

approved by Voice Vote
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AR 19: In Support of Expanding the Emergency Text Message Alert System

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WHEREAS, The Office of Campus Safety and Security at The University of Texas at Austin has the mission, "To ensure the safety, welfare, and security of the staff, faculty, students, visitors and property of The University of Texas at Austin through high quality services and leadership"¹, and;

WHEREAS, The Office of Campus Safety and Security holds "Communication" as a Core Value, and indicates that to "Develop, implement, and sustain effective communications for the university community"¹ is a goal for the division, and;

WHEREAS, The University of Texas at Austin Emergency Notification Policy lists email and text messaging as a means of communicating relevant emergency information with the student body², and;

WHEREAS, The University of Texas at Austin Emergency Notification Policy does not specify if all students must or can be included in the emergency text message alert system, and;

WHEREAS, A recent study concluded that 99.7% of college students nationwide have a cell phone and use text messaging as a means of communication³, and;

WHEREAS, A recent study determined that on average only 27% of college students have smart phones, or phones that have the ability to access email and the internet from a cell phone³, and;

WHEREAS, During an emergency situation on The University of Texas at Austin campus on Sept. 28, 2010, students who had signed up for the emergency text message service received notification about the situation approximately 10 minutes after the incident was reported, and;

WHEREAS, During an emergency situation on a college campus, the effective and rapid dissemination of information to the University community can have an impact on the safety of individuals, and;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Student Government of the University of Texas at Austin believes that emergency text message alerts are an effective means of reaching the student body in the event of an emergency, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Student Government of the University of Texas at Austin believes that the University's emergency text message alert system should be widely promoted to the University Community and that students should be prompted to submit relevant information at the start of their time at the University, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Student Government of the University of Texas at Austin believes that the use of emergency text message alerts should be expanded to include all members of the student body, to the fullest extent possible, in order to promote safety through enhanced communication efforts, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Office of the Vice President for University Operations, the Office of Campus Safety and Security, the Department of Emergency Preparedness, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, and the Office of the President.

1: <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/about/mission.html>

2: Emergency Notification Policy 2010-2011

3: <http://cms.bsu.edu/Academics/CentersandInstitutes/CMD/IMMR/IntheMedia.aspx>