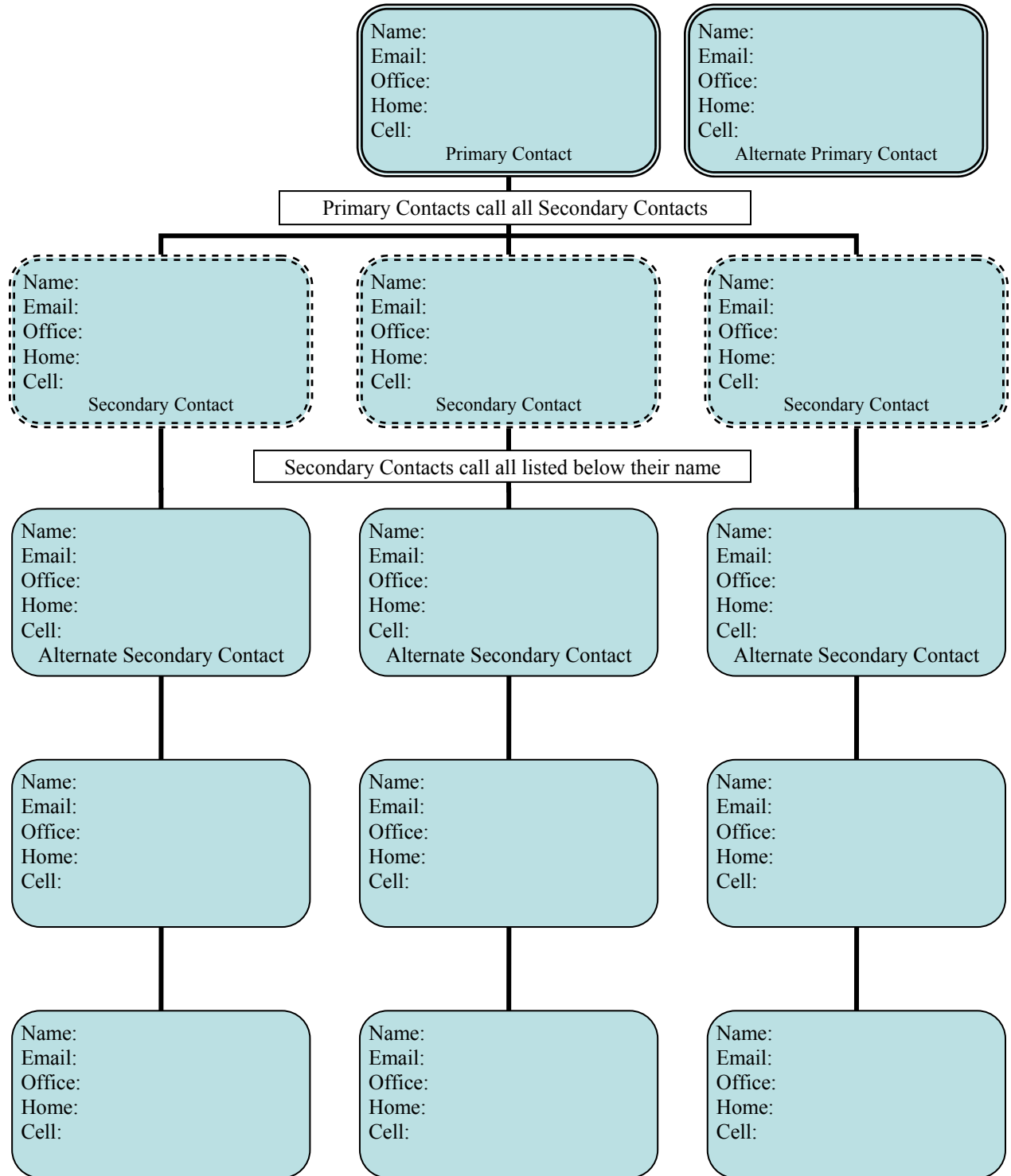
- a. If possible access your email account and the contact list set up for your work unit
- b. Send the same “script” developed for the phone calls for email messages.
- c. Include the Signal word about the situation included in the subject line
- d. Send the message with high importance.

## Phone Tree Template A

(Template A, Created using the MS Word Organizational Chart feature)

**Department:**

**Last Revised on:**



Send copies of the revised tree to:

- a. Human Resources
- b. Campus Safety office

Keep copies of the call tree:

- ▶ Near your office phone and home phone
- ▶ In your car

## Call Tree Procedure – Abbreviated Directions

(Print on the reverse side of the call tree in use)

- a. **Use the Emergency Message Script form below to record the message EXACTLY as provided. Verify the accuracy of your written message with the caller before hanging up.**
- b. The Primary Contact /Alternate will provide the script to the secondary contact/alternate. The secondary contacts call each person on the list below their name. If a secondary contact is unavailable, the next individual in the call tree line becomes the alternate.
- c. Call all numbers listed until the person answers the phone. If the phone is answered by voicemail or an answering machine, leave the message then call the other phone numbers until contact is made.
- d. Read the “script” as written so the same information is transmitted accurately to each listener.
- e. The last person on the list should contact the Primary Contact to let them know all calls were made.
- f. Limit the conversation to the emergency message so all calls can be completed in time.

### Emergency Message Script

- The “script” must be concise, and written so the message can be delivered via phone call in less than 60 seconds.
- The script should include a very brief statement of what has happened, the immediate actions that should be taken, and where to get additional information.

**Example of a written emergency message script:** *Hello, this is (your name) with an emergency message from UW Superior. A transportation accident has created a toxic release on campus. If you are on-campus, stay in the buildings and follow the Shelter-in-place directions in the campus phone books. If you are off campus, do not report to campus until the all-clear is given. Further instructions will be posted on the campus weather hotline, 394-8400.*

**Message Received From:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Call Back Number:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Subject Line:** **Important Emergency Message:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Send email with high importance to work unit email group

**Phone Introduction:** Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ with an emergency message from UW Superior.

**Message (Briefly include what has happened, what to do, and where to get more information and updates):**

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**Select one or more of the following as part of the message, if appropriate:**

- Follow the emergency procedure for \_\_\_\_\_ in the UW Superior phone book.
- Additional information and instructions are available by calling ( ) \_\_\_\_\_.
- Additional information and instructions will be posted on the UW Superior Weather Hotline, (715) 394-8400.

## Phone Tree Template B

(Template B Created using MS Word Tables feature)

**Department:**

**Last Revised on:**

Primary Contact:

Name:
Email:
Office phone:
Cell phone:
Home phone:

Alternate Primary Contact:

Name:
Email:
Office phone:
Cell phone:
Home phone:

Primary contact calls all Secondary Contacts		
<i>Secondary Contact</i> Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:	<i>Secondary Contact</i> Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:	<i>Secondary Contact</i> Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:
<b>Calls all listed below</b>	<b>Calls all listed below</b>	<b>Calls all listed below</b>
<i>Alternate Secondary Contact</i> Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:	<i>Alternate Secondary Contact</i> Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:	<i>Alternate Secondary Contact</i> Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:
Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:	Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:	Name: Email: Office phone: Cell phone: Home phone:
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**Send copies of the revised tree to:**

- a. Human Resources
- b. Campus Safety office

**Keep copies of the call tree:**

- ▶ Near your office phone
- ▶ In your car
- ▶ Near your home phone

## Call Tree Procedure – Abbreviated Directions

(Print on the reverse side of the call tree in use)

- g. **Use the Emergency Message Script form below to record the message EXACTLY as provided. Verify the accuracy of your written message with the caller before hanging up.**
- h. The Primary Contact /Alternate will provide the script to the secondary contact/alternate. The secondary contacts call each person on the list below their name. If a secondary contact is unavailable, the next individual in the call tree line becomes the alternate.
- i. Call all numbers listed until the person answers the phone. If the phone is answered by voicemail or an answering machine, leave the message then call the other phone numbers until contact is made.
- j. Read the “script” as written so the same information is transmitted accurately to each listener.
- k. The last person on the list should contact the Primary Contact to let them know all calls were made.
- l. Limit the conversation to the emergency message so all calls can be completed in time.

### Emergency Message Script

- The “script” must be concise, and written so the message can be delivered via phone call in less than 60 seconds.
- The script should include a very brief statement of what has happened, the immediate actions that should be taken, and where to get additional information.

**Example of a written emergency message script:** *Hello, this is (your name) with an emergency message from UW Superior. A transportation accident has created a toxic release on campus. If you are on-campus, stay in the buildings and follow the Shelter-in-place directions in the campus phone books. If you are off campus, do not report to campus until the all-clear is given. Further instructions will be posted on the campus weather hotline, 394-8400.*

**Message Received From:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Call Back Number:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Subject Line:** **Important Emergency Message:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Send email with high importance to work unit email group**

**Phone Introduction:** Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ with an emergency message from UW Superior.

**Message (Briefly include what has happened, what to do, and where to get more information and updates):**

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**Select one or more of the following as part of the message, if appropriate:**

- Follow the emergency procedure for \_\_\_\_\_ in the UW Superior phone book.
- Additional information and instructions are available by calling ( ) \_\_\_\_\_.
- Additional information and instructions will be posted on the UW Superior Weather Hotline, (715) 394-8400.

# Crisis Communication Plan

## **Annex B**

### **UW-Superior Emergency Response Plan**

## **University of Wisconsin-Superior**

### ***Crisis Communication Plan -- Summary***

- 1) UW-Superior's crisis communication efforts will be directed by the Director of University Advancement with the assistance of the University Relations Specialist. If the director is not available, the University Relations Specialist will direct the efforts.
- 2) When the Chancellor, the Officer of the Day or other appropriate authority assembles the university's Emergency Response Team or designates an Incident Commander, the Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will be notified.
- 3) The Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will join the meeting of the Emergency Response Team or confer with the Incident Commander. The Director of University Advancement will immediately assume the role and title of Public Information Officer during the crisis. If the director is not available, the University Relations Specialist will assume the role and title of Public Information Officer.
- 4) The Public Information Officer will be authorized to gather and verify information in a crisis, and to disseminate that information to internal and external audiences.
- 5) The Public Information Officer will attempt to inform UW-Superior students and employees before details are released externally. In a crisis, the need to ensure student and employee safety may make it necessary for this duty to take priority over other communication functions.
- 6) The Public Information Officer will coordinate notification of the news media and other external audiences. If appropriate, the PIO will work with other involved agencies as a Joint Information Officer.
- 7) The Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will document the news coverage surrounding a crisis and determine whether a follow-up strategy for communication and advertising is needed.

University of Wisconsin-Superior  
***Crisis Communication Plan***  
June 2007

***Part 1: Introduction***

The way the University of Wisconsin-Superior communicates during a crisis has a lasting effect on its reputation. As a publicly assisted institution and significant part of the community, UW-Superior is obligated to keep the public informed of its activities. The actions the university takes during a crisis, and how it interacts with the news media during these periods of intense public scrutiny, can critically shape the way it is perceived, which in turn can affect the degree of support it receives.

Even more important, effective communication during a crisis may assist in ensuring the safety of students, employees and neighbors. It also can convey accurate information beyond the community to the concerned parents and family members of students – people who also are part of our campus community.

How well the university gets its message to the public depends to a great extent on what is reported by the news media. This is especially true in a crisis, when people rely primarily on the information they receive from newspapers, television and radio to form their opinions. However, the university also must use the “new media” of e-mail, websites, cell phones and emerging popular technologies to communicate directly with students and employees. In both cases, communicating quickly, accurately and openly is the key to ensuring safety and maintaining the university’s reputation.

Those implementing the Crisis Communication Plan will work closely with the university’s Emergency Response Team or designated Incident Commander. No plan can anticipate everything that may occur during a crisis, so those implementing this plan will remain flexible and open-minded to quickly seize opportunities and react to situations as they arise.

The Chancellor or Provost or Officer of the Day will activate this plan, if necessary, but the entire university community should be aware of the plan and of the roles they play in executing it. If any member of the UW-Superior community believes a crisis is pending or is under way, he or she should report it immediately to the chancellor or Campus Safety Office.

***Part 2: Anticipating a crisis***

Different types of crises call for different responses. It is important to identify a crisis while it is still in its early stages. Some may be minor; others severe. The university's response will depend upon the circumstances.

## Types of crises:

### **Sudden -- An immediate, unforeseen crisis, with either:**

- Massive Lives at Risk or Lost, (examples: tornado, large fire, flood, violent acts on campus, chemical spill)
- Individual Lives at Risk or Lost (Examples: car accident, murder, small fire, meningitis outbreak)

This type of crisis occurs unexpectedly and requires immediate action. If lives are at risk, the first action will be to move swiftly to save lives and prevent injury.

### **Smoldering -- An ongoing, festering crisis that begins small and grows larger as more information becomes known.**

This type of crisis can drag out and result in bad press for weeks, months or even years. These crises should be resolved as quickly as possible. Officials should try to anticipate future developments and mitigate them. (Examples: An NCAA investigation, sexual harassment lawsuits, campus building/neighborhood issues.)

The table below from the UW-Superior Emergency Response Plan defines the levels of possible emergencies. The role of the Crisis Communication Plan is included in italics under the Plan Activation Status category.

### **Emergency Levels and Response Actions**

Emergency Level	Definition	Plan Activation Status
Minor Emergency	Affects only a limited area of campus that is easily isolated, such as a room or corridor, a single person or small group of individuals.	Plan activation is not required, but may be used in part. <i>Part of the Crisis Communication Plan may be implemented.</i>
Moderate Emergency	Affects a significant area of a building or external area of campus, such as a floor of a building, street, or large group of individuals.	Plan activation or partial implementation is recommended but not required. <i>The Crisis Communication Plan likely will be activated.</i>
Major Emergency	Affects a large portion of campus or campus community, such as an entire building or a large population.	Plan activation is required. <i>The Crisis Communication Plan will be activated.</i>
Community Level Emergency	The local community has declared an emergency of any magnitude and has requested UW Superior participation.	Plan activation is required. <i>The Crisis Communication Plan will be activated. The PIO may serve as a Joint Information Officer.</i>

Adopting a pre-emptive approach to media relations is critical in successful crisis management. Disclosing information as soon as it is verified can be a highly effective strategy, since it keeps the institution on the initiative and quickly eliminates the "breaking news" interest in a story. This technique often summarily defuses a public relations crisis, even when the subject is unpleasant or embarrassing.

### **General Assumptions**

- Quick, effective communication during a crisis may play a role in the safety of students and employees.
- Key audiences for communication during a crisis and the order in which they need to be informed are: 1) students and employees, 2) the news media, 3) parents, 4) the general public, 5) alumni and friends of the university. Depending on the nature of the crisis, campus neighbors may need to be listed as a separate group with their priority set accordingly.
- Communication systems that can be used during an emergency include: 1) telephones and cell phones, 2) e-mail (broadcast e-mail, the Staff Digest and the Student Digest), 3) website updates on the main university web page and the News and Events web page, 4) Campus Emergency Hotline message (weather hotline), 5) television and radio broadcasts, 6) building fire-alarm audio systems, 7) Campus Safety car loudspeakers, 8) personal interaction, 9) universal text messaging, 10) other means that may become available. Determining which systems to use will depend on the nature of the crisis, the time of day, and the availability of various systems.
- UW-Superior is located in a small media market with an unusually large number of media outlets for its size. (Two daily newspapers, several weekly newspapers, five television stations, several radio stations, including a WPR station on campus.) This will result in considerable media scrutiny.
- News reporters won't follow our rules. They will try to slip past police and fire lines, and contact people who are not authorized to speak for the university. They will demand access to university officials beyond the spokesperson, and seek frequent information updates.
- Public safety officials may insist that the university release little or no information during a crisis. University officials, particularly those involved in communication, will need to work carefully but persistently with public safety officials to determine sufficient information that can be released to satisfy the needs of students, employees, the community and the news media without jeopardizing any investigations. This may include working as a Joint Information Officer to coordinate release of information with other involved agencies.

- Public perceptions are a key factor in the support UW-Superior receives from legislators, alumni, donors and the community, and in UW-Superior's ability to attract and retain qualified students, faculty and staff.
- Negative news coverage can damage UW-Superior's reputation.

### ***Part 3: Preparing for a crisis***

The University Advancement Office and its University Relations function will prepare and regularly update digital and paper “crisis packets.”

The packets will include:

- Work, home and cell telephone numbers for key university officials.
- Contact information for local and regional news media.
- A list of the Emergency School Closing passwords for local media. Passwords will be established with the two local newspapers.
- Sample news releases that can be quickly completed in the opening minutes and hours of a crisis.
- A basic UW-Superior fact sheet.
- A University of Wisconsin System Directory.

Paper copies of the packets will be kept in the University Advancement Office, at the University Services Center, and at the homes of the Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist. Digital copies will be maintained by the Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist on their computers, and on a CD kept with the paper copy at the University Services Center. A digital copy, minus confidential items such as the closing passwords, will be kept in a discreet location on the News and Events website.

The University Advancement Office and its University Relations function will:

- Work with university technology offices to obtain remote access to university news web pages so they can be updated from off campus in an emergency.
- Work with university technology offices and other pertinent campus offices to recommend the purchase of new communications systems that may be developed.
- Periodically review the Crisis Communication Plan.
- Conduct cross-training on updating the campus emergency hotline voicemail system and university news web pages.
- Designate and, if necessary, train people to act as university spokesperson. This will include the Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist.

- Create a Parents web page on the university website in coordination with the Admissions Office that can be used for general news and, when necessary, emergency information.
- At the start of each semester, communicate with employees and students about how the university will communicate news and information during an emergency.

#### ***Part 4: Responding to a crisis***

When a crisis occurs, University Advancement personnel will coordinate their communication action with the university's. The Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will gather and verify information about the crisis, develop strategies concerning how information is to be released, determine a spokesperson for the institution, and determine which audiences to be notified. They will continue in this role until the Emergency Response Team decides the immediate crisis is over. The Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will then proceed to the Recovery Phase of the plan.

Crisis communication efforts will be directed by the Director of University Advancement with the assistance of the University Relations Specialist. If the director is not available, the University Relations Specialist will direct the efforts. If neither person is available, then the chain of succession for this role will be the Vice Chancellor for University Advancement, the Alumni Director and the Development Communications Coordinator.

##### **1) Join the Emergency Response Team**

When a crisis occurs and the Chancellor, the Officer of the Day or other appropriate authority assembles the university's Emergency Response Team or designates an Incident Commander, the Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will be notified.

The Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will join the meeting of the Emergency Response Team. The Director of University Advancement will immediately assume the role and title of Public Information Officer during the crisis. If the director is not available, the University Relations Specialist will assume the role and title of Public Information Officer during the crisis.

At the meeting of the Emergency Response Team, the Public Information Officer shall:

- Be apprised of all known facts and background.
- Have direct access to the Chancellor, Officer of the Day or Incident Commander to develop a first-wave communications strategy and determine what accurate, verifiable should be released.

- Implement the first-wave strategy immediately upon approval or the Chancellor, Officer of the Day or Incident Commander.

After implementing "first-wave" communication strategy, the Public Information Officer will develop an ongoing communications strategy to be approved by the Chancellor, Officer of the Day or a designee.

Members of the University Advancement Office or other campus offices will be assigned to assist the Public Information Officer as needed.

## **2) Establish a clear line of communication**

The Public Information Officer will be authorized to gather and verify information in a crisis.

- A representative of the Emergency Response Team or the Incident Commander will quickly supply the Public Information Officer with all known details.
- The Public Information Officer will meet with the Chancellor or Incident Commander to determine what accurate, verifiable information can be released. These meetings will be regularly repeated as needed throughout the crisis.
- Depending on the nature of the emergency, the university may not be the agency in charge of information. In that case, the Public Information Officer will act as liaison or Joint Information Officer with the agency in command of the emergency response to develop and release appropriate information.
- All news media contacts will be directed to the Public Information Officer.
- The Public Information Officer will be the only person authorized to release information during the crisis.
- If necessary, the Public Information Officer can appoint an assistant to also release information.

## **3) Release information internally**

Whenever practical, the Public Information Officer will attempt to inform UW-Superior students and employees before details are released externally. In a crisis, the need to ensure student and employee safety may make it necessary for this duty to take priority over other communication functions.

The Public Information Officer may:

- Release information by broadcast e-mail
- Post news bulletins on the Campus News and Events website with a link from the main university website
- Use the message on the Emergency Weather Hotline and update as necessary.
- Directly contact affected offices, such as Residence Life, to distribute information.
- Use building fire-alarm audio systems.
- Use Campus Safety car loudspeakers.
- Text messaging and cell phone messages
- Contact KUWS to broadcast emergency messages

#### **4) Release information externally**

The Public Information Officer will coordinate notification of the news media.

The Public Information Officer may:

- Write and distribute a news release to local and regional news media. It may be necessary to do this many times during the crisis.
- Update university online news stories.
- Hold a news conference. It may be necessary to do this numerous times during the crisis. (See Note A below.)
- Escort reporters to affected areas if Campus Safety officials and local law enforcement officials deem it safe to do so.
- Work with the Campus Safety Office and other law enforcement officials to apprise news reporters of areas they cannot enter for safety reasons.
- Make university officials available to the news media if possible. (This may not be possible until the crisis is over.)
- Monitor local media reports to quickly correct any errors.
- Work with the Chancellor or a designee to draft e-mail, letters and other forms of communication to be sent to parents, alumni and donors as necessary.
- Informing outside parties, such as University of Wisconsin System and key university supporters.

#### **5) Begin recovery and evaluation**

The Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will document the news coverage surrounding a crisis, including wire stories, newspaper articles, radio and television broadcasts. They also will determine whether a follow-up strategy for communication and advertising is needed.

The Director of University Advancement and the University Relations Specialist will:

- Develop a strategy of follow-up letters or e-mail or both to employees, students, parents, alumni and donors.
- Develop follow-up news stories for campus distribution and the campus website.
- Develop “thank you” letters or columns for campus, local and regional media to recognize work by local organizations during the crisis.
- Work with admissions and marketing staff to determine whether advertising is needed to help recover possible lost prospective students.

When the crisis is over, the Director of University Advancement and University Relations Specialist will:

- Evaluate the overall success or failure of the crisis communication effort.
- Determine problems and steps to remedy them.
- Report their findings to the Chancellor’s Office.