

Emergency Notification

When a student is unable to contact instructors about an absence because of hospitalization or incapacitation, the Office of the Dean of Student Life can send by email an emergency notification to instructors.

An emergency notification IS:

- An e-mail notification from the Dean of Student Life or Student Care Team to a student's faculty members and academic advisers that is sent to the student, as well.
- An announcement of an emergency situation that has taken a student away from campus/classes (their own hospitalization, assault, accident, death in the family, etc.).
- A source of information for instructors so they can anticipate the absence and, sometimes, if/when they can expect the student to return to class.
- A written reminder for students that they should work directly with instructors to figure out how they should proceed in the course given their absence.
- Sent when a student can't notify instructors him/herself.

An emergency notification IS NOT:

- A notification for non-emergency situations (car problems, planned absences, minor illnesses, a past absence).
- A requirement for students. If a student notifies instructors that he/she is in an emergency situation, instructors can work out the details with them and do not need to involve our office.
- A request or mandate to excuse an absence (that is left to the professor to determine).
- Verification that the story the student/caller has told is true (instructors may request the student to provide verification).
- Sent when a student can notify or has notified instructors him/herself.

Dean of Student Life staff DOES

- Recommend to students that they provide instructors with supporting documentation for the absence.
- Ask for some details from the person requesting the emergency notification so we can assess the situation and offer advice about what should be done to make the student's transition back to class easier.
- Often follow up with students after the emergency notification process. Knowing their situation can help us tailor our follow-up, get them the help they need, and help them be better prepared to re-enter class.

Dean of Student Life staff DOES NOT

- Investigate when we receive requests to send out emergency notifications; we do not contact hospitals, doctors, or family members to assess the validity of an absence.

When the student comes back

- Because we do not investigate, instructors are within their rights to ask for documentation of the student's absence.
- We recognize that instructors have the academic freedom to make decisions about absences and how they will affect a student's grade. However, please keep in mind that students who utilize the emergency notification service are typically recovering from a crisis and would benefit from flexibility.

This publication can be made available in an accessible format upon request. Please call the Office of the Dean of Student Life at 541.737.8748