

CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN

THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

In the event of a crisis, the president (or, in the absence of a president, the vice president for administration and finance) or the vice president for communications shall convene a team consisting of some or all of the following people:

- ✦ the president
- ✦ the vice president for administration and finance
- ✦ the provost
- ✦ the vice president for advancement
- ✦ the vice president for communications
- ✦ the vice president for enrollment services
- ✦ the dean of students, if applicable
- ✦ other members of the senior staff, if applicable

The president (or vice president for administration and finance) may include other personnel whose expertise and authority are key to the crisis. The team should be kept as small as possible to work with maximum speed and efficiency.

Each team member should keep a confidential list of the entire team's home phone, cellular, and/or pager numbers, both at home and at work.

PROCESS

1. **Report crisis.** A crisis can happen at any time and in any place on either campus. College members close to the situation should first contact the president's office (or, in the absence of a president, the office of the vice president for finance and administration). If that person cannot be reached, contact should be made with the provost and/or the vice president for communications.
2. **Obtain information.** The crisis team's first objective is to identify the essential facts, consulting appropriate college members and others close to the situation. The team should do this before any public statement is made. If members of the press are looking for information prior to this time, they should be told, "College officials are now meeting to determine exactly what happened and will be prepared to discuss the situation in (20 minutes, half an hour, hour, etc.)." Reporters should be requested to call back at that time or leave a number where they may be reached. It is important to reassure reporters that they will be contacted in a timely fashion.
3. **Identify concerns.** The team will need to consider the safety of the college community, the college's responsibility to protect the rights and privacy of members of the CCA community, the public's concern and right to know, and any legal or financial ramifications.
4. **Fact sheet.** The crisis team should prepare a complete fact sheet of the situation. The team should then develop public statements and strategies based on these facts before anyone speaks to the press.
5. **Spokesperson.** The crisis management team should designate one person to act as the college spokesperson on the issue. Understanding that both the media and the public prefer statements from those close to the situation, a college representative with

expertise and credibility in the crisis area should be the designated spokesperson. The president should be the appointed speaker in any serious situation. The vice president for communications should be a secondary spokesperson in all situations.

6. **No other college official besides the designated spokesperson should respond to questions from the media.**
7. **Media inquiries.** All media inquiries should be politely but firmly directed to the vice president for communications (415.703.9545), including those to the designated spokesperson. The Communications Department will then arrange for interviews.
8. **Press conferences.** For complicated situations, the crisis team may decide to hold a press conference, which would include more than one spokesperson for the college. The Communications Department would be responsible for arranging the conference.
9. **Communicating to the community.** Whenever possible, CCA faculty, staff, and students should be informed first, beginning with those closest to the occurrence. This communication could take the form of a letter from the president (or, in the absence of a president, the vice president for finance and administration) addressed to the CCA community. The letter should be drawn up from the fact sheet and considered an official statement of the college.
10. **Timeliness.** In a crisis, the college seeks to release accurate and complete information in a timely manner. In more complicated situations, more information may need to be released, as it becomes available. The crisis management team may need to convene several times to determine any further public statements and the strategies for the release of information.
11. **Follow-up.** Once the crisis has passed, the crisis team should reconvene to evaluate the handling of the situation and make recommendations for improvements.