

Xavier University of Louisiana

Hurricane Emergency Plan

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Revised: August 2017

Hurricane Emergency Plan

The Xavier University of Louisiana (XULA) Hurricane Emergency Plan is effective June 1, 2006 and supersedes all previous plans. With specific directions from Dr. Norman Francis, a group was chartered in April 2006 to prepare this document:

- Calvin Tregre, Chair, Senior Vice President of Administration
- Nedra Alcorn, Associate Vice president for Student Services
- Ashton Baltrip, President of the Sophomore Class
- Elizabeth Barron, Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Warren Bell, Associate Vice President of University and Media Relations
- Marion Bracy, Director of Facilities and Planning
- Joseph Byrd, Vice President for Student Services
- Regina McCutcheon, SGA President
- Crystal Moore, President of the Junior Class
- Catherine Lewis, Vice President of Technology Administration

The Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico annual hurricane season extends from June 1 to November 30 each year. Official information and advice on hurricane and severe weather safety preparedness can be found at a variety of federal, state and local web sites – many of which are available as direct links from the XULA Emergency Preparedness information page.

I. Hurricane Emergency Plan Team

The President of Xavier University of Louisiana has designated the Vice President of Facility Planning/Management as the Plan Coordinator of the XULA Hurricane Emergency Plan.

During the emergency period, the Plan Coordinator has supervisory responsibility over departments and personnel who comprise the Hurricane Emergency Preparedness Team (HEPT). All decisions of the HEPT are recommendations to the University President as relayed by the Plan Coordinator.

The following positions and personnel comprise the Hurricane Emergency Preparedness Team and are responsible for making decisions during the Pre-season Preparation, Threat Assessment, Class Cancellation, University Closure, and Aftermath stages:

- Marion Bracy, Vice President of Facilities Planning and Management
- Nedra Alcorn, Associate Vice President for Student Services
- Dr. Anne McCall, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Judy Bracy, Director of Residential Life
- Joseph Byrd, Vice President for Student Services
- Jacques Battiste, Chief, Campus Police
- Gia Soublet, Vice President for Institutional Advancement
- Richard Tucker, Director, Communications and Media Relations
- Tony Moore, Vice President of Technology Administration

II. Emergency Information

While the campus remains open prior to threatening weather, the University's main web site at <http://www.xula.edu> will be the official source of University information. All messages of importance will also be sent to faculty, staff and students via campus-wide email and posted on the XULA emergency web site.

Note that the Xavier e-mail address, xula.edu, is the official e-mail address for the campus and will be used for all official communications. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to communicate via their xula.edu email addresses.

All campus constituents are also automatically enrolled in the campus emergency messaging system through Banner Student Information System to receive emergency bulletins via email and mobile devices. Students/faculty/staff are encouraged to make sure their mobile device numbers in the system are current.

In the event of an weather emergency which causes the campus to be closed – external crisis communications and needed information will also be disseminated to the media – however the XULA emergency website @ <http://www.xulaemergency.com>, the toll-free telephone number (1-866-520-9852), and messages sent via the university emergency alert system are to be considered the only official sources of information.

Since the dangers of misinformation and false rumors are greatly increased during any emergency period, the President has designated the Vice President for Institutional Advancement as the official source of university announcements and spokesman for the university.

III. Hurricane Emergency Plan

The Hurricane Emergency Plan is divided into 5 stages. The action steps indicated in the stages may or may not be taken within the stages listed, depending on the circumstances of the storm and time of day in which the stage occurs. In addition, the Plan Coordinator may declare a change in stage at any time due to the unpredictable nature of hurricanes.

1. Pre-Season Preparation
2. Threat Assessment Stage
3. Classes Cancelled
 - a) Shelter in Place
 - b) Plan for Evacuation
4. Activate Evacuation Plan – Resident Students
5. University Closure Stage
6. Aftermath Stage

STAGE ONE: Pre-Season Preparation

Tropical storms and hurricanes often produce widespread heavy rains which may result in hazards to the community. Rainfall amounts are not directly related to the strength of the storm but rather to the speed and size of the storm as well as the geographical area. Slower moving and larger storms produce more rainfall. Some of the major hazards associated with tropical storms and hurricanes are:

- storm surge and storm tide
- heavy rainfall and inland flooding
- high winds
- tornadoes
- power outages

Students are encouraged **NOT** to make airline reservations for Christmas break until the end of October due to the possibility of the fall semester being extended for university closure during an emergency. University closure of four class days or longer will result in the fall semester being extended.

Students should not wait until a developing weather system threatens the area to make personal plans. Each student is responsible for preparing a Personal Evacuation Plan and putting together a Disaster Supplies Kit (see below). Personal Evacuation Plans are to be submitted to the Director of Residential Life or the Vice President of Student Services prior to check in date for currently enrolled students. Personal Evacuation Plans for new students are to be submitted to the Director of Residential Life or the Vice President of Student Affairs by the first day of class. During Stage One there will be frequent updates. These updates will include broadcast e-mails and web postings.

To prepare a Personal Evacuation Plan, students can refer to: [Red Cross Hurricane Safety Checklist. \[http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4340160_Hurricane.pdf\]](http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4340160_Hurricane.pdf)

What should I do?

1. Submit your evacuation plan to the University through the on-line Housing Process prior to check-in in preparation of the Hurricane Season.
2. Identify ahead of time where you would travel to if told to evacuate. Choose several places – home, especially if home is within a 200 mile radius of the University and home is away from the storm's path, a friend's home in another town, a hotel or a shelter. Generally, it is safer to evacuate to the north, further inland, than it is to evacuate to the east or west along the Gulf coast (i.e. Mobile, AL or Houston, TX) in case the storm turns just before landfall. Make sure to watch the Weather alerts issued by the weather channels and the University. Students are reminded to notify their parents/family of their plans.
3. Keep handy the telephone numbers of these places as well as a road map of the area. Students may need to take alternative or unfamiliar routes if major roads are closed or clogged.
4. Identify a method of transportation. Determine if you will be able to use your own transportation, ride with friends, family or other students evacuating the area.

5. Any resident student who does not submit a Personal Evacuation Plan must meet with the Director of Residence Life or Vice President of Student Services for assistance in developing a satisfactory (or acceptable) plan for evacuation.

What supplies will I need?

Conditions during and after a hurricane will not be ideal, therefore prepare for many contingencies. A Disaster Supplies Kit should be prepared in advance and include:

- First aid kit and essential medications, especially prescription medications.
- Extra set of car keys.
- Canned food and a manual can opener.
- At least three gallons of water per person.
- Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries.
- Special items for infants, elderly, or special needs family members. If travelling with family.
- Documents, driver's licenses, Social Security Card, proof of residence, insurance policies, wills, deeds, birth and marriage certificates, tax records, etc.
- Off-campus students should seek instructions from the owner or manager of the property regarding closing the apartment or house and turning off gas and water.

Students are encouraged to:

- Secure a full tank of gas for your vehicle as early as possible.
- Have cash for items needed during the emergency.
- Take your personal items that are deemed valuable with you.
- Take laptop and back up data on your computer hard drives. Take all charging devices for electronic equipment.

STAGE TWO: Threat Assessment

Stage Two begins when a weather pattern is elevated to tropical storm status and poses possible danger to Louisiana. The university may be under Stage Two for several weeks or days before predicted storm landfall. Under Stage Two:

1. Plan Coordinator convenes the Hurricane Emergency Preparedness Team to assess available factual information and begin implementation of the plan. Information is taken from the National Weather Service, and the City of New Orleans Office of Emergency Preparedness.
2. Plan Coordinator advises the Vice President for Institutional Advancement to update the Emergency Web Site and Emergency Information Line with current university operating status, special instructions, and next scheduled update.
3. Information is distributed to the Xavier community via email, web page, and posted statements in the University Center, and residence halls, if applicable.

4. Resident students receive explicit instructions from Residential Life staff regarding hurricane procedures.
5. Students are advised to begin researching available air, train, and bus schedules and fares if they are not evacuating by car.
6. Students are reminded to notify their parents/family of their personal evacuation plan, especially where they are going if they are not going home.
7. Parents of resident students should refer to the university emergency alert line and website for updates but may also contact the Office of Housing and Residence Life (504-520-7321), the Residence Halls' information desk or University Police (504-520-7490).
8. Assign personnel to test emergency equipment, re-check supplies, and inventory, food, water, and medical supplies.
9. Within 48-72 hours of predicted landfall, HEPT makes decision whether or not to cancel classes.

Once the decision has been made to cancel classes, HEPT monitors the ongoing weather conditions and decides whether/when to close the University. Resident students should prepare to activate their Personal Emergency Plan (PEP) and register emergency relocation information with the residence hall staff. Office campus/non-students should check in with the Office of Student Services to register their Personal Emergency Plan.

STAGE THREE: CLASSES CANCELLED - SHELTER IN PLACE OR PLAN FOR EVACUATION

A. Classes Cancelled / Prepare to Shelter in Place at your campus residence or off-campus home

Plan Coordinator advises the Vice President for Institutional Advancement to update the Emergency Information Line and the Emergency Web Site to announce effective time of class cancellation. Under Stage Three:

1. Upon cancellation of classes by the Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, faculty, staff, and non-resident students are required to leave campus and are not permitted to remain in any campus building for any reason. Resident students may remain in their resident hall rooms.
2. Resident students are free to leave the storm area, but are not required to do so at this time. Resident students may check-out of the hall and notify the Dean of the College if their return is delayed due to the weather system after classes resume.

B. Classes Cancelled / Prepare for Evacuation

1. Students are to activate their personal evacuation plans and begin leaving the storm area immediately. Resident students are to lock their room doors upon evacuation.
2. Parking lots are closed to non-permit holders. Students are advised not to leave vehicles parked

on campus.

3. If there should be any resident students who are unable to evacuate from campus on their own, they must check-in and comply with the verbal and written instructions of the Office of Student Services.

STAGE FOUR: Activate Evacuation Plan – Resident Students

Xavier University of Louisiana has revised its hurricane emergency plan in compliance with recommended changes of the City of New Orleans and Louisiana State Emergency Preparedness Offices. In addition, the City of New Orleans has also established various pick up points in the event of a hurricane evacuation that can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.nola.gov/ready/evacuspots/>

It is recommended that evacuation outside the storm area under catastrophic storm conditions is the best possible way to ensure personal safety. Therefore, NO students, faculty or non-essential staff will be allowed to remain on campus under catastrophic storm conditions.

While conditions during a hurricane emergency are not ideal, everyone will work to make the environment safe although the usual level of service or maintenance will not be available. Under the Evacuation Plan:

1. Resident students who are unable to evacuate on their own must have registered with Residence Life at the beginning of the summer and fall semesters. The Director of Residence Life will maintain an accurate and all-inclusive list of the students in need of assistance in a weather emergency. Students who are unable to activate their prearranged emergency plan or need further assistance to evacuate should immediately contact the Office of Housing and Residence Life and/or the Office of Student Services.

2. If there should be any students at this stage that have been unable to confirm evacuation plans, at an announced time and place, the pre-identified students will be contacted to pack minimal personal belongings (toiletries, towel, medications, and change of clothing) and be ready to relocate to a pre-determined destination. Note: The evacuation will be to a shelter-like, short-term environment supervised by university staff. All personal belongings must be in a book bag or duffle/gym bag. NO SUITCASES WILL BE ALLOWED. Details will be made available via the website at such time evacuation is necessary.

3. The Director of Residence Life verifies that all students have complied with the order to vacate and lock room doors.

Under no circumstances will students be allowed to stay on campus once a decision has been made to evacuate students.

STAGE FIVE: University Closure

1. Plan Coordinator advises the Vice President for Institutional Advancement to update the Emergency Web Site and the Emergency Information Line announcing emergency closure, special

instructions, and next scheduled update.

2. Plan Coordinator directs Campus Police to lock campus buildings. All students, faculty, and staff must vacate. Once campus buildings are locked, no one will be permitted to enter campus buildings.

3. Campus Police officers will check all buildings for compliance with this requirement. All interior doors are locked, exterior doors are chained and locked if possible and laminated signs are posted on buildings announcing university closure and official "keep out/trespass warning" notice.

4. Plan Coordinator exchanges contact information and a proposed contact schedule with Chief of Police and Vice President of Facilities Planning and Management before leaving the campus to assist with critical communication.

STAGE SIX: Aftermath

No one is permitted to enter the campus unless approved by the Plan Coordinator until the university has been deemed as safe. Once the storm has passed and if the campus is accessible, Physical Plant and Campus Police inspect for damages to all buildings, grounds, and utilities and report to the Plan Coordinator on any unsafe campus conditions. Emergency repairs are made if practical. Under Stage Six:

1. Plan Coordinator, or his designee, communicates available factual information from the City of New Orleans Office of Emergency Preparedness, including flooding, road closures, curfews, etc.

2. If possible, Plan Coordinator advises the Vice President of Institutional Advancement to update the Emergency Information Line and the Emergency Web Site with current university operating status, special instructions, and next scheduled update; and the University & Media Relations staff will update news media with current university operating status.

University is deemed as safe:

Plan Coordinator announces official end of emergency and resident students are allowed to return to campus housing facilities.

University is deemed unsafe:

1. Students and emergency personnel assisted with evacuation by the university are to make appropriate relocation arrangements for travel. All expenses incurred are the individual's responsibility.

2. Students, faculty, and staff should monitor the emergency website for official campus news, such as campus reopening and resumption of classes.

END