



PACIFIC
LUTHERAN
UNIVERSITY

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
10/22/13

***PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMUNICATION UNIT
SUPPLEMENT TO THE EMERGENCY ALL HAZARDS MANAGEMENT PLAN***

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INTRODUCTION

This Crisis Communications Plan is intended to supplement other administrative procedures and guidelines for dealing with emergency situations, including the University's Emergency All Hazards Management Plan and the Student Life Crisis Response Plan. The Crisis Communications Plan should be reviewed annually and distributed to appropriate members of the PLU community.

When an emergency occurs, the need to communicate is often immediate. If campus operations are disrupted, students, faculty and staff will want to know how they will be impacted. Regulators may need to be notified and local government officials will want to know what is going on in their community. Families and friends of students will be concerned and will want information, and will often turn to social media channels before traditional news media. Neighbors living near campus may need information—especially if they are threatened by the incident. All of these “audiences” will want information, often before University officials have a chance to begin communicating.

An important component of the preparedness program is the crisis communications plan. PLU must be able to respond promptly, accurately and confidently during an emergency in the hours and days that follow. Many different audiences must be reached with information specific to their interests and needs. The image of the University can be positively or negatively impacted by public perceptions of the handling of the incident.

OBJECTIVES

The University makes every effort to be open and timely in its communication with on- and off-campus communities and the media during a crisis or emergency. Concern for the right to privacy, personal health and safety, legal liability and the public's legitimate right to be informed will guide decisions regarding all internal and external communications. Our objectives are:

- Assist in the actual management of the crisis;
- Provide direction to faculty, staff and students;
- Reduce rumor and uncertainty;
- Develop and disseminate clear and accurate information to students and parents, faculty and staff, the news media and directly to the public via official PLU social media feeds;
- Maintain PLU's credibility and minimize damage to its reputation.

CRISIS COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

During a declared emergency, both internal and external communications are managed by the Public Information Officer (PIO) and the Public Information Communication Unit. The PIO is directed by the Incident Commander, in consultation with the Emergency Policy Team, and in accordance with PLU's Emergency All Hazards Management Plan.

Elements of this Crisis Communications Plan will also apply in the event of an incident which is not a declared emergency, but for which PLU has some responsibility or where a significant number of its community are involved, e.g., auto accident, personal assault, and conflict or controversy. Communication initiatives in response to these incidents will be directed by the PIO in consultation with the appropriate administrative officers.

RELEASING STATEMENTS/INFORMATION

All information released by the University will be handled in cooperation with the appropriate external authority, e.g., Central Pierce Fire and Pierce County Sheriff.

All written or oral statements to campus groups, the media and directly to the public via social media channels will usually require the authorization of the Incident Commander in consultation with the Emergency Policy Team -- or in a non-declared crisis -- University officers.

All statements and information will be channeled through and coordinated by the PIO as outlined in the PLU Emergency All Hazards Management Plan.

The legal aspects of releasing information will be governed by the appropriate legal guidelines or referred to legal counsel. All public and media inquiries that are received by other offices and departments will be forwarded to the PIO and:

- Under no circumstances will any representative of the University other than the PIO or official spokesperson or his/her designee volunteer any information (including names, dates, times, locations, nature of the incident) about any on- or off-campus incident.
- Inquiries about an off-campus arrest in the public domain will be referred to the authority that made the arrest.
- It is the responsibility of the Director of Campus Safety or his/her designee to notify the PIO when on- or off-campus incidents occur.

PROCEDURES

1. Alerting Responsibilities. Prior to, or during, a declared state of emergency or the decision to assemble the Emergency Operations Center, the Incident Commander or a member of the Emergency Operations Team will alert the PIO. The PIO will then advise the other public information staff as to the emergency and its circumstances and provide direction for responding to initial inquiries from the media and the key publics and assemble the Public Information Communication Unit.

2. Public Information Communication Unit. The Public Information Communication Unit will be headed by the PIO. In the absence of the PIO, an alternate will be appointed in the following order: Deputy Public Information Officer 1, Deputy Public Information Officer 2.

The unit may include staff who report to the CIO such as the Director of Web Design & Development and/or special appointees from related departments on campus such as the Sports Information Director. The unit will be responsible for carrying out all crisis communications.

3. Specific Responsibilities. The PIO will be responsible for:

- Meeting with the Incident Commander and Emergency Policy Team to determine level of crisis and audiences affected.
- Maintaining regular contact with the Incident Commander and Emergency Policy Team.
- Establishing a media center in **Regency Room, Anderson University Center** or elsewhere on- or off-campus.
- Providing communication and media counsel to the Incident Commander and Emergency Policy Team.
- Preparing and disseminating statements or information to the campus community, interested constituencies, the media and other groups as identified.
- Regularly updating the University web site with pertinent information for students, concerned parents and others.
- Preparing a campus-wide email, voicemail and text message alerting student, faculty and staff to any pertinent information.
- Preparing and disseminating regular updates to official PLU social media channels and monitoring -- and responding as necessary -- to misinformation and rumors on informal student channels.
- Handling public inquiries and rumor control regarding the crisis.
- Responding to media inquiries regarding the crisis.
- Arranging for photography and audio-visual services, if necessary.
- Maintaining regular contact with PIOs of other agencies or organizations (sheriff, police, fire, etc.) responding to the emergency, for the purpose of coordinating the preparation and dissemination of public statements of information.
- Managing the media's presence during the crisis and enforcing the guidelines for media behavior during a crisis.
- Monitoring media coverage and public response to the crisis.
- Providing appropriate post-crisis follow-up releases and news to the media.
- Providing information for volunteers to disseminate over the phone in the call center, should it be activated.
- Evaluating the communication process, providing full media documentation to the Emergency Policy Team and participating in a debriefing session with members of the Emergency Planning Team.

4. Authority. The PIO will have the authority to guide the official spokesperson and disseminate information to the media and the public usually under the direction of the Incident Commander and Emergency Policy Team.

Except for emergency services personnel and security, only the PIO will be authorized to provide direction to the media.

Once a crisis/emergency has been identified, Campus Safety will have the authority to limit access to the affected area and any other areas of campus designated for use in responding to the crisis.

At the direction of the Incident Commander, in consultation with the Emergency Policy Team, the PIO may allow media photographers and camera operators to tour the emergency site. They will be escorted at all times.

5. Media and Public Inquiry Centers. Depending on the nature and duration of the crisis, the PIO may establish and oversee a 24-hour hotline and an information and public web page. This center may be located on campus or at a predetermined site off campus. At the direction of the Incident Commander, the PIO will have authority to use other University facilities and/or offices for these and related purposes.

6. Official Spokesperson. In consultation with the Incident Commander and Emergency Policy Team, the PIO may appoint one official spokesperson and an alternate, as required. The spokesperson will be chosen based upon his or her knowledge and credibility with regard to the existing emergency and will be responsible for articulating the University's position only upon the authorization of, and as directed by, the PIO.

The spokesperson and alternate should be readily available and accessible to the PIO and the media, and be able to articulate the University's position in a way appropriate for the media.

The spokesperson and alternate will be selected from the following:

- Public Information Officer
- Provost
- Vice President for Student Life
- Vice President for Admissions and Enrollment Services

The President and the Chair of the Board of Regents will generally not serve as spokesperson, but will be held in reserve to intervene with definitive and strategically placed public statements as the emergency situation evolves.

7. On-campus Media. Student-led media, such as The Mooring Mast, will generally be considered as external media for the purposes of this Crisis Communications Plan. They will be guided by the ground rules for media behavior during an emergency.

BOILERPLATE SCENARIO RESPONSES - FIRST 24 HOURS TALKING POINTS

1. Fire on or near campus (no injuries):

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- We are thankful no one was injured in this accident.
- We are working with the Central Pierce fire department to determine the cause of the fire.
- We are also working with the fire department to determine when it is safe for our students, faculty, staff and our neighbors (if applicable) to return to their homes and offices.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu.

2. Fire or natural gas explosion on or near campus (possible injuries)

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- We do not know the extent of injuries at present, but we can confirm that (X number) individuals have been taken to area hospitals, including (names of hospitals). We are not releasing names of the individuals pending notification of next of kin. We direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- We are working with the Central Pierce fire department to determine the cause of the fire and we will be meeting with the PLU community and neighbors affected in the immediate area later today.

Natural gas explosion:

- As a precaution, natural gas delivery has been shut off to affected campus areas and to homes within a X block area around the explosion.
- We are also working with the fire department to determine when it is safe for our campus community and neighbors to return to their homes and offices.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, or if you smell natural gas, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

3. Violence on campus (no injuries)

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, general details of the incident, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- If the perpetrator is still at large, refer questions regarding gender, physical description and approx age to the Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority.
- If the suspect has been apprehended, refer all questions to the Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority.
- We are not releasing any further details regarding the assailant(s) or victim(s) and direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- We are thankful no one was injured in this incident.

- The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, staff and neighbors is our single greatest priority.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- PLU campus security, in coordination with Parkland and Pierce County authorities, helps us maintain a safe personal, work and learning environment.
- Effective immediately, we are stepping up safety patrols and reminding students of the free escort and shuttle services the University provides and other emergency systems on campus.
- We are also offering free counseling services to PLU community members and neighbors (if applicable) who may have been affected. More information is available at plu.edu/emergency.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

4. Violence on campus (injuries and/or death)

- We are deeply saddened by this unprecedented incident within our tight-knit community. And we share our most heartfelt condolences and prayers with the victims' families and loved ones.
- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, general details of the incident, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- If the perpetrator is still at large, refer questions regarding gender, physical description and approx age to the Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority.
- If the suspect has been apprehended, injured or killed, refer all questions to the Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority.
- We are not releasing any further details regarding the assailant(s) or victim(s) at this time and direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, staff and neighbors is our single greatest priority.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- PLU campus security, in coordination with Parkland and Pierce County authorities, helps us maintain a safe personal, work and learning environment.
- Effective immediately, we are stepping up safety patrols and reminding students of the free escort and shuttle services the University provides and other emergency systems on campus.
- We are also offering free counseling services to PLU community members and neighbors who may have been affected. More information is available at plu.edu/emergency.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

5. Hazardous substance control (no injuries, contained incident)

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, general details of the incident, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- We are thankful no one was injured in this accident.
- We want to assure the PLU community and local neighbors that the area has been deemed safe by Pierce County health department officials. However, as an added precaution we have evacuated building X, while health officials carry out additional investigations into the cause of this accident.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

6. Hazardous substance control (possible injuries, widespread incident)

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- We do not know the extent of injuries at present, but we can confirm that (X number) individuals have been taken to area hospitals, including (names of hospitals). We are not releasing names of the individuals pending notification of next of kin. We direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- We are working with Pierce County health department officials to determine the cause of the accident and we will be meeting with the PLU community and neighbors affected in the immediate area later today.
- We are also working with the health department to determine when it is safe for our students, faculty, staff and neighbors to return to their homes and offices.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

7. Criminal activity on or near campus

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, general details of the incident, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- If the perpetrator is still at large, refer questions regarding gender, physical description and approx age to the Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority.
- If the suspect has been apprehended, refer all questions to the Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority.
- We are not releasing any further details regarding the assailant(s) or victim(s) and direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- We are thankful no one was injured in this incident.
- The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, staff and neighbors is our single greatest priority.
- PLU campus security, in coordination with Parkland and Pierce County authorities, helps us maintain a safe personal, work and learning environment.

- Effective immediately, we are stepping up safety patrols and reminding students of the free escort and shuttle services the University provides and other emergency systems on campus.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

8. Bomb threat (hoax threat, no injuries)

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, general details of the incident, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, staff and neighbors is our single greatest priority.
- Although this incident has been deemed a hoax, as a precaution, building XYZ have been evacuated while the Pierce County Sheriff's department conducts a thorough investigation.
- As part of PLU's incident prevention effort, all staff and faculty have been trained to be alert for suspicious items (if applicable, in the case of a suspicious object found).
- Making a false bomb threat is a federal offense that carries a penalty of up to 10 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, or both. This penalty also applies to juvenile offenders. Making a false bomb threat is also a violation of the Washington state penal code.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

Actual bomb explosion:

- Emergency first responders are on site. We are still assessing the cause of the explosion and the extent of injuries.
- We can confirm that (X number) individuals have been taken to area hospitals, including (names of hospitals). We are not releasing names of the individuals pending notification of next of kin. We direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- Gas and electricity has been shut off to the buildings affected.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- We are also offering free counseling services to PLU community members and neighbors who may have been affected. More information is available at plu.edu/emergency.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

9. Weather-related campus closure

- The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty and staff is our single greatest priority.
- We have temporarily suspended classes, and encourage our commuter students, faculty and staff to stay home and stay tuned in for closure updates on local radio and TV

stations. We will also post regular updates on plu.edu and on PLU's official Facebook page and Twitter feed.

- For our on-campus population, food service and other campus services will proceed with a limited schedule. Please check plu.edu/weatherclosure for further information and updates.

10. Natural disaster (earthquake, volcano eruption, flood - no major injuries)

- Share known, confirmed facts including building impacts and approx. number of people affected.
- At the current time, we are not aware of any serious injuries.
- As a precaution, emergency first responders are on site. We are still assessing the safety of some of our older buildings, and as a further precaution, we have evacuated buildings XYZ, affecting approx. (X number) of students, faculty and staff.
- We are currently making arrangements for temporary housing for on-campus residential students whose residence halls may have been affected.
- As an additional precaution, gas has been shut off to the buildings affected.
- We will also be temporarily suspending classes in buildings XYZ until a thorough safety check has been completed.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- We are also offering free counseling services to PLU community members and neighbors who may have been affected. More information is available at plu.edu/emergency.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

11. Natural disaster (earthquake, volcano eruption, flood - major injuries)

- Share known, confirmed facts including building impacts and approx number of people affected.
- We are still assessing the extent of injuries and emergency first responders are on site.
- We are also assessing the safety of some of our older buildings, and as a further precaution, we have evacuated buildings XYZ, affecting approx (X number) of students, faculty and staff.
- We are currently making arrangements for temporary housing for on-campus residential students whose residence halls may have been affected.
- As an additional precaution, gas has been shut off to the buildings affected.
- We are also temporarily suspending all classes until a thorough safety check of all campus facilities has been completed.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- We are also offering free counseling services to PLU community members and neighbors who may have been affected. More information is available at plu.edu/emergency.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

12. Serious outbreak of illness/food tampering

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- We do not know the extent of illnesses at present, but we do have health care personnel on campus providing free care. We are not releasing names of the individuals affected, and direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, staff and neighbors is our single greatest priority.
- We have discontinued food operations until a thorough review of food sources and preparation techniques has been conducted.
- We have also communicated with Pierce County public health officials and notified state food regulatory agencies and our suppliers.
- While the investigation is underway, we have made arrangements with XYZ to provide free food service to our students.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

13. Unethical behavior/major student misconduct

- Share known, confirmed facts including nature of the incident and approx number of people impacted.
- We expect all members of the PLU community to possess an earnest purpose, the ability to exercise mature judgment, the ability to act in a responsible manner, to have a well-developed concept of -- and commitment to -- honor, morality and integrity, and a respect for law and the rights of others.
- We are deeply troubled by this incident and we are redoubling our efforts to train students, faculty and staff in the school's code of conduct policies and procedures.
- A disciplinary hearing will be undertaken with those involved.
- In respect of the students' privacy, we are not releasing names of the individuals involved.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

14. Harassment/hate crimes

- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, nature of the incident, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- We expect all members of the PLU community to possess an earnest purpose, the ability to exercise mature judgment, the ability to act in a responsible manner, to have a well-developed concept of -- and commitment to -- honor, morality and integrity, and a respect for law and the rights of others.
- PLU has a very clear commitment to not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- We are deeply troubled by this incident and we are redoubling our efforts to train students, faculty and staff in the school's code of conduct policies and procedures.
- A disciplinary hearing will be undertaken with those involved.

- We are not releasing names of the individuals involved, and direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

15. Ethical breaches by administrators/faculty

- Share known, confirmed facts including nature of the incident.
- We expect all members of the PLU community to possess an earnest purpose, the ability to exercise mature judgment, the ability to act in a responsible manner, to have a well-developed concept of -- and commitment to -- honor, morality and integrity, and a respect for law and the rights of others.
- PLU has implemented a comprehensive review of the allegations, including examination of human resources and code of conduct policies, practices and procedures and we intend to also launch an independent external audit.
- Additionally, the PLU Board of Regents will review its bylaws and Code of Ethics and make changes needed to remedy deficiencies.
- Employees facing disciplinary action have been assigned an advocate to help them better understand the disciplinary process (if applicable).
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

16. Building safety (unstable infrastructure on campus or in off-campus student housing)

- Share known, confirmed facts including building impacts and approx number of people affected.
- At the current time, we are not aware of any serious injuries.
- As a precaution, emergency first responders are on site (if applicable). We are still assessing the safety of the building, and as a further precaution, we have evacuated the building, affecting approx (X number) of students, faculty and staff.
- We are currently making arrangements for temporary housing for on-campus residential students who may have been affected.
- As an additional precaution, gas has been shut off to the building affected.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus or in the immediate area, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.

17. Grade data tampering

- We are currently investigating allegations of breaches of our computer system that resulted in grades being changed.
- If our investigation determines that students did gain access to grading systems without authorization, they will be dismissed and could also face criminal charges.
- We expect all members of the PLU community to possess an earnest purpose, the ability to exercise mature judgment, the ability to act in a responsible manner, to have a

well-developed concept of -- and commitment to -- honor, morality and integrity, and a respect for law and the rights of others.

- We are not releasing names of the individuals involved, and direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate authority) for further information.
- The changed grades are being corrected and steps are being taken to enhance system security to prevent similar incidents in the future.

18. Off-campus accidents (serious injuries and/or death)

- We are deeply saddened by the untimely death of members of our PLU community, and we share our most heartfelt condolences and prayers with the victims' families and loved ones.
- Share known, confirmed facts including approx time of day, general details of the incident, physical location and approx number of people impacted.
- We can confirm that (X number) individuals have been taken to area hospitals, including (names of hospitals). We are not releasing names of the individuals pending notification of next of kin. We direct you to (name of Incident Commander at the appropriate emergency authority) for further information.
- We know an incident such as this is unsettling. If you have concerns about family members on campus, please call our Emergency Response Center at XXX-XXX-XXXX.
- We are also offering free counseling services to PLU community members. More information is available at plu.edu/emergency.
- Further information regarding memorial services for the victims will be forthcoming. When we have more information we will inform you by this process and it will be posted on our website at plu.edu as it becomes available.