Procedure 701.2A LCC Student Mass Text Messaging

Policy 701 - Acceptable Use of Information Systems and Services

LCC values communicating with current and prospective students promptly and efficiently using methods that are engaging but not overwhelming. LCC may utilize text messaging as a way to communicate with students. The following procedure applies to mass text messaging to relay important and time-sensitive notices that are critical to student academic success, outreach, recruitment, and retention efforts (e.g., application, advising, registration, and financial aid deadlines). For the purposes of this procedure, mass text messages are defined as texts sent to a predetermined group of persons with whom the sender is not in direct, personal contact on a regular basis. This procedure does not address texting related to emergency notification processes or general communication with students with whom a staff or faculty member has an established relationship, such as a coach, advisor, instructor, mentor, or supervisor.

1. Purpose of Text Messaging:

Text messaging is reserved for information which is considered critical or time sensitive. The following are the categories of mass text messages permitted under this procedure:

Student Success Campaigns

Strategic and coordinated mass texting focused on critical advising, recruitment, enrollment, or student success initiatives, such as financial aid

deadlines, payment due dates, graduation requirements, and other calls to action. Messages should be used in cases that require urgent action to be completed by the student or timely critical announcements. Student Success Campaigns must be approved by the Vice President of Student Services or designees.

Individual Messages to Students

Outside of approved Student Success Campaigns, users shall only send text messages to students they are already assigned to be working with, for example as a mentor, advisor, or instructor. This method of communication shall be used to communicate about specific questions and details regarding advising, events for which the student has registered or requested information, notifications about a single class meeting being canceled, reminding a small group of students who are missing a required document, or other time-sensitive matters.

Appointment Notifications and Reminders

Students may receive appointment confirmation and reminder text messages, which occur automatically in the service areas that have enabled the Navigate Student Success or Fireworks CRM platforms to perform these notifications.

2. Parameters of Use for Non-Emergency Texting:

When sending mass text messages, texting must not be used as the sole means of communicating an essential message or announcement. The text message must be supplemented by some other means of communication, such as an email or paper notice, to ensure all students, including those who have opted out of texting, receive the message.

Text messaging can be used by authorized college officials to relay information about admissions and academic requirements or deadlines, registration information, financial aid, and other matters that are time sensitive and necessary for student success. Departments interested in utilizing texting should designate an employee to be responsible for monitoring and approving text message requests on behalf of their department. Designated employees must undergo training and are subject

to approval by the Vice President of Student Services or designee. Training will include the following:

1. Authorized text messages must abide by all other policies, as well as the following:
    a. Content is accurate.
    b. Wording is appropriate.
    c. Tone is casual but professional and ends with a question when a response is desired.
    d. List of recipients is correct.
    e. Information within the message is directly related to the student.
    f. Message clearly states the action that the student needs to take or how the information impacts the student and who to contact for additional information.
    g. Number of messages received by a student should be appropriate to ensure they will continue to regard the text messages as important information.
    h. Messages are sent with adequate time for the action or activity.
    i. Content of messages should be timely and action oriented.
2. All messages must be tagged with the appropriate identifier so recipients can immediately recognize the sender. For example, begin an initial text message with, "Hi Becky, it's Chris Smith from Admissions." On all subsequent communications that are not a part of real-time conversations with a student, end the message with, "– Chris Smith, Admissions."
3. Messages should be concise while maintaining a professional but conversational tone.
4. Messages should be no longer than 160 characters and should address the student directly, i.e. as 'you.' (e.g., "Your financial aid form is due on Friday," rather than, "Financial aid forms are due on Friday.").
    a. They should include essential points plus the instructions: 'check your email for full details' or 'full details available on the online at _____'.
    b. Link to a specific LCC webpage or create a tinyurl if you need to refer students to a larger message.
5. Avoid abbreviations and text messaging lingo, including emojis, gifs, images, and pictures.

6. Records retention - college business-related text messages are considered public records whether an LCC system/tool or personal telephone/system/tool is used for texting.
7. Use of a non-LCC provided service to text with students is discouraged.
8. No LCC faculty or staff shall require any student to provide a personal phone number or send/receive text messages in order to participate in an LCC activity, program, or course.

Quality assurance may be conducted to ensure users are following best practices and procedural requirements.

Non-emergency text messages should **not** be used for:

1. Communicating confidential or sensitive information, including but not limited to: social security numbers, passwords, or credit card numbers. These are strictly prohibited.
2. Sending general information to large populations (e.g., "Fall classes start Monday!").
3. Personal matters (e.g., items for sale, farewell messages).
4. Appeals on behalf of individuals or groups of students (e.g., to attend an event or activity, unless the student opted-in for text messages regarding these topics).
5. Emergency alerts.
6. Repeat reminders of text messages already circulated. Solicitation.

3. Authorization:

Student Success Campaigns can only be sent via text message by the Vice President of Student Services or designees. Departmental authorization may be approved by the Vice President of Student Services or designee to text students participating in specific academic or student support programs or services, such as Running Start, Workforce programs, TRiO, or Financial Aid.

Employees or faculty wanting to send text messages to students must gain approval from the Vice President of Student Services or designee, and access to texting platforms shall be contingent upon completing a training session about how to use the texting platform and review of these procedures.

Procedure History

- Reviewed by Executive Leadership Team: September 21, 2022
- Approved by the Executive Leadership Team: December 7, 2022
- Approved by Governance: December 7, 2022
- Approved by UMCC: December 12, 2022