

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PROGRAM AT UCI

Summary: The business continuity planning program is designed to ensure that the University is “event-ready” in the case of emergencies and disasters. This process enables the campus to carry on **the mission of teaching, research and service** without drastic interruptions. The key to preparation is to do so at the **departmental level** where operational knowledge resides.

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1.0 Program Description

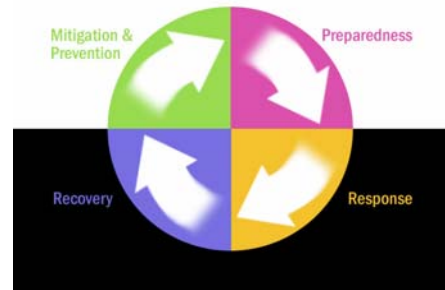
Every day there are emergencies and disasters that we could experience such as earthquakes, fires, floods, terrorism, pandemic illnesses, and active shooter events. We need to ensure that we are properly prepared to recover from these events.



The University’s goal is to create a disaster-resistant, resilient institution with effective crisis and consequence management capabilities in support of the University’s ***Policy on Safeguards, Security and Emergency Management***.

Business continuity planning (BCP) is the process of developing advance arrangements and procedures that enable an organization to respond to an event so that critical functions can continue. In today’s interconnected world, virtually every aspect of an organization’s operation is vulnerable to disruption.

The **UC Business Continuity Planning Program** utilizing the *UC Ready* continuity planning tool is an essential coordinated and integrated system-wide program to ensure that the University is “event-ready.” This initiative is a progressive and pro-active approach to prevent or mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from any catastrophic or other extraordinary disruption. **We all must be committed to making our campus’ teaching, research, and public service functions** more resilient and “event-ready” by taking the initiative to start a business continuity plan.



A business continuity plan describes:

- **How we might carry on** our teaching, research, service, and support functions under conditions of diminished resources: loss of space, loss of equipment, loss of IT infrastructure, and loss of some of our people.
- **How we might rapidly resume** these functions if they've been interrupted by an unplanned event.
- **How we can prepare.** This is most important of all since preparation is the key to reducing risk. A good continuity plan will include a “to-do” list for readiness referred to as an Action Item List. Action Items are things that we could do to limit our vulnerability, lessen the damage, and make it easier to recover. Our Action Items include tasks that can be done now as well as actions that we can not afford now but can be considered for future allocations of resources.

2.0 Scope

This program is applicable to all University departments that support our teaching, research, and service mission and who want to help make UCI a disaster-resistant, resilient institution with effective crisis and consequence management capabilities.

3.0 The Process

1. **Software Planning Tool:** The *UC Ready* business continuity planning tool is an award-winning software program (NACUBO Innovation Award, UC Sautter Award). **The web application is a “do-it-yourself” tool that enables departments to produce continuity plans.** Users report that the tool is intuitive and easy-to-use. *UC Ready* produces a printable plan that includes recovery strategies, action items, and other information that may be needed for post-disaster recovery.



The *UC Ready* tool will guide your department step by step in creating a continuity plan. Your plan will identify:

- CRITICAL FUNCTIONS** performed by your department and the factors needed for their continuance.
- INFORMATION AND STRATEGIES** that will help during and after the disaster-event.
- ACTION ITEMS** that can be done, starting now, to lessen the impact of these events and make us ready to cope.

2. **Annual Review:** The most important element of each department’s plan is a list of action items. These action items comprise a “to-do” list for readiness which will become the main focus of subsequent annual readiness exercises in the department. The main focus is on what has been done, what still needs to be done, what should be dropped or added, and what assistance is needed. The plan is updated using the UC Ready Tool.

3. **Tracking of Action Items:** To ensure completion of action items, the program systematically tracks action items, promotes collaboration on action items between departments where needed, and reports progress.

4.0 How to Get Started

The Business Continuity Planner will assist campus departments to develop continuity plans. Business Continuity services are provided without charge.

The continuity planning methodology is appropriate for all types of campus units — academic departments, organized research units, public service units, and administrative/support units.

To create a continuity plan for your unit, we suggest you proceed as follows:

1. Contact the Business Continuity Planner at Environmental Health & Safety. The Business Continuity Planner will discuss the process with you. In particular, the Planner will explore with you the question of *locus*: Would continuity planning be most effective at the level of your unit or would it be more effective for your parent unit or subordinate units?
2. Schedule an orientation session on your premises. The Planner will discuss with you who should attend the session — typically, several of your key staff will be needed.
3. At the session, the Planner will explain the campus-level planning that is already in place and will introduce you to the campus' web-based planning tool, **The UC Ready Tool**.
4. Following the orientation session, your team will be ready to create your plan. **The UC Ready Tool** will make this surprisingly easy. **UC Ready** is an on-screen questionnaire. Group discussion will be needed to answer some of the questions; other questions may cause you to consult others in your unit who have particular expertise. Hardly any research will be needed. When you have answered the questions, the tool produces a finished, printable continuity plan.

5.0 Tips

We recommend taking the following steps when creating your business continuity plan. Prior to using the UC Ready tool, consider at least Items # 1-7. This will not only expedite the completion of your plan, but help eliminate unnecessary frustrations. After the completion of the plan, it is critical that Items # 8-12 be followed.

1. **Document internal key personnel and backups.** These are people who fill positions without which your business absolutely cannot function – make the list as large as necessary but as small as possible. Consider which job functions are critically necessary every day. Think about who fills those positions when the primary job-holder is on vacation. Make a list of all those individuals with all contact information including business phone, home phone, cell phone, pager, business email, personal email, and any other possible way of contacting them in an emergency situation where normal communications might be unavailable.
2. **Identify who can telecommute.** Some people in your company might be perfectly capable of conducting business from a home office. Find out who can and who cannot. You might consider assuring that your key personnel can all telecommute if necessary.
3. **Document external contacts.** If you have critical vendors or contractors, build a special contact list that includes a description of the company (or individual) and any other absolutely critical information about them including key personnel contact information. Include in your list anyone that you might need to call to assist with various operational issues. Don't forget utility companies, municipal, and community offices (police, fire, water, hospitals) and the post office!

4. **Document critical equipment.** Personal computers often contain critical information (you do have off-site backups, don't you?). Some businesses cannot function even for a few hours without a FAX machine. Do you rely heavily on your copy machine? Do you have special printers you absolutely must have? Don't forget software – that would often be considered critical equipment especially if it is specialized software or if it cannot be replaced. Consider the minimum equipment you will need to perform ALL the critical functions.
5. **Identify critical documents.** Any documents that are very important to the critical function – whether they are individual documents (such as policy manuals) or sets of records (such as patient files, research files, or vendor invoices) – you need to have everything available that would be necessary to start your business over again. Remember, you might be dealing with a total facility loss. Do not include records that are stored within a database application such as a financial system, HR system, medical records systems, etc. These will be treated elsewhere.
6. **Identify contingency equipment options.** If your company uses trucks and it is possible the trucks might be damaged in a building fire, where would you rent trucks? Where would you rent computers? Can you use a business service outlet for copies, fax, printing, and other critical functions?
7. **Identify your contingency location.** This is the place you will conduct business while your primary offices are unavailable. It could be another institution – many of them have very well equipped facilities you can use. It might be one of your contractors' offices. Perhaps telecommuting for everyone is a viable option. Wherever it is, make sure you have all the appropriate contact information (including people's names). If you do have an identified temporary location, include a map in your BCP.
8. **Put the information together!** A BCP is useless if all the information is scattered about in different places. A BCP is a reference document – it should all be kept together in something like a 3-ring binder. Make plenty of copies and give one to each of your key personnel. Keep several extra copies at an off-site location, at home and/or in a safety-deposit box. It's not a bad idea to keep one in your car.
9. **Communicate.** Make sure everyone in your company knows the BCP. Hold training classes – mandatory training classes – for each and every employee whether they are on the critical list or not. You do not want your non-critical staff driving through hazardous conditions to get to a building that has been damaged by fire then wondering what to do next.
10. **Test the plan!** You've put really good ideas down, accumulated all your information, identified contingency locations, put your personnel list in place, contacts, and service companies, but can you pull it off? One thing you will definitely learn in the test is if you haven't gotten it all just exactly right. Don't wait until disaster strikes to figure out what you should do differently next time. Run the test. If you make any major changes, run it again a few months later. Even after you have a solid plan, you should test it annually. Pick a day – let everyone know what's going to happen (including your customers, contractors and vendors) and then on that morning, act as though your office building has been destroyed. Make the calls – go to the contingency site.
11. **Plan to change the plan.** No matter how good your plan is and no matter how smoothly your test runs, it is likely there will be events outside your plan. The hotel you plan to use for your contingency site is hosting a huge convention. You can't get into the bank because the disaster happened on a banking holiday. The power is out in your house. The copy machine at the business services company is broken. Your IT consultant is on vacation.

12. **Review and revise.** Every time something changes, update all copies of your BCP. Never let it get out of date. An out-of-date plan can be worse than useless; it can make you feel safe when you are definitely not safe.

6.0 Contact Information

The Business Continuity Program is located at Environmental Health & Safety:

Environmental Health & Safety

4600 Health Sciences Road

Irvine, CA 92697-2725

Building 41 on UCI campus map

(949) 824-6200 (phone)

(949) 824-8539 (fax)

<http://www.ehs.uci.edu>

Kim Hau

Business Continuity Planner

(949) 824-9645

khau@uci.edu

Linda Bogue

Emergency Management Coordinator

(949) 824-7417

lbogue@uci.edu