2.0 Crisis Communication

Crisis Communication Protocol

Crisis communications relates to both emergencies and controversial issues. Emergencies include but are not limited to: fires, bomb threats, terrorist acts, earthquakes and other natural and man-made disasters. Controversial issues include: alleged improper, unethical or illegal conduct by members of the University community, police and other agency investigations, internal hearings or litigation involving the University or members of the University community, student protests, and other situations that reflect upon the institution's reputation.

POLICY:

The Crisis Communications outline is designed to provide information on how to respond to inquiries in situations and in connection with controversial issues. When there is an indication of a potential crisis or controversy involving Suffolk University, whether before or after exposure to the media, preparation for a timely, accurate response to the situation is primarily the responsibility of the Office of Public Affairs. The Vice President of Communications will be responsible for interpreting information for dissemination to the University and the media. If the Office of Public Affairs cannot provide all of the needed information, it will contact the appropriate individual to gather the necessary information, or will coordinate with the appropriate person to speak with the media.

PROCEDURE:

***Assess the situation*:**

The Incident Commander/Incident Support Team should determine whether it is actually a crisis and, if so, gather complete and accurate information from the appropriate sources as quickly as possible. This information should be communicated immediately to the Office of Public Affairs.

The Incident Support Team will convene at the Emergency Operations Center.

The Vice President of Communications may consult with the President, the Senior Vice President for External Affairs, and University Counsel to determine whether an immediate response (internal and external) is necessary or advisable.

The Incident Support Team will determine how/when to contact appropriate internal and external constituencies. If the crisis is of major proportions the Vice President of Communications may consult with the President, the Senior Vice President for External Affairs, and University Counsel before taking further action.

PLEASE NOTE:

All communications (telephone calls and correspondence) from outside attorneys, and all legal documents should immediately be referred to the Office of General Counsel.

Each manager should have a communication "web" for his/her department, listing phone numbers and contact order, should an emergency situation arise. Please be sure to gather the necessary information as soon as possible so that notification of a crisis can be given in a timely fashion.

Reviewed by	Date
Incident Support Team	7/1/2015