Cornell University
Student Assembly

Student Assembly R. 69: Transitioning to an Opt Out Emergency Mass Notification System

Sponsors: Lisa Liu, Lindsay Wershaw, and Inge Chen
Propose on March 22nd, 2014

1   Whereas, under university Policy 2.4: Health and Safety, there is a designation for emergency
2   preparedness and response "intended to help prevent accidents and injuries, [and to] increase
3   safety awareness";
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5   Whereas, in extreme cases of emergency the university transmits information electronically
6   through a mass notification system via emails, texts, and phone calls;
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8   Whereas, in the past semester, there have been multiple CORNELLALERTs due to the
9   extreme weather that was notified to the community through the mass notification system;
10
11 Whereas, all systems were reported to have worked well and with positive feedback about its
12 delivery after university communication systems such as CUView digital signs, RSS, and the
13 university Facebook account alerted the campus community to the tests;
14
15 Whereas, the current mass notification tool is an Opt In System, which means that students
16 must manually register for the system through Student Center;
17
18 Whereas, students go to the Student Center website at http://studentcenter.cornell.edu and
19 select the links for Emergency Contact Info and Emergency Mass Notification;
20
21 Whereas, entering a phone number and choosing to receive notifications by text or phone call
22 takes less than one minute;
23
24 Whereas, of the potential 23,300 students that could enroll, only about 6,560 people are
25 registered in the system to receive voice or text notifications, which constitutes only about 28%
26 of the Cornell population;
27
28 Whereas, after speaking to Police Chief Kathy Zoner and IT@Cornell, they concluded that the
29 best measure to implement this system is to transition from an Opt In System to an Opt Out
30 System;
31
32 Be it therefore resolved, that Cornell continues to move forward and create technological
33 solutions for students to automatically register for the Emergency Mass Notification system
34 through the Opt Out system;
35
36 Be it further resolved, that IT@Cornell moves forward with a trial system to see if an Opt Out
37 System is more technologically sound and is more beneficial to students than an Opt In
38 System;
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40 Be it finally resolved, that the Student Assembly will work closely with IT@Cornell and the

1   CUPD for the development of this technology to survey the most effective way to establish an
2   informed and safe campus in response to emergencies.
3
4   Respectfully submitted,
5
6   Lisa Liu '15
7   Arts and Sciences Representative
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9   Lindsay Wershaw '16
10   CALS Representative
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12   Inge Chen '15
13   Minority At-Large Representative