

UCI Libraries

Crisis Communications Guidelines

Goal

Protect the reputation and operations of the University of California, Irvine (UCI) Libraries and UCI as a whole.

Objectives:

- Recognize a crisis and respond appropriately
- Communicate intelligently, quickly, accurately and with concern
- Manage an orderly flow of information through designated representatives
- Maintain and protect relationships with constituents

Definition

A crisis is any situation or event that could negatively affect the reputation, operations or people of UCI, as well as its constituents, community or partners. Trigger items that call for the implementation of the crisis guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- Atrocities and security threats (*e.g., violence, harassment, discrimination, criminal activity – may be covered in emergency procedures*)
- Knowledge or rumor of significant negative media attention
- Legal action on behalf or against the university or an individual known to be associated with the university
- Political or regulatory activity (*e.g., troubling investigations, hearings, legislation*)
- Unethical behavior (*cheating, policy breach, negative stereotyping*)
- Physical calamities (*fire, flood, earthquake – also covered in emergency procedures*)

Note: A crisis does not refer minor incidents that are routinely handled by library employees. These are covered in How to Handle Incidents in the UCI Libraries.

Action Plan

In some cases, you may first learn about a crisis by contact with a member of the media. If approached by media all staff and librarians should:

- Be calm and professional.
- Be truthful. If an answer is unknown, say: “I don’t know. May I research it

and get back to you?”

- Defer to a designated UCI Libraries’ spokesperson (Library Leadership, Communications & Events Officer or other to be identified and communicated via LibAll at onset of crisis or anytime during).
- Be genuinely and noticeably concerned about the situation.
- Remain gracious. Reporters may be pushy, repetitive or aggressive. Do not appear irritated.
- Avoid confrontation; do not be argumentative.

If you suspect a crisis is in progress or may result from a situation:

- Immediately notify your supervisor if **they are available**.
 - If your supervisor is unavailable, immediately notify Library Leadership and the Communications & Events Officer. Always use the most efficient method available (in person, phone, email) as it relates to the severity of the potential or current crisis.
- Complete an Incident Report form available at <http://www.lib.uci.edu/incident-report-form> as soon as possible.
- Supervisors then immediately notify Library Leadership (University Librarian, Associate and Assistant University Librarians) and the Communications & Events Officer.
 - Current UCI contact information (Cell/Home contact info is available in the Libraries’ Emergency Manual - staff.lib.uci.edu/emergency/restricted/emergency_manual.pdf):
 - Leadership
 - Lorelei Tanji, ltanji@uci.edu or x 45212
 - Kevin Ruminson, Associate University Librarian for Administrative Services, ruminson@uci.edu or x44440
 - John Renaud, Associate University Librarian for Research Resources, jrenaud@uci.edu x44216 or x46145
 - Alison Regan, Assistant University Librarian for Public Services, aeregan@uci.edu or x49753
 - Communications & Events Officer
 - Charla Batey, cbatey@uci.edu or x44658

- Leadership and the Communications & Events Officer will assess the situation.
- If a crisis is in progress or an immediate threat, Library Leadership and the Communications & Events Officer will contact the UCI Crisis Communications team and work with them to mitigate the situation.
- Library Leadership and the Communication & Events Office will notify and brief librarians and staff as appropriate on how to respond to questions/comments from media, library users and the general public. Remember, when approached by media, you should be friendly and professional, but defer to a designated UCI Libraries spokesperson.
- UCI Libraries staff and librarians will be notified when the crisis is resolved via a LibAll and/or full organization meeting, depending on the severity of the crisis.