Title of the Policy: Messaging Policy

Functional Area: Communications

Applies To: Messaging Policy

Policy Reference(s): References to any applicable policies, such as the governing Board of Regents policy or other University policies on related topics

Number:

Date First Issued:

Date Last Reviewed:

Page(s): 3

Responsible Person

The Director of Marketing and Communications is responsible for implementing and revising this policy.

Purpose / Rationale

It is the responsibility of the University to keep campus constituents informed. The best way to do this is through communication. The purpose of this policy is to identify instances in which mass communications are appropriate and how those messages are approved. Currently, mass communications can be facilitated through the University’s BLAST system: email, phone and text messaging. Along with email and telephone, the increasing use of mobile phones has opened up a new avenue of opportunity for communication between the University and its students, faculty, and staff.

The purpose of this policy is to define how messaging will be used for a means of communicating important information to the Armstrong community. Email, phone calls, and text messaging are used by authorized university officials to relay important and time sensitive information such as emergency notifications, campus closures, and academic deadlines to the campus community, using the University’s BLAST system. For the purposes of this policy, text messaging is defined as text messages sent to a predetermined group of persons with whom the sender is not in direct, personal contact on a regular basis.

Guiding Principles:

- **Email** will be used as a channel for critical communications to students, faculty and staff. This feature will apply to the campus community. As such there will not be an option to opt out of email notifications in the BLAST system.
- **Phone calls** will be used as a channel for critical communications to students, faculty and staff.
This feature will apply to the campus community. As such there will not be an option to opt out of phone notifications in the BLAST system.

- **Text messaging** will be used as an additional channel for critical communications as outlined in the Categories of Messages section of the policy. As such there will be an option to opt out of notifications via text messaging in the BLAST system.
  
  - Armstrong will minimize the number of text messages sent to students to ensure that students remain in the texting program and do not opt-out because of overuse.
  - Messages must be directly related to student safety or student academic success.
  - All text messages originating from any University office, or from any authorized University employee acting in his/her professional capacity, are included in this procedure.

*A text message is an SMS or MMS message sent to a phone, web or mobile communication device.*

### Definitions

**Policy**

**Mass Text**

A mass text refers to an SMS or MMS message sent to anyone who has not opted out of the University’s BLAST system.

**Categories of BLAST Messages**

- **Email messages** will be used to communicate appropriate information to the campus community regarding events as well as important and time sensitive information such as emergency notifications, campus closures, and academic deadlines to the campus community.

- **Phone messages** will be used to communicate appropriate information to the campus community regarding events as well as important and time sensitive information such as emergency notifications, campus closures, and academic deadlines to the campus community.

- **Text messaging** will be reserved for information that is considered critical and/or time sensitive. The following are the categories of mass text messages permitted under this policy:
  - Crisis and/or emergency, or significant disruptions to University operations, including activities that pose a threat to public safety.
  - Information critical to student academic success such as critical academic calendar dates, academic advising or registration notifications and issues concerning the student’s account, payment, or financial aid status.
  - Other critical messages as determined by a cabinet-level member of the University.

**Text messaging** should not be used for:

- General information to large populations
- Repeat reminders of text messages already circulated
- Personal matters (e.g. items for sale)
- Solicitation
Related Procedures

In order for communications to be effective, contact information for each faculty, staff, and student must remain up to date and accurate. In efforts to support this, we ask that each campus constituent own the responsibility of validating or updating their contact information at the beginning of each semester. This will allow the most effective communication and can be accomplished by accessing this information at any time through PORT of Armstrong and selecting Update BLAST Information.

Opting Out

- Because it is the responsibility of the to keep our campus constituents safe and informed, the only OPT OUT feature available is for text messaging. By opting out of text messaging, you will not be notified via SMS but will still receive notices via email and phone when applicable.

- As stated, this will be a formal means for communication with regards to emergencies; therefore, all students, faculty and staff will be automatically opted into this service. Persons wishing to opt-out of this service will have to remove themselves by visiting PORT of Armstrong in order to make the change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone Call</th>
<th>Text Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MANDATORY</td>
<td>MANDATORY</td>
<td>OPTIONAL</td>
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Mass Text Approvers

Prior to being sent, mass text messages delivered through the University’s BLAST system need to be approved by:
- A cabinet-level member of the University or the Chief of Police

University officials must ensure the text message is:
- Valid and in compliance with the Text Messaging Policy
- The wording is appropriate
- The distribution list is accurate