

# **SAFETY and the COLLEGE OF EDUCATION at KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY**

## Faculty Affairs Committee

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Safety and the College of Education at Kansas State University

1.0 Overview and Rationale

Early Fall 2007 semester, the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) in the College of Education (COE) at Kansas State University (KSU) was given the charge of creating a crisis plan for the constituents of the COE at large. The current climate of safety at universities across the nation continues to cause concern for the safety of faculty, staff, and students as a result of injuries and fatalities through shootings, natural disasters, and other means. As such, it is imperative for the COE to establish a working and living safety plan to protect the students, faculty, and staff of the COE to the best of its ability, provide a safe and secure learning, teaching, and working environment, and to provide guidance and resources.

The FAC acknowledges and recommends that the COE safety plan is an ongoing living work in progress in order to continuously review and update the most current safety measures for the environment. It further acknowledges the impossibility and danger in providing a specific procedure for unanticipated events because each event is contextual, situation-specific, has its own set of characteristics, and to do so potentially could provide misleading and inappropriate guidance. The prevailing rule in any safety or crisis situation is communication, to trust one's instincts, exercise sound judgment based on an analysis of the event to the best of one's ability, exercise common sense, and to remain calm in order to provide leadership for those we are responsible.

To that end, the FAC researched and reviewed extensively the literature, research, and existing plans from numerous higher education institutions, and the existing and evolving safety efforts on the KSU campus. It is of utmost importance that the COE plan

support and be consonant with the larger safety efforts of the KSU community at large. It is with this vision and goal that the FAC undertook its efforts.

This document is organized in the following manner: (1.0) Overview and rationale; (2.0) Context of document within crisis management initiatives at K-State; (3.0) Potential crisis events, recommendations, and resources; (4.0) General emergency notification resources and issues; (5.0) Environmental crisis events; (6.0) Facility crisis events; (7.0) Human crisis events – terroristic threats; (8.0) Human crisis events – troubled or disruptive/dangerous person; (9.0) Recommendations for ongoing planning and prevention in the COE; and (10.0) K-State resources.

## 2.0 Context of Document within Crisis Management Initiatives at K-State

The descriptions and recommendations provided in this document are made at a time when Kansas State University is further developing university wide crisis management measures and policies. Therefore, it is important that the descriptions and recommendations in this document are updated as changes occur. This highlights the importance of providing ongoing updates to COE faculty, staff, and students about information relevant to crisis management. This is further addressed in the recommendations section.

### 2.1 The following events are occurring in connection to crisis management at K-State:

- 2.1.1. The Board of Regents hired a security consultant to evaluate the crisis management plans of the Regents Universities. K-State expects the consultants to make an initial visit during the Spring, 2009 semester.
- 2.1.2. Vice President Rawson is heading the K-State Security Measures and Policy Work Group, which is a new work group.

2.1.3. K-State Alerts (<http://www.k-state.edu/infotech/helpdesk/k-statealerts.html>)

began to operate during the Fall 2008 semester. Students, faculty, and staff can register to receive automated phone calls and text messages when a dangerous condition exists on campus (e.g. active shooter, storm in process, dangerous debris from storm), when a decision to close the campus has been made, or when a decision to reopen the campus following a forced closure has been made. K-State Alerts will typically be used to provide information about dangerous conditions that affect the whole campus, although there may be situations in which it is used to provide information about a dangerous situation that affects a single building.

2.1.4. The K-State Crisis Management Committee is vetting a Critical Incident

Response Team (CIRT), which would respond to student crisis events. One question is whether CIRT also would respond to employee crisis events, or if that responsibility would remain solely with HR.

2.1.5. A communication system that would be located in each classroom at the university is being explored. This system would serve as a panic button within the classroom. If there were a crisis incident in the classroom, then a button could be pressed and emergency responders would be dispatched. This function would be similar to the blue light posts located throughout campus. This system also would allow for emergency messages to be broadcast to classrooms. The current plan is that these systems initially would be placed in the largest and most frequently used classrooms on campus.

2.1.6. The university is continuing to develop its Disaster Plan, which would address K-State's response to a crisis event that interfered with the functioning of the broader community in addition to the functioning of the university.

### 3.0 Potential Crisis Events, Recommendations, and Resources

In order to remain consistent with current crisis management recommendations that exist at Kansas State University, the Kansas State University Emergency Guide (UEG, <http://www.k-state.edu/emergency/guide/>) was used as a guiding framework for the following descriptions and recommendations. In addition to being located on the K-State Web page, the UEG will be placed in each classroom so it can be accessed by instructors and students if there is a crisis event.

#### 3.1 UEG Contacts

3.1.1. The UEG provides contact information for several offices and departments that may need to be contacted in a crisis situation. Phone numbers and/or web links are provided for: Environmental Health & Safety, Office of Student Life, Counseling Services, Lafene Student Health Center, Facilities, University Police, Crisis Assistance, SAFE Zone Program, SafeRide Program, Wildcat Walk, and Silent Witness.

#### 3.2 Additional Sources of Information

3.2.1. In addition to the UEG, the following documents were consulted in preparing these descriptions and recommendations: (a) Kansas State University Emergency Notification Systems brochure (<http://www.k-state.edu/safety/EmergencyInfo1.htm>); (b) Responding to Emergency or Crisis Situations Involving Students document prepared by the Office of Student Life

(<http://www.k-state.edu/studentlife/crisisassistance/respondingcrisis.htm>); and (3) the Psychological, Medical, and Student Safety Crises Protocols developed by the K-State Crisis Management Committee (<http://www.k-state.edu/studentlife/crisisassistance/crisisprotocols.htm>).

### 3.3 Four Categories of Crisis Events

- 3.3.1. Environmental events are those that interfere with the functioning of the campus, or both campus and community
- 3.3.2. Facility events are those that interfere with the functioning of a segment of the campus, or the entire campus (some of which also could affect the greater community)
- 3.3.3. Human events characterized as Terroristic Threats are those that interfere with the functioning of a segment of the campus (e.g., classroom), or the entire campus (some of which also could affect the greater community)
- 3.3.4. Human events characterized by a troubled or disruptive/dangerous person are those that interfere with the functioning of a segment of the university (although it could affect the entire campus or broader community).

### 3.4 Within each of these four crisis categories recommendations are divided into two parts

- 3.4.1. Communication, and Response. Communication is further divided into
  - 3.4.1.1. How do you find out that a crisis event is occurring, and
  - 3.4.1.2. Who do you notify if you discover a crisis event is occurring.

- 3.4.2. Response is divided into
  - 3.4.2.1. Responding during a crisis, and
  - 3.4.2.2. Crisis planning and prevention.

#### 4.0 General Emergency Notification Resources and Issues

Before addressing specific crisis events, general resources and issues about emergency notification at K-State are covered. For many of the crisis events addressed in this document there are multiple “means of communication to alert the university community about a crisis, danger, or natural disaster” (Kansas State University Emergency Notification Systems brochure). These include: (a) reverse 911 telephone calling system; (b) automated phone calls and text messaging; (c) web page override; (d) e-mail advisory; (e) police public address systems located on K-State Police vehicles; (f) campus carillon in Anderson Hall tower, used as a public address system; (g) local media; and (h) K-State staff who carry radios. One potential issue with receiving timely communication about a crisis event is notifying instructors and students who are in class. See Recommendations section for recommendations of this issue.

#### 5.0 Environmental Crisis Events

Environmental crisis events are those that originate in the environment or nature. “Tornado and Severe Weather” are the crisis events listed in the UEG that fit this category.

##### 5.1 Communication – Learning About Situation.

For a Tornado the following communication channels are used: (a) tornado warning sirens; (b) police public address systems; (c) reverse 911 telephone call; (d) K-State staff who carry radios; and (e) email, Web page, and local media.

## 5.2 Communication – Informing Others.

Instructors should address this issue with students at the beginning of the semester.

Students should be encouraged to check their K-State email and the K-State web page on days that the weather is questionable for possible cancellations of classes. The COE student listserv most likely would not be a reliable means of communicating this to students because it is based on emails gathered from iSIS, contains only undergraduate students, and messages are not distributed to students until midnight. Faculty and staff also should be encouraged to check their K-State email and the K-State web page on days that the weather is questionable for possible cancellation of classes. Further, the COE faculty and staff listserv could be an effective means of communication because it includes COE classified and unclassified staff, and GTAs, and messages are distributed as soon as the message is emailed to the listserv.

5.3 Response – During Crisis Event. See the UEG Web page listing for “Tornado and Severe Weather” for actions to take.

5.4 Response – Planning and Prevention. Dr. Kay Ann Taylor contacted the K-State Emergency Management Coordinator to request the posting of signs that provide information about what to do in case of tornado. These signs are now posted at the entrances to Bluemont Hall. Further, Dr. Taylor found blueprints for evacuation maps/routes for Bluemont Hall. It is recommended that evacuation route signs are created and posted based on these blueprints. Additionally, it is recommended that faculty and staff are made aware of the procedures for responding to severe weather.

## 6.0 Facility Crisis Events

Facility crisis events are those that originate in a facility or structure. The following crisis events listed in the UEG fit this category: fire, hazardous substance spills, and explosion.

### 6.1 Communication – Learning About Situation.

6.1.1. For **fire** the following communication channels are used: (a) smoke and fire alarms; (b) reverse 911 telephone call; and (c) K-State staff who carry radios.

6.1.2. For **hazardous substance/chemical release/spill** the following communication channels are used: (a) reverse 911 telephone call; (b) local media; and (c) K-State police public address system.

### 6.2 Communication – Informing Others.

The recommendation from the UEG for each of these facility crisis events is Call 911, and also to pull the fire alarm for a fire. In the case of fire in Bluemont Hall, the act of pulling the fire alarm should notify others in Bluemont Hall who need to be aware of the situation. It also is likely that in the case of an explosion in Bluemont Hall that others in Bluemont Hall would be aware of the event due to the nature of the event. It is recommended that for hazardous substance spills (and explosion if appropriate to the situation) that after calling 911, that either the Dean's Office or the Department Office is called/notified. Should the Department Office be notified first, they should then call the Dean's Office. After the Dean's Office is notified then the Department Offices should be notified. The Department Offices can then notify instructors and students in classrooms as necessary.

### 6.3 Response – During Crisis Event.

The UEG provides an overall *Evacuation* of the building recommendation.

Recommendations also are provided that address how to respond to fire, hazardous substance spill, explosion, and suspicious packages. See the UEG Web pages that provide recommendations for actions to take for fire, hazardous substance spills, and explosion.

Additionally, see the section labeled “Hazardous Substance Release” in the Medical Emergency Protocol:

(<http://www.kstate.edu/studentlife/crisisassistance/crisisprotocols.htm>).

### 6.4 Response – Planning and Prevention.

It is recommended that faculty and staff are made aware of the evacuation procedures, and recommended responses to the different facility crisis events: fire, hazardous substance spills, and explosions.

## 7.0 Human Crisis Events – Terroristic Threats

Human crisis events are those that originate with or are initiated by human beings.

Terroristic Threat includes suspicious materials, air contaminants, bomb threats, and biological agents. We include Active Shooter in this category also. The UEG provides recommendations for Terroristic Threat, Bomb Threat, Suspicious Package, and Active Shooter.

### 7.1 Communication – Learning About the Situation.

7.1.1. For ***terroristic threats*** (including *suspicious materials, air contaminants, bomb threats, and biological agents*) the following communication channels are used: (a) reverse 911 telephone call; (b) K-State police public address system; and (c) e-mail and K-State Web page.

7.1.2. For *active shooter* the following communication channels are used: (a) reverse 911 telephone call; (b) K-State police public address system; (c) e-mail and K-State Web page; (d) local media; and (e) K-State staff who carry radios.

## 7.2 Communication – Informing Others.

For those situations that involve *terroristic threats, suspicious materials, and bomb threats*, the UEG recommends calling 911. For *active shooter* it recommends calling 911 if it is safe to do so. For *bomb threat* and *suspicious package*, follow the evacuation procedures. For *terroristic threat* and *active shooter* it recommends notifying others in the building if it is safe to do so. If it is safe to do so, then the following notification procedure is recommended: either the Dean's Office or the Department Office is called/notified. Should the Department Office be notified first, they should then call the Dean's Office. After the Dean's Office is notified then the Department Offices should be notified. The Department Offices can then notify instructors and students in classrooms as necessary.

## 7.3 Response – During Crisis Event.

Separate recommendations are made for *terroristic threat, bomb threats, active shooter, and suspicious package*. Additionally, the *evacuation procedures* are referred to in the recommendations for *bomb threat* and *suspicious package*.

## 7.4 Response – Planning and Prevention.

It is recommended that faculty and staff are made aware of the evacuation procedures, and recommended responses to *terroristic threat, bomb threat, active shooter, and suspicious package*.

## 8.0 Human Crisis Events – Troubled or Disruptive/Dangerous Person

A troubled person is a person “who is...confused, very sad, highly anxious, irritable, lacks in motivation and or concentration, demonstrates bizarre behavior, or thinking about suicide.” In the UEG, the Medical Emergencies, and Behavior Problems sections are applicable. A disruptive or dangerous person is verbally or physically threatening or violent, or actively threatens suicide but is resistant to getting help. In the UEG, the Behavior Problems, and Criminal Activity sections are applicable.

### 8.1 Communication – Learning About the Situation.

These are likely situations in which you learn about the crisis event because it unfolds in your presence.

### 8.2 Communication – Informing Others.

According to both the UEG recommendations, and the Medical (i.e., serious and minor medical emergencies, substance abuse, infectious disease outbreak, and hazardous substance release), Psychological, and Students Safety (i.e., victim of serious crime, sexual assault, missing person, and student death) Crisis Protocols (<http://www.k-state.edu/studentlife/crisisassistance/crisisprotocols.htm>), if there is a major medical emergency, or an imminent risk of harm to self or others call 911 immediately. Once the immediate situation has been addressed then the faculty member should consult with their immediate superior. When addressing a situation with a student, decisions can be made about who else needs to be informed, such as parents, Office of Student Life, the student’s other instructors, etc. These events should then be reported to the Dean, so a decision can be made about whom else within the COE needs to be informed of the incident.

For situations that do not pose imminent threat of harm to self or others, then again consulting with one's immediate superior is recommended in order to determine who else may need to be informed of the situation, and what other recommendations can be made to the student.

### 8.3 Response – During Crisis Event.

See the sections in the UEG labeled Medical Emergencies, Behavior Problems, and Criminal Activity for recommendations. Additionally, see the Medical, Psychological, and Student Safety Crisis Protocols.

### 8.4 Response – Planning and Prevention.

See the Crisis Prevention pyramid (see attachment), and the document “Responding to Emergency or Crisis Situations Involving Students” (<http://www.k-state.edu/studentlife/crisisassistance/respondingcrisis.htm>) both developed by the Office of Student Life. The pyramid highlights resources on campus that can assist with the prevention of student crises through Support and Education (such as ongoing supportive services, maintaining a positive campus climate, providing academic support, and encouraging student participation in clubs and organizations that promote community values), and Early Intervention, which involves recognizing and approaching students with problems that need additional support or accommodations and facilitating their connection with available resources.

## 9.0 Recommendations for Ongoing Planning and Prevention in the COE

9.1 A person or persons should be charged with keeping up to date with the ongoing crisis management activities and recommendations at KSU, and then updating the COE as needed.

9.2 The COE should sponsor an annual program about topics connected to campus crisis management. For example, in August, 2008, FAC initiated the Crisis Management Panel Discussion for the COE faculty and staff. The panel included two members of the K-State Police Department, and Steve Broccolo, the Emergency Management Coordinator for KSU. Future programming could address topics such as, addressing college student mental health and personal problems, dealing with disruptive and dangerous student behavior, K-State Alerts, the Critical Incident Response Team, and implications for the COE from the recommendations that come from the K-State Security Measures and Policy Work Group.

9.2.1. Faculty, staff, and students should be encouraged to participate in other crisis management and safety trainings offered at K-State and in the community, such as those provided by KSU SafeZone.

9.3 Create a page on the COE Web site that provides links to the campus safety and crisis management materials provided at KSU.

9.4 Signs should be made based on the evacuation plans for Bluemont Hall that Dr. Taylor found. These should then be posted in Bluemont Hall.

9.5 Communication of Crisis Events.

9.5.1. The recommendation procedures highlighted in sections 5.0 through 8.0 of this document should be followed.

9.5.2. Faculty, staff, and students should be encouraged to register for K-State Alerts. Instructors are encouraged to leave their cell phones on during class in case of emergency. If an instructor does not own a cell phone, then the instructor should ask a few students who have registered for K-State Alerts to keep their phones on

(perhaps on vibrate), and to alert the instructor if an emergency notification is sent out. This is especially important when classes are held after 5:00pm. To register for K-State Alerts see the “Receive emergency alerts” section at: <http://www.k-state.edu/infotech/helpdesk/k-statealerts.html>.

- 9.6 Given that for much of the year evening courses occur after sunset, and that many of the classrooms in Bluemont Hall are windowless, it is recommended that appropriately equipped emergency kits are provided for each COE classroom in Bluemont Hall. Kits should be made available to faculty who teach outside of Bluemont Hall as appropriate. Items in the kits could include first-aid items, battery-operated radio and extra batteries, flashlight and extra batteries, and light/glo/glow sticks (light/glo/glow sticks provide neon light for several hours when activated; unlike flashlights, batteries are not required; a 25-pack of 6" light sticks is \$13.50). For minimum requirements for workplace first-aid kits see: [www.doli.state.mn.us/pdf/fact\\_firstaid.pdf](http://www.doli.state.mn.us/pdf/fact_firstaid.pdf). Further, these kits would require upkeep, such as making sure that fresh batteries are in the kit for the flashlight and radio. Thus, someone needs to be charged with maintaining the emergency kits.

10.0 K-State Resources

10.1 Kansas State University Emergency Guide:

<http://www.k-state.edu/emergency/guide/>

10.2 K-State Emergency Notification Systems:

<http://www.k-state.edu/safety/EmergencyInfo1.htm>

10.3 Crisis Management Protocols:

<http://www.k-state.edu/studentlife/crisisassistance/crisisprotocols.htm>

10.4 Responding to Emergency or Crisis Situations Involving Students:

<http://www.k-state.edu/studentlife/crisisassistance/respondingcrisis.htm>

10.5 K-State Alerts:

<http://www.k-state.edu/infotech/helpdesk/k-statealerts.html>