

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Emergency Preparedness Committee

SUBJECT: Emergency Preparedness Update

DATE: 02/29/2016

Emergency Preparedness Committee:

This committee first convened in early September 2015 to examine the University's communications protocols in emergency situations. After finishing an Emergency Notification Protocol draft, the committee was held together to incorporate a broad spectrum of viewpoints into the University's emergency preparedness efforts. Membership includes representatives from Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Student Affairs, University Advancement, and General Counsel as well as representation from the faculty, student body, and local first responders. The committee has convened six times thus far, with a goal of meeting monthly in 2016.

Emergency Notification Protocol:

The first project addressed by the Emergency Preparedness Committee was to draft a protocol outlining the process used to initiate emergency notification, to include Norse Alerts. The broad, safety-centric philosophy in issuing emergency notification remains unchanged. However, the committee feels the drafting and public review of this protocol allows for transparency in the notification process while also informing community members as to the considerations and challenges involved in issuing an alert.

Emergency Communications Plan:

The committee reviewed and updated the University's Emergency Communication Plan, a manual designed to guide the communications response to a critical incident or other emergency that may affect or has affected the health, safety, or welfare of students, employees, and/or the campus visitors. The plan outlines roles and responsibilities, available resources and how to align them in the event of a critical incident, and best practices for communicating information to the campus and to the public.

Norse Alert Opt-out:

In conjunction with discussions surrounding the newly-drafted Emergency Notification Protocol, the committee felt very strongly that NKU's Norse Alert mass notification system would better serve the community by transitioning to an opt-out approach. Currently, users are enrolled only if they take the time to visit norsealert.nku.edu and input their contact information. Preliminary discussions are ongoing with IT in order to decide how to gather contact information, with the myNKU platform the likely solution. It is important to note that opting out will remain an option, with users acknowledging they may not receive notification during an emergency situation if they elect to do so.

RedMan/ALiCE:

As you are likely aware, Dr. Melissa Moon has been a proponent of ALiCE active shooter training here on NKU's campus. Dr. Moon remains committed to this cause and has a number of sessions scheduled for February/March of 2016. Following this, University Police plans to conduct an active shooter/violent intruder drill with an officer in a "RedMan" suit simulating an intruder.

Building Emergency Action Plan:

As a part of a comprehensive emergency awareness for campus stakeholders, building-specific emergency plans are being developed. The plans provide basic guidance about how to respond to a variety of emergency situations and relevant information specific to each building. Further, the plans identify specific safety coordinators for departments housed in the facility. A pilot of the program was completed in Student Union. Work has since started on Science Center's plan. The goal is to have major academic buildings complete by the end of 2016.

Response Drill:

Over the winter break, University Police conducted an emergency response drill. Over 30 first responders, including University Police and local partners, took part in the drill's scenarios with a focus on bomb threats and suspicious packages. Responders were familiarized with the characteristics of suspicious packages and bombs, response options, and resources available locally and regionally in reacting to such incidents. University Police staff facilitated the drill following attendance at a Department of Homeland Security funded bomb response course in New Mexico.