Chapter 3 – General Institution

AP 3730   Text Messaging

<u>Background</u>

Short Message Servicing (SMS), also known as text messaging, is a supplemental method of communication that Mt. San Antonio College will use to communicate with the Mt. SAC community. SMS messaging will be utilized by authorized College personnel to relay important and time sensitive information. The College utilizes two systems for text messaging. For critical emergency information, text messaging is part of the Emergency Notification System which also includes phone calls and emails. For informational messages that are critical to students, text messaging is used for updating students on topics such as student account issues, registration, and financial aid.

<u>Opt In, Opt Out Options for Informational Messages</u>

Individuals must opt-in to receive informational text messages. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that their mobile phone number is accurate. Their information can be updated anytime in the portal.

Although this service is free from Mt. SAC, charges from each recipient's cell phone provider for usage may apply. Recipients must contact their service provider for details.

Prospective students who have completed a community college admissions application via CCC Apply and opt-in to the receipt of informational text messages will receive text messages.

Mt. SAC students and employees can opt-in to receive informational text messages by logging into the portal to update their personal information, selecting the appropriate phone type(s), and providing a corresponding mobile phone number.

Students can opt out in one of two ways. Users can log into the portal to update their personal information by selecting to inactivate or delete their mobile phone number. In addition, they can follow the opt-out procedures provided at the end of each text message.

Students are automatically removed from the system after two consecutive semesters of inactivity.

Employees must opt out of informational messages by logging into the portal to update their personal information by selecting to inactivate or delete their Employee Text Message phone number.

<u>Opt In, Opt Out Options for Emergency Messages</u>

The Emergency Notification System, which includes text messaging, is coordinated through a separate system.

Students and employees opt in to receive emergency text messages by logging into the portal and updating their Emergency Notification Information and providing a mobile phone number under the Text Phone field.

Students can opt out in one of two ways. Users can log into the portal to update their personal information by selecting to inactivate or delete their mobile phone number. In addition, they can follow the opt-out procedures provided at the end of each text message.

Students are automatically removed from the system after two consecutive semesters of inactivity.

Employees must opt out of emergency messages by logging into the portal to update their personal information by selecting to inactivate or delete their Emergency Text Message phone number.

Procedures for Informational Text Messages

Non-emergency text messaging requests must be made by completing the Text Request Form. Requests must be submitted via email to the helpdesk at helpdesk@mtsac.edu 48 hours in advance by a College administrator authorized by the President. A list of authorized text messages and corresponding authorized administrators will be maintained by the Information Technology Department. Informational text messaging is limited to financial aid, enrollment, and registration information including student holds that affect registration.

Messages should be no longer than 116 characters, should address a specific student population, and should direct students to a specific call of action, such as 'check your Mt. SAC portal' or 'go to www.mtsac.edu/bog for info'. When possible, abbreviations and text lingo should be kept to a minimum.

All text messages will end with a static opt out message, 'To end msgs txt XXSTOP.' The first two leading characters noted as 'XX' will denote the appropriate identifier, e.g., FA = Financial Aid and AR = Admissions and Records, which are specific to the administrative office sending the message so that recipients can identify its origin.

Authorized College administrators must abide by all other College polices and ensure:

• the message is valid,
• the wording is appropriate, and
• the distribution list is accurate.

Emergency Alerts will be handled by the campus Emergency Notification System in compliance with Mt. SAC's Emergency Response and Evacuation Plan.

Considerations

Text messaging must not be used as the sole means of communicating an important message or announcement. The text message must be supplemented by another means of communication such as an email, portal announcement, or paper notice to ensure that all students, including those without a mobile phone, receive the message.

Text messaging must not be used for:

- general information to large populations such as "Winter session starts Tuesday!"
- repeat reminders of messages already circulated, or
- personal matters; items for sale or congratulatory messages.

Care must be taken not to send messages too frequently or frivolously as this may result in fewer students choosing to receive text messages.

Approved: February 8, 2017