Title of the Policy: Communicating to Students via Text Message

**Functional Area:** Academic Affairs, Business and Finance, Student Affairs

**Applies To:** University Police, Bursar, Registrar, Financial Aid, and Academic Advising

**Policy Reference(s):** N/A

**Number:** N/A

**Date First Issued:** 10/15/2014

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**Responsible Person**

The Provost and VP for Academic Affairs is responsible for maintenance of this policy and for responding to questions posed regarding this policy.

**Purpose / Rationale**

Today’s students rarely read email, yet they are always on their phone. Social media is an effective communication tool, but students ignore the commonplace social media (Facebook) for newer, “instant gratification” methods, such as Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram and Snapchat. The most common thing that students do on their phone is text. In addition, iPads and other devices also receive texts. Few students still have pay-per text plans since those are no longer marketed by phone companies. Armstrong have significant amounts of cell numbers collected, but do not utilize them for communication. Armstrong needs to have the ability to reach our students effectively but must use this technology judiciously. Communication via text must be limited to very specific individuals and for very specific purposes.

**Definitions**

N/A

**Policy**

Texting is not to be open to general announcements, general communication or other low level communication.
The following are approved/not approved to text students for the following objectives:

1) Police: Emergency notifications

2) Bursar’s office: 1-2 times in a semester, specifically to warn students that if they do not pay their balance they may be dropped for non-payment.

3) Registrar’s Office: To tell a student that they have been dropped for non-payment.

4) Financial Aid: Free application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) due dates and urgent financial aid information (no more than 3 times per semester)

5) Advising Center: 2-3 times a semester to tell students that it is time to be advised and register for classes. This is coordinated through the Director of Academic Advising and may be via GradesFirst.

**Related Procedures**

IT Services will need to convert the BLAST/texting feature to be an **opt-out** system as opposed to the current opt-in system.