I. PURPOSE

The University of Alabama handles emergency situations through a designated Incident Command activation process through the University of Alabama Police Department (UAPD). From this activation, the Emergency Preparedness Response Policy Group (EPRPG) may enact the University’s Campus Emergency Operations Plan. The Executive Vice President convenes the EPRPG to which the Vice President for Student Affairs is a designated member. The EPRPG is responsible for (1) gathering information for the President and the Executive Staff, (2) notifying the office of Tuscaloosa County Emergency Management Agency, and providing recommendations to the President. The EPRPG serves as a policy decision-maker for the University and works in conjunction with the Tuscaloosa County Emergency Management Agency’s (EMA) Emergency Operations Plan. The Incident Command is charged with the actual management of the emergency with the EPRPG overseeing from the perspective of campus impact. The effectiveness of the Emergency Response Plan depends on the support and cooperation of all members of the University community. The basic plan for the University of Alabama EPRPG can be found online at:


This plan anticipates appropriate responses from Student Affairs and serves as a guide for action should a natural disaster or other emergency occur. While this plan covers details of emergencies, recoveries and sheltering on several levels of severity, all Student Affairs units should have well-defined and communicated plans for their immediate and longer-term operations. With these divisional and unit-prepared plans it is important to note in all cases, however, the direction of the EPRPG will prevail and should be considered the foundation for any subsequent plans.

II. PREPARATION

A. General Readiness

1. Each department/unit in Student Affairs will have an emergency plan outlining:
   a. **How it will close down: care of equipment and facilities.** Unit directors should determine their ability to remain open and to what extent. Decisions to close should be communicated through the Vice President for Student Affairs or designate.
   b. **First Response personnel and their roles.** Each unit director will determine those staff essential to first response and facility coordination. First response staff determination will be coordinated prior to enacting emergency response plans and be communicated to appropriate staff. Secondary support staff
should also be identified and prepared to provide relief and continuity of the emergency response plan.

c. **Communications with internal and external constituencies before, during, and after the emergency; voicemail and internet are particularly important.** For internal communications within staff and among Student Affairs personnel, text messaging will be the preferred method. Unit directors will establish comprehensive cell phone contact lists and create the ability to quickly text messaging among staff to mobilize emergency operations. Cell phone contact lists should be updated no less than quarterly. Unit external communications should identify a staff member responsible for updating main unit voicemail resources. All staff will be responsible for updating email and personal voicemails as able. Each unit should identify a staff member responsible for website updates with the capacity to provide such updates from a home or remote location as able. As directed units may be instructed to have phones forwarded to the UA-call center. This number will be shared with unit directors for dissemination as necessary.

d. **Emergency contact strategies for operations.** During emergency operations, text messaging may become the primary communication method. Unit directors and essential staff during emergencies should ensure that accurate cell phone contact lists are maintained and updated as appropriate.

e. **Plan for re-opening.** Unit directors should determine staffing resources in tandem with determinations of campus-wide re-openings in establishing a re-opening and operational schedule. Each Student Affairs unit will identify staff and capacity to re-open and communicate updates to the Vice President for Student Affairs or designate.

f. **Responsibility for inspecting premises and reporting damages and costs incurred.** Unit directors and other essential operations staff will inspect facilities in advance of re-opening. Staff coordination of damages and costs should also be identified in advance so accurate insurance and possible reimbursement processes can be enacted.

g. **Response to power outages with special attention to communications when computers are down.** In the event of a wide-spread power outage on campus as well as determined circumstances where centralized coordination of communication and response are required, the University of Alabama Student Recreation Center (SRC) has been established as a hub for such division needs. The SRC will allow for power assistance to identified unit leadership through use of items such as cell phones and chargers, laptops, and other smaller electronic devices. The Executive Director of University or staff designate will establish a command headquarters for necessary Student Affairs staff to conduct and coordinate emergency response operations. The Vice President for Student Affairs or designate will notify unit directors when the Division of Student Affairs will shift operation to the command center at the SRC.

2. Each summer, departments in the Division of Student Affairs will review and update disaster protocols and checklists. Each summer, the staff of the Division
of Student Affairs will be provided training in emergency protocol. Student workers (including Graduate Assistants and Resident Advisors) will be trained as part of their annual staff orientation. The Division of Student Affairs will provide periodic in-services and table top exercises emphasizing emergency protocols for potential disasters and events. This training should provide information protocols and equipment needs review for shelter-in-place situations. Student Affairs unit directors and associate directors will be required to take NIMS online training as coordinated through the UA Office of Emergency Preparedness.

3. Twice annually, first aid supplies will be checked and replenished by all departments, residence halls and Greek houses. Greek house coordination and communication will be shared between Housing and Residential Communities (for UA-staffed houses) and the Office of the Dean of Students (for houses staffed by non-UA personnel). Greek house staff will meet with Divisional leadership annually for review and training on procedures and supplies updates for emergency readiness. These supplies include, but are not limited to cell phone chargers, battery operated 2-way radios, high beam flashlights, candles (as deemed safe and authorized by Environmental Health and Safety), and batteries.

4. Building representatives will annually review disaster protocols and checklists with Facilities. Twice annually, building representatives (as designated by Facilities) will advise staff of the designated safe areas in the buildings should hazardous conditions occur. Training on location of power sources such as HVAC units, gas lines, etc. as well procedures for turning such equipment off should be reviewed. Directional signage to safe areas will be updated and posted or stored. Each unit director or building representative should review pre-determined “safe areas” and ensure that adequate space and safety is available during emergency sheltering needs.

5. The Office of the Dean of Students will twice annually collect contact information for each Greek chapter and House Corporation and share that information with Housing and Residential Communities staff. Twice annually Housing and Residential Communities will provide written instructions to fraternities and sororities of safety procedures for their residents.

6. Emergency protocol will be a required and ongoing program of the Greek Leadership Academy for student leaders.

7. Ferguson Center and HRC staff will meet annually with Bama Dining to review disaster protocols and checklists. It is anticipated that Ferguson Center and HRC staff will assist Bama Dining with storing supplies of water and food for use during extended storm conditions or power outages.

8. Signage designating areas for distribution of goods, shelter sites, campus closings, and other related information will be prepared in advance. The Office of the Vice
President for Student Affairs will create a template for these signs and is responsible for their locations.

9. HRC will prepare instructions for residents during an emergency that can be easily duplicated and distributed as needed. HRC will prepare similar instructions for Greek house directors. Such instructions should include sheltering and dining options and locations.

10. Subject to the authority of the Incident Command/EPRPG, the following teams are anticipated for a timely response. Teams will act on behalf of the University and thus may include persons outside of Student Affairs (except Staff Communication, which is internal to Student Affairs). Team members and back-ups will be notified each summer by the Vice President for Student Affairs in preparation for the coming academic year.
   a. Food and Supply Distribution
   b. Facility Readiness
   c. Nurturing, Care, and Medical Response
   d. Staff Communication (Division)
   e. Parent, Student Communication
   f. Student Volunteerism

It is noted with the establishment of these functional teams that areas such as HRC may be unable to provide significant participation given their primary role in maintaining housing operations.

B. Immediate Preparation for Emergency

1. Level 1: Little Damage Anticipated (Classes cancelled 0-2 days). As possible and through the EPRPG and Vice President for Student Affairs, the anticipated emergency level will be communicated through unit directors.
   a. Resident students are not required to leave campus. As space permits, off campus students will be accommodated on campus. In the event space is not available, students are to go to designated shelters.

   b. Faculty and staff will be notified by their supervisor as to whether they need to be on campus. Unit directors will designate essential personnel (with rotations as necessary), alternate personnel, and persons responsible for checking telephone messages, establishing unit voicemail, website updates, and forward that information, along with contact information for all personnel whether or not expected to report for work, to the Office of the Vice President or designate for dissemination. Essential personnel will be provided a nametag or other identification for use during the emergency and an emergency parking tag as needed.

   c. Under the direction of the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and working with University/Public Relations, staff will be instructed on communicating with the institution while the University is closed.
d. Each unit will gather contact information for staff, including student staff, in order to communicate while the University is operating at a reduced level. The preferred method for such communication will be text message, especially under conditions where power outages occur. When power is available, landline phone and email distribution will be utilized.

e. The Ferguson Center, the Student Recreation Center (SRC), Bama Dining/Auxiliary Services, and WVUA radio will operate according to normal schedules as much as is safe and practical. The HRC central office and Dean of Students office will remain open with a skeletal staff as is safe and practical. Other offices may be asked to remain open according to need. As determined by the Vice President for Student Affairs, the SRC will become the central operations and communication hub for the division.

f. In addition to posting information about pending hazardous conditions campus-wide, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will communicate with the Capstone International Services Director for information about shelters and severe weather preparation. Capstone International will send pertinent information to international students on the ISA listserv.

g. HRC will request that Parking and Transportation Services and UAPD clear parking lots in areas that could potentially flood within 10 hours of a projected storm.

h. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will confirm with American Red Cross (ARC) the location of emergency shelters within the city limits and disseminate that information to Student Affairs personnel via, text message, the divisional listserv or through University Relations. The SRC and University Recreation will communicate and coordinate any on-campus sheltering and transfer of individuals to ARC shelters as necessary.

i. HRC will confirm which Resident Advisors and other staff intend to stay in the halls for the duration of the pending emergency.

j. Signage will be posted as appropriate under the direction of the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

k. Teams (See Section II: Preparation, Item #10) and meeting sites will be designated in advance for response to various parts of the campus. As determined by the Vice President for Student Affairs, the SRC will become the central operations and communication hub for the division.

2. **Level 2: Moderate Damage Anticipated (Closure for up to several days).** As possible and through the EPRPG and Vice President for Student Affairs, the anticipated emergency level will be communicated through unit directors. With level
2 emergency status, the entire University is shut down except for essential staff. Resident students are encouraged to leave campus. In addition to Level 1 steps previously stated, the following additional measures will enacted:

a. Directors should secure their areas by making certain that all computers and other appropriate appliances are turned off and unplugged and voice mail messages are left for their unit.

b. HRC will remind Greek house managers of safety protocols. Items to discuss include: review of safety measures, debris near the house, plan for no use of candles, parental contact and identification of which students are staying in town for the duration of the pending emergency, and handling local media should circumstances warrant. The Dean of Students and HRC will provide information and support to chapter officers (students) based on staff employment and oversight of the various chapters.

c. Student staff, including Resident Advisors, will be released from their work responsibilities during closures of several days or longer. Communication and distribution lists to notify students of such status should be well established in advance of a level 2 emergency.

d. The Community Service Center will make connections with appropriate agencies for possible support response regarding student volunteerism after the campus reopens.

e. The Division of Student Affairs Liaison to the Campus Ministers will inform them of plans and needs.

f. If remote access and capacity exists, unit designees will respond to voicemail and email messages and update them regularly even while the campus remains closed so that those concerned or interested may remain informed. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, with direction from the Assistant Vice President for University Relations, will coordinate suggested text for the messages forwarding of calls to the UA-wide or a third party outsourced call center may be possible during this level of emergency.

3. Level 3: Extensive Damage Anticipated (Extended closure)
As possible and through the EPRPG and Vice President for Student Affairs, the anticipated emergency level will be communicated through unit directors. With a level 3 emergency status, the entire University is shut down except for essential staff. Resident students are required to leave campus. In addition to Level 1 and 2 steps previously stated, the following additional measures will be enacted:

a. The Vice President for Student Affairs, with direction from the EPRPG, will determine which buildings will remain open to the public. The Executive Director of HRC will assist with notifying residents of occupancy procedures and timeline for closing the halls.

b. The Counseling Center staff will remain on call and be available for group sessions for students as well as employees should the need arise.

c. HRC will implement a check-out system for residents, gathering contact and destination information. HRC will ask fraternities and sororities to do the same.
d. As deemed necessary for off-campus students and faculty and staff, the SRC may be opened as a shelter operation.

C. Immediate Danger with Little Warning
In the event of tornado, airborne toxins, or other disaster occurring with little warning or preparation time, the following protocols will be enacted:

1. All persons (students and employees) should quickly and calmly seek the nearest shelter or safe location to await instruction.

2. Unit directors with responsibility for facilities (HRC, Ferguson Center, and University Recreation) will designate essential staff to oversee response according to departmental protocols. In turn, unit directors will designate employees to calmly guide persons in the building to the nearest safe location.

3. If the emergency is so contained that UAPD may not be aware of it, a unit designee will notify UAPD.

4. The unit director or designee will notify the Vice President for Student Affairs of the circumstances, the perceived threat to safety, and immediate needs.

5. Calm and accurate information is imperative. The Office of University Relations will oversee public information on behalf of the University. The Director of Student Media will inform the Office of University Relations as to the availability of WVUA 90.7 radio, WUAL 91.5 radio, WVUA 7, of other traditional media for dissemination of information. The Vice President for Student Affairs or designee will contact the Office of University Relations about messages to be posted on Student Affairs websites. Staff should be directed to refrain from rumors and spread of any information that has not been confirmed from Office of University Relations. Use of social media during these circumstances and all emergencies should be at the direction and supervision of the Vice President for Student Affairs with delegation to unit directors for unit-specific messages as appropriate. Unit directors should designate authorized staff only for use of and dissemination of information through social media. Primary Communication will be coordinated and maintained from The University of Alabama University Relations website at [www.ua.edu](http://www.ua.edu).

III. RECOVERY
A. Little Damage to Campus; Quick Recovery (Level 1 Emergency)

1. The Community Service Center will make connections with appropriate agencies for possible support response regarding student volunteerism after the campus reopens.

2. Student Media, especially the radio station, will be open as soon as possible to assist with campus communication working closely with University Relations.
University Relations will act at the primary information officer (PIO) of the University.

3. University Recreation facilities (SRC and Aquatic Center) will open as soon as possible to allow students a place to gather and release post-event stress, as well as Ferguson Center and Bama Dining facilities.

4. Unit-wide voicemail messages will be updated regularly even while the campus remains closed so that those concerned or interested may remain informed. Individual staff, within capacity, should maintain and update their email accounts.

5. Staff is expected to use area news outlets and the UA website for general re-opening or recovery information. In addition, unless otherwise instructed, staff is to report daily to their departmental supervisor or designee for updates. Staff with student supervisory will maintain contact with the student staff to inform them of their responsibilities. Student employees will be expected to return to work as soon as it is both safe and necessary.

6. If residence halls have been closed, HRC will re-open residence halls one day before classes resume unless the EPRPG determines that circumstances require otherwise.

B. Moderate Damage to Campus; Closure of Several Days (Level 2 Emergency)

1. Items 1-6 in II (A) may be implemented.

2. In the event that the EPRPG has closed the campus, only those staff members designated as first responders will be expected to report to work. Staff should heed emergency warnings about returning to campus prematurely.

3. The SRC, the Ferguson Center, and dining facilities will open as soon as possible to allow students a place to gather and release post-event stress.

4. The Counseling Center staff will be available for students regarding emotional response to the incidents. They will reach out to students at various locations and initiate contact. They will inform the staff of the division and students regarding indicators of appropriate and inappropriate response to the event(s). Other division staff with appropriate training may be asked to assist with this process.

5. The Community Service Center (CSC) will be prepared to assist community agencies, including serving as a clearinghouse for student volunteers and routing of donations for community agencies, in response to those affected by the weather or hazard with regard to student volunteerism. Through the EPRPG and Vice President for Student Affairs, determination of donation drop-off sites and reporting location(s) for volunteers will be established and managed by the CSC.
6. The Student Affairs Liaison to the Campus Ministers will inform them of particular needs.

7. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will provide to unit directors suggested voice mail messages for the parents and students to be updated on a regular basis. These reassuring messages will provide information for those off campus as well as residents regarding the conditions of the grounds, power outages, student safety, and facilities. This will be coordinated with University Relations to make sure that the messages are consistent.

8. Due to safety concerns, students will be discouraged from assisting with debris removal so as to avoid hazardous conditions. Communications following disasters will emphasize channeling appropriate responses and requests for debris removal through agencies established for this activity.

9. Staff will not be expected to return to campus while it is closed unless otherwise notified individually. Exceptions to this include unit-defined essential personnel in facilities where there is a reasonable expectation of re-opening during this recovery level (e.g. Ferguson Center, SRC, and Dining Facilities).

10. When official announcements provide notice that the campus is reopening, all units should be ready to resume activity and normal work schedules.

11. Student Affairs staff should be prepared to serve as needed. They may include capacities outside their unit-defined responsibilities. Unit areas should have clear determination and communication of first responder and secondary assistance personnel.

12. HRC will assist displaced on or off campus students with alternative housing. Communication and coordination with University Recreation staff on possible SRC sheltering will be on-going as needed and within the announcements of the EPRPG and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

C. Level 3: Extensive Damage (Possible delayed or prolonged recovery)
   1. II (A) and II (B) items may be implemented by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

   2. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, working with the EPRPG, will determine which buildings will remain open to the public. The Executive Director of HRC will assist with notifying residents of occupancy procedures and timeline for closing the halls.

   3. The Counseling Center staff will remain on call and be available for group sessions for students as well as employees should the need arise.
4. A designated team will work with Admissions to assist students in relocating for matriculation. Coordination for addresses and contact information will take place as quickly as possible.

COMMUNITY SHELTERS ON CAMPUS

The University’s first priority is sheltering its resident students. As space permits, off-campus students may be accommodated on campus. In the event space is not available, students will be directed to designated community shelters.

From time to time, the University may assist off-campus agencies or residents by providing shelter to persons not affiliated with the University. When University facilities are used for community shelters, it is expected that a community agency will manage the shelter mindful of UA needs and requirements. So that they will understand the Red Cross system and provide support for the American Red Cross managers in UA facilities, it is recommended that essential facility personnel in potential community shelter sites complete Red Cross shelter management training. Serving as an American Red Cross volunteer or official for a community shelter, however, requires the approval of one’s supervisor and would normally require the use of vacation time. (Use of vacation time would not be required if serving as a UA official in a shelter housing UA affiliates.)

All requests for use of University facilities as community or public shelters will be directed through UA Incident Command or the EPRPG. Only in exceptional cases will the Provost accept requests from another community agency or sponsor (e.g., American Red Cross). The EPRPG will determine which University facility, if any, will be designated as a community shelter, the duration of the stay, and any other conditions of providing facilities. If it becomes necessary to shelter University students, faculty, or staff as well as non-affiliates, specific needs of each group will be considered in designating shelter location(s).

1. The University will expect the following of a community agency or sponsor using University facilities for shelters:
   a. The agency will provide a shelter manager and, in addition, a shift supervisor for each 8 hours the shelter is open.
   b. The agency will be responsible for registration, paid and volunteer staff recruitment, feeding evacuees, health services including mental health services, communications to evacuees, and dormitory management according to American Red Cross or other standard protocols.
   c. The agency may provide bedding and (if offered) food for shelter residents. Coordination with HRC and Dining Services will be maintained in this circumstance recognizing that depending on time of year, beds and mattresses may be in limited supply.
   d. If a large number of volunteers will be utilized, the agency will provide an off-site location for accepting, training, and scheduling community volunteers.
Community Service Center will work with facility officials and American Red Cross personnel in scheduling student volunteers and providing information to them.

e. In the event the UA SRC will be utilized as a community shelter, University Recreation staff and personnel will be expected to operate closely with the American Red Cross or other community-service organization in management of these facilities. As SRC staff have attended and been trained in approved shelter operations, it is imperative that facility-related issues be shared and communicated in an on-going basis with University Recreation leadership. University Recreation would require an on-going professional presence (24 hour coverage) during all sheltering operations. Any additional Student Affairs staff working in these shelters must be trained through the American Red Cross in advance of such work.

2. When a campus location is designated as a community shelter, the University through the EPRPG will provide for:
   a. Parking for shelter residents and personnel
   b. A location for meals to be served (if offered to shelter residents)
   c. Any increase in security for University interests in the shelter area
   d. Where available, mattresses and linens

3. Shelter Plan for the Student Recreation Center (SRC)
   a. The SRC will make available sleeping space, an outdoor food distribution location (weather permitting; no food preparation in the building), showers, and toilets for up to 250 evacuees for a maximum of 7 days. If needs are extraordinary, the same facilities will be made available for up to 500 people for 7 days. The duration and/or maximum occupancy may be extended in case of severe disaster and/or need.
   b. With the creation and mobilization of a centralized Student Affairs Communication “hub” located at the SRC, designated space for operations such counseling through the Counseling Center, death notifications through UAPD and Dean of Students office and housing updates and assistance through HRC can be achieved. Additionally a temporary or secondary call center (internal to UA or outsourced third party) may be established for immediate response from and to parents and students.
   c. Food distribution sites will be coordinated between providing agencies and University Recreation contact personnel. As able, refrigeration and storage of perishable foods may be coordinated with food providers.
   d. Through the University of Alabama database and website, an “I’m Ok” database may be maintained for those seeking information on the safety or whereabouts of individual displaced or missing during the emergency.
   e. Preferred parking location for shelter personnel and evacuees is the Campus Drive lot. Emergency hang tags will be issued to shelter personnel and residents.
   f. The North entrance will serve as the shelter entrance. All external signage will direct shelter business to the North entrance where possible. In extraordinary
circumstances the south (main) entrance may be determined as a primary or secondary access point.

g. Access to SRC will be restricted to shelter areas. In certain cases, the ability for the SRC to function in its intended capacity in addition to sheltering will be reviewed.

h. Access to the shelter will be limited to evacuees, University Recreation, and American Red Cross (as applicable) personnel. These persons will be issued identification.

i. Facility rules must be followed.

j. The University Recreation Executive Director may form a shelter management team consisting of representatives of the host agency, HRC, UA Media Relations, Tuscaloosa EMA, UA Community Service Center, and other agencies providing services to evacuees, e.g. transportation, medical care, child care.

k. The University Recreation Executive Director may supplement Red Cross efforts by arranging child care, transportation, and other services as needed.

l. Donations will not be accepted on site. (Exception: The SRC may allow one truck to park nearby to receive donations and transport them to an off-campus site). As determined by the EPRPG, coordination of donations and transportation of items will reside with the UA CSC.

m. University Recreation’s designee will be responsible for detailed logging of expenses, damages, and staff time expended by serving as a shelter.

4. Shelter Plan for the Ferguson Center

a. The Ferguson Center will make available a food distribution area in the building, an outdoor food distribution location, toilet access, and sleeping space for 200 persons for a maximum of 24 hours. If needs are extraordinary, the same facilities will be made available for up to 48 hours. The duration may be extended in case of severe disaster and/or need.

b. Preferred parking location for shelter personnel and evacuees is the MIB parking lot across from the loading dock. Emergency hang tags will be issued to shelter personnel.

c. The East entrance (near the Theater) will serve as the shelter entrance. All external signage will direct shelter business to the East entrance.

d. Facility rules must be followed.

e. The American Red Cross (or other sponsor) will be responsible for the management of the shelter. The Ferguson Center will be responsible for communications and coordination with UA Media Relations and the EPRPG.

f. Donations will not be accepted on site.

g. The Ferguson Center Director is responsible for detailed logging of expenses, damages, and staff time expended by serving as a shelter.