Ensuring Business Continuity

Purpose and Scope

This Policy is promulgated to establish general University-wide standards for business continuity planning so as to minimize disruption to critical University operations. It applies to all University Administrative/Academic Units at whatever location they operate.

Definitions

Administrative/Business Unit: A University School or College, academic center, operating division, department, support center or business office.

Department Continuity Planner (DCP): The designated administrator of an Administrative/Business Unit having responsibility for development and execution of a Business Continuity Plan pursuant to this Policy.

Emergency Management Executive Team (EMET): A group of key University administrators who provide executive leadership and oversight on all high level emergency management and business continuity decisions for Boston College.

University Vice Presidents/Deans: As used in this Policy, these terms shall refer to persons having the title of Vice President or Dean, as well as the University President, the University Provost and Dean of Faculties in relation to their immediate staff.

Policy

Boston College places a paramount importance on maintaining and/or quickly restoring all critical functions during and after an emergency in order to minimize disruption to teaching, research and other public services that are central to its mission. Accordingly, each University Vice President/Dean shall have responsibility pursuant to this Policy to ensure that adequate plans and procedures are in place to enable the Administrative/Business Units over which they have charge to avoid or minimize interruption to any critical functions during and after an emergency. In this effort, the University Vice Presidents/Deans shall avail themselves of the University's Office of Emergency Management (OEM), which office shall periodically review and comment on the continuity planning efforts of the University's Administrative/Business Units.

Continuity Planning Procedures

1. Role of University Vice Presidents/Deans

University Vice Presidents/Deans are responsible for promoting the institutional awareness of this Policy and for ensuring overall compliance with it by their staff. In particular, Vice Presidents/Deans are responsible for:

- Identifying discrete Administrative/Business Units within his or her areas of responsibility;
- Designating and supervising a DCP for each Administrative/Business Unit; and
- Approving the Business Continuity Plan for each Administrative/Business Unit, as recommended by the DCP.

2. Role of Department Continuity Planner

The DCP will be designated by the Vice President/Dean of the relevant Administrative/Business Unit and will have responsibility for:

- Development and maintenance of the Administrative/Business Unit's Business Continuity Plan utilizing tools developed by the University. Plans should be updated at a minimum annually;
- Training and exercising other employees of the relevant Administrative/Business Unit in all aspect of the Business Continuity Plan; and
- Working with the University EMET in a disaster situation to coordinate information and support from the University as needed.

3. Role of the Office of Emergency Management

OEM shall have responsibility for development and maintenance of the University Business Continuity program through the following:

- Consulting with each Department Continuity Planner in the formulation of their respective Administrative/Business Unit's Business Continuity Plan;
- Reviewing and providing comment on draft Business Continuity Plans;
- Providing a backup, centralized location for documentation of all Business Continuity Plans, training materials, and exercises; and
- Making available training in business continuity best practices to University Administrative/Business Units.

4. Elements of the Business Continuity Plan

Business Continuity Plans shall include at a minimum:

- A listing of critical functions and critical resources needed to sustain such functions (essential software applications, vital data and information, critical equipment, vendors and contacts) and a prioritized recovery checklist of critical resources needed to support the unit's primary mission and function;
- An alternative staffing plan to allow for operations when greater than 25% of the unit's staffing is unable to work for more than 72 hours, including a list of staff who can be cross trained to perform essential functions, a line of succession, managerial and essential contacts, and a full department staff contact list;
- An alternative location tentatively identified in the event the primary workspace is not available;
- A communication plan that identifies primary, secondary, and alternate forms of communication and that addresses the necessary information needs of employees and

their families, the Administrative/Business Unit management; OEM and the Emergency Operation Center as it may be activated; and

- A plan to promote personal preparedness for staff and faculty.

Note: Because University Information Technology Services is responsible for ensuring the recovery of critical University software and data during emergencies as part of a University-wide disaster recovery plan, all Administrative/Business Units are encouraged to keep informed of which applications and data storage are covered by Information Technology planning and to ensure their Business Continuity Plan takes this into account. Third-party application, including internet-based "cloud" storage may not be covered in Information Technology recovery procedures, and it is the responsibility of Administrative/Business Units to investigate vendor disaster recovery planning for these applications, especially if the information and data are critical to the department's business operations.

5. Approval of Business Continuity Plans

An Administrative/Business Unit's Business Continuity Plan shall be reviewed by the OEM and approved by the responsible Vice President/Dean. Once approved by all levels, any future updates to the plan need only to be approved by the head of the Administrative/Business Unit. The OEM will periodically review all plans for currency and updates as needed. The OEM will provide periodic reports on Business Continuity planning efforts University-wide to the EMET.

6. Plan Activation and Communications

An Administrative/Business Unit emergency may be declared by the responsible Vice President/Dean or their designee pursuant to the Business Continuity Plan; provided, however, that authority to declare a University-wide emergency or disaster shall be reserved to the University President or a designee of the President. Upon declaration of an Administrative/Business Unit emergency, and activation of the Business Continuity Plan, the responsible Vice President/Dean will immediately notify the OEM. The OEM may also be notified through the BC Police dispatch center.

7. Policy Enforcement

Each Administrative/Business Unit shall submit an annual status report concerning the Business Continuity Plan to the OEM. Such report shall outline all revisions made to the approved Plan during the year, all employee training conducted with respect to the Plan, and shall highlight any new designation of authority of employees relative to the activation and implementation of the Plan. Internal Audit will periodically review status of individual Administrative/Business Units as part of annual compliance audits.

Additional Information

For additional information, contact the BC OEM:
- Phone: 617-552-4316
- Email: bc_emergency@bc.edu
- Website: BC Emergency

In addition, the following specific web pages are available:
- Business Continuity

- Business Continuity Planning Application
- Information Technology Services
- University Closure Policy

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