

CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN

CORNISH COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Developed, Updated & Approved by
Office of Marketing & Communication, Campus Safety &
Security & President's Cabinet

December 2019



Posted: January 2020

Revised: Month Year

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Key Information at a Glance:

College Emergency Communications

- The Cornish College of the Arts Crisis Communications Plan provides the general framework for the coordination of communications within the College, and among the College, the media and the public in the event of an emergency or other critical incident.
- The Crisis Communications Team is comprised of individuals who represent key departments and units of the College and who have a critical role in responding and supporting the response to an emergency at the College.
- The Cornish Marketing & Communication Office is the lead communications organization for Cornish College of the Arts, both on a daily basis and as a member of the Crisis Communications Team during major emergencies.
- During an emergency or incident on campus Omnilert is the primary tool for providing continually updated information to the College Community, the media, and the general public.
- Campus emergency communications tools include a mass notification system (MNS) that allows the Crisis Communication Team to send out SMS (text messages), Cornish email, social media (Facebook & Twitter), and phone calls. Other tools include the Cornish Website Banner Postings, the College Mainline, 206-726-2787 (provides a recorded emergency message). When using these tools to alert the College community the messages will also include instructions about what to do if applicable.
- **Emergency Alert:** In the event of an emergency (which could include active-shooter situations, armed robberies, HazMat responses and severe weather incidents that pose an immediate safety risk), information will be issued via the College's mass text emergency communication system and through the College e-mail system to students, faculty and staff. A posted notice will also occur on the College's website (<http://www.cornish.edu/>) providing the College community with additional immediate notification. These alerts will include instructions for an action to be taken, and will be closed out with a message when the threat has been addressed or contained. In instances relating to inclement weather, information will be posted on <http://www.flashalert.net/id/CornishCollege> along with the other identified communication resources
- **Timely Warning** - If a situation arises, either on or off campus, that the Director of Security and/or Vice President of Operations judges to constitute an ongoing or continuing threat to students and employees, a campus wide "timely warning" will be issued. The warning may be issued through the College e-mail system to students, faculty and staff, or via the College's mass cell phone text emergency communication system or the college website and/or social media channels.
- **General Advisory:** A Cornish Advisory will be sent via the most appropriate platforms (potentially including text, email, social media, website) to make the community aware of a situation that could disrupt operations but does not pose an immediate threat to health and safety.

PLEASE NOTE: Detailed and specific (step-by-step) procedures related to the implementation of this framework are not included in this plan, but are part of each assigned departments' individual documentation process.

Section I: Introduction

In an emergency or other crisis, effective and timely communication helps to protect life, public safety and property, and upholds the long-term integrity of Cornish College of the Arts.

Emergency communication are a vital tool during an emergency conditions are essential to preserve the safety and security of the College community. This plan outlines the different warning systems available and suggested use of each system, as well as provides operational guidance for issuing emergency warnings and Cornish Alerts.

There is no one system that will enable the College to fully warn everyone in a timely manner because each system has limitations. It is imperative to utilize multiple systems to effectively broadcast warning messages to the majority and as many of the Cornish College of the Arts of students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

All Cornish Alert messages must be accurate, clear, and consistent. Within the constraints of the available messaging system(s), all messages should include accurate and detailed information about the situation and what actions to take. During the course of the emergency incident, regular updates to the campus community are highly advisable.

The media also aids in the warning dissemination. To assist in maintaining accuracy of the Cornish Alert messages, the media should receive consistent information with the warning messages themselves. The Cornish Marketing & Communication Office will ensure that the media has access to updated information throughout the emergency incident as necessary to ensure the safety of the College community, first responders and other support personnel responding to the incident.

A. Purpose

The Cornish College of the Arts' Crisis Communication Plan outlines the roles, responsibilities, and procedures of key Cornish officials and departments that will guide the College in promptly and accurately sharing information with all of the College's audiences during an emergency or crisis.

For the purpose of this plan, a crisis is defined as a significant event or incident that disrupts – or has the potential to disrupt -- the College's normal activities and operations. A crisis could be precipitated by **emergency** or a **controversy**.

- An **emergency** is a fire, earthquake, severe weather, crime or other event that presents a threat and typically involves a response from police, fire, utilities, and/or emergency medical personnel.

- A **controversy** better describes events such as a major protest, march or civil disturbance either by students, faculty, staff, or other persons on/near one of the Cornish College campuses.

This plan is to be flexible in nature and used in conjunction with other emergency decision-making procedures of the College. This plan solely describes the crisis communication roles, responsibilities, and procedures that will be followed by the Crisis Communication Team and does not address other response and recovery procedures that likely will also be implemented in response to an incident on campus.

Elements of this plan are tested periodically as well as annually in conjunction with campus-wide emergency exercises and drills. All appendices are checked and updated for accuracy and completeness annually. Copies of this plan are posted on the Compass Home Page of Faculty, Staff & Students.

B. Scope

The audience for this plan includes current and potential undergraduates, graduates, extensions program students as well as faculty, staff, alumni, visitors, parents, trustees, neighbors, city and regional leaders, the media, and our Seattle community, national and international publics, and state and federal officials.

This Plan is designed for the entire Cornish College of the Arts community. The campus includes our facility on Capitol Hill, the Uptown Campus (Cornish Playhouse at Seattle Center and Scene Shop), and the main campus in South Lake Union including the Cornish Commons (the residence hall) which is responsible for their own specific procedures. However, this plan will be carried out in close coordination with all our facilities and Seattle emergency management, safety, and security personnel to align messages and operations, promoting effective communications across the entire Cornish College of the Arts community.

C. Objectives of the Plan

The guiding principle of the Cornish College of the Arts and the Crisis Communications Team is to communicate incident/event facts as accurately and quickly as possible, updating information regularly as circumstances change, to ensure the safety of the Cornish community and the continued operation of essential campus and public services.

- To assemble the Crisis Communications Team that will assess, implement, and support the appropriate emergency communications resulting from incident/situation.
- To factually assess situations and determine whether emergency notification communications are warranted and the requisite urgency of the notification(s).

- Implement immediate actions to:
 - To define the immediate actions needed to inform the campus community about the situation.
 - Identify all key audiences that need to be notified of the situation.
 - Communicate in an accurate and timely manner about the situation.
 - Monitor all media (broadcast, print, radio, social media, etc...) coverage of the incident/ event and manage rumors.
 - Restore a sense of confidence and/ or order.

The Crisis Communications Team will also meet on a regular basis (frequency determined by the Team members) to conduct business related to the review, implementation and maintenance of this plan. Topics discussed may include review of past actions and activations, developing and presenting strategic and operational priorities for process improvements, and drafting an annual report to senior College leadership highlighting past activities, challenges and proposed enhancements to the College's crisis communications tools and procedures. To ensure consistency and administrative continuity, the Crisis Communications Team will meet annually to review processes and procedures and will be co-chaired by the Chief Marketing Officer, the Director of Information Technology, and the Director of Campus Safety & Security.

Section II: Concept of Operations

A. Procedures

1. **Convening the Crisis Communications Team**

Anyone (including the general campus public) as well as any member of Cornish's Crisis Communication Team) who becomes aware of a potential crisis or emergency that may potentially impact College operations is responsible for notifying key College officials of the incident or event. Any member of the Crisis Communication Team may activate this plan in order to begin the initial group assessment of the incident or event. Each time the Plan is activated, the Crisis Communications Team member whose department has the lead response incident role, is responsible for notifying the appropriate member(s) of the College's senior leadership team (the President's Cabinet) of the status of the incident and provide ongoing status reports.

Primary Team:

President

Provost

VP of Enrollment Management

Chief Marketing Officer

VP of Operations

Director of Information Technology

Given the urgency of communicating critical information to the College community and the media, the Crisis Communication Team will be convened as quickly as possible. Based on the timing, location, and severity of the incident(s) or event(s), this may occur either in person or virtually through the crisis communication team's crisis conference call service. The initiator of the conference call (the VP of Operations or the Chief Marketing Officer) or his/her designee, will determine when a sufficient number of the team have joined the call before discussions commence. Each participant's notes will be collected and compiled and submitted to the Office of Campus Safety & Security to be included in the official incident report.

2. **Crisis Communication Team Representatives**

The Cornish Crisis Communication Team comprises individuals whose departments and organizations play a critical role in addressing the crisis, including representatives of the following. The list below is not meant to be exhaustive.

- President's Cabinet
- Student Life
- Housing & Residence Life
- Food Services
- Cornish Office of Campus Safety & Security
- Cornish Information Technology Department
- Marketing & Communication Office
- Chief Equity Officer
- Academic Services
- Creative Spaces & Event Services
- Other unit(s) may be invited to participate on the conference call based on the specific incident.

The Crisis Communications Team, will develop, and regularly-update a list of key Crisis Communication Team members and their 24/7 contact information. Each represented department must have a minimum of one with an additional (1-3) designated and trained individuals to ensure adequate 24/7 coverage whenever possible. This confidential contact information will be maintained as part of the notification procedures (separate document).

B. Response

1. **Implementation**

The Crisis Communication Team will implement some, or all of the steps outlined below based on the circumstances, coordinating with all key personnel. Throughout a crisis, the team will meet frequently to review changing facts, assess whether key messages are reaching audiences and determine whether strategies need to change. The success

of this plan rests on open and frequent communication among the Cornish College of the Arts' safety, security, and emergency management leadership, the Executive leadership, and the Crisis Communications Team.

2. Immediate Response

Based on the available crisis information and after conducting a situation assessment, the Crisis Communication Team will determine what, if any, public messaging should be sent out.

Appendix A contains a description of the communication tools, their possible applications in a crisis, and who can operate those tools.

3. Notifying Key Audiences

The Crisis Communication Team will determine which groups need to be informed first. It is important to keep in mind that people will seek – and trust – other sources of information (e.g. news reports, social media, rumors, and word of mouth) in the absence of official communication.

Effective communication will help quell rumors, maintain trust, and ensure public safety.

Key audiences include:

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- Parents of students
- Alumni
- Neighbors
- General Public, including campus Visitors/temporary residents (i.e., summer camps)
- News Media
- Board of Trustees

4. Determine Spokesperson(s)

This can either be the Chief Marketing Officer, his/her designated alternate, a senior leader of the College, or a member of the Crisis Communication Team who has knowledge of the crisis will be assigned to provide key messages and emerging facts to the public/media. The individuals selected will have the highest credibility of the College, and additional public information officers can manage briefings, media questions between formal press gatherings.

5. Developing a Fact Sheet

As soon as possible after the incident, a fact sheet will be prepared to supplement communication with key audiences and information provided to the media by the spokesperson. It will be approved by the Chief Marketing Officer or his/her designee and checked for accuracy by those with a direct knowledge of the crisis. Fact sheets

released publicly or posted to the internet must be time stamped and updated as information changes.

6. Alerting the Media

The Chief Marketing Officer will decide on the best way(s) of contacting the news media. In cases where a crisis is likely to be prolonged and/ or especially complex, the CMO may open and activate the Cornish Joint Information Center (JIC) located in the 2nd floor Conference Room at the Cornish Commons and a news media briefing center (location to be determined at the time of incident by CMO) to coordinate the information flow and assure that the correct people are involved in collecting and disseminating information.

Consideration will be given to appropriate media staging locations that can accommodate vehicles such as satellite trucks. Communication with the media must occur frequently as new information is known.

7. Monitor Traditional and Social Media

To anticipate any problems in the way information is flowing to the news media and to social media, the Crisis Communication Team will have members monitor media and provide a listening report if the incident is anticipated to be of a longer duration than a normal work day. Additional resources may be available to assist in monitoring of media by request (e.g. virtual operations support team (VOST)).

8. Approval of Outgoing Information

Typically, we use a collegial approach of multiple approvals before we distribute communications pieces, including emails and news releases. That system will not work in a crisis. Seconds matter in a crisis, and we will be judged by how quickly we share information with key audiences. In the event immediate communication is required during a crisis, the Office of Campus Safety & Security will issue appropriate messaging.

As a matter of policy, Cornish College of the Arts is committed to trying to meet these expectations. It recognizes the need for unusually crisp decision-making during a crisis to enable rapid, accurate communication in coordination with the institution's broader process. The Crisis Communications Team have developed templates that have been approved in advance to expedite the approval process during a crisis. Final approval for all communications – for the College rests with the Chief Marketing Officer or her/his designee.

9. The End of the Crisis and After-Action Report

The Crisis Communications Team will determine when an incident has ended and provide an "All Clear" message to the key audiences and routine communications processes can resume.

Within one week of the crisis, the Chief Marketing Officer or the Cornish department that took the lead operational role in the response will convene the Crisis Communications Team for an incident review to document lessons learned and suggested improvements (by meeting or via conference call). A summary report will be delivered to the college leadership.

C. Education and Plan Maintenance

1. **Education and Testing**

It is the responsibility of all the Crisis Communications Team members to provide education to our College community about how and when members would get messages from Cornish Alerts in an emergency. The procedure may be similar to those used to educate the College community in emergency preparedness and other safety presentations. The College will also conduct at least one test annually of the Cornish Alert mass notification system tools, which include, conference call system, audible alerts, email, text messaging, phone calls, social media alerts, and Cornish website banner.

2. **Updating the Plan**

This plan shall be updated at least annually and a number of items contained in the appendices will be updated twice a year.

The Co-Chairs of the Crisis Communication Team in coordination with the Director of Campus Safety & Security will update this plan and have a review from the Crisis Communication Team. Information Technology, will coordinate with the Vice President of Operations to update and improve the distribution lists located within the mass notification system.

Section III - Appendix: Crisis and Mass Communication Tools

Note: In a crisis situation no single medium will suffice to notify all constituencies. Depending on the particular situation, some combination of the communication tools listed below may be employed to reach the widest number of people as quickly as possible.

Communication Tool	Application	Characteristics
Cornish Website Banner Postings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornish Homepage 	Short messages posted as banners on official Cornish Web site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to disseminate official information during emergencies or crisis situations that may disrupt the normal operation of the College or threaten the health or safety of members of the College community. • Great source of information if College community knows when and where to check. • Does not provide active notification. • Crisis Communications Team posts information. • Messages are usually less detailed and shorter. • Banners are color-coded by the severity of the event (Green, Yellow, Orange, Red)
Cornish Main Phone Line 206-726-2787	Messages recorded on official Cornish Main line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to disseminate official information during emergencies or crisis situations that may disrupt the normal operation of the College or threaten the health or safety of members of the College community. • Great source of information if College community knows when and where to check. • Does not provide active notification. • Manually updated as needed. • Messages are usually less detailed and shorter, but can be manually updated to provide more detail as needed.
Cornish Alert ♦ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CornishAlert (service) 	Short messages sent to SMS text, email, and social networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to disseminate official information during emergencies or crisis situations that may disrupt

<p>provider for the mass notification system)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Twitter 	<p>accounts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMS text message • Cornish email • Facebook • Twitter 	<p>the normal operation of Cornish College of the Arts or threaten the health or safety of members of the Cornish community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides active notification to subscribers of Cornish Alert. • All student email addresses are automatically enrolled. • All current Cornish faculty and staff email addresses will be automatically enrolled; however, they still must "opt-in" to receive Cornish Alerts on their mobile devices. • Subscribers need to sign up separately for the Facebook and Twitter capabilities. • Crisis Communications Team posts information. • Messages limited to approximately 140 text characters due to SMS text and Twitter limitations.
<p>Cornish Advisory</p>	<p>Messages sent directly to recipients' email.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sent via email to make the community aware of a situation that could disrupt operations but does not pose an immediate threat to health and safety
<p>Cornish Audible Alarm</p>	<p>Alarm inside all Cornish campus buildings and structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to disseminate official information during emergencies or crisis situations that may disrupt the normal operation of the College or threaten the health or safety of members of the College community. • Provides active notification to people within earshot of the alarm. • Office of Campus Safety & Security may initiate alarm if not automatically triggered.
<p>Cornish ListServ Email</p>	<p>Messages sent directly to recipients' email.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used to disseminate official information during emergencies or crisis situations that may disrupt the normal operation of the College or

		<p>threaten the health or safety of members of the College community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides active notification to email. However, recipients may not necessarily be able to read/receive email messages. • Examples of recipient groups include building coordinators, deans, chairs, VPs, directors, students. • Message delivery dependent on network conditions and the number of recipients. • Messages can be as detailed and long as needed.
Bulk Email	Email message sent to entire campus or large-scale recipient list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used to disseminate official information during emergencies or crisis situations that may disrupt the normal operation of the College or threaten the health or safety of members of the College community. • Provides active notification to email. However, recipients may not necessarily be able to read/receive email messages. • Message delivery dependent on network conditions. • Messages can be as detailed and long as needed.

◆ Note: The City of Seattle also has a SMS Alert System -

The alert system will be the primary way we share urgent information with resident organizations. Relevant staff who needs/wants to be informed opts in. They can sign up at: <https://www.smart911.com/smart911/ref/reg.action?pa=seacenter1>.

The CoS alert system is meant for INTERNAL USE only, not to be shared with patrons or others outside your organization. It is anonymous in the sense that we cannot access the contact information of those who opt in, and users can opt out at any time through the account they set up when they sign up.

If you learn of an incident that you believe warrants a campus wide emergency alert, please contact Seattle Center Emergency Services Unit 1 at 206 684-7272 24/7 and/or Customer Service during working hours (approx. 9am-7pm) at 206 684-7200. Provide the essential information (who, what, where and when) so that alert posters can adequately describe the incident. The Seattle Center duty manager/designee or ESU will make the final determination regarding alert postings.

Change Number	Date of Change	Description of Change	Change Made By: