I. Tornado Procedures

A. Severe Weather Preparedness

1. Institutions must establish methods to ensure safety of students and personnel during severe weather.

B. General Information

1. Tornadoes are most likely to occur in mid-afternoon, generally between 3 and 7 PM. Movement is generally from Southwest to Northeast.

2. The length of the path ranges from 4 to 16 miles and the width is generally 300 to 400 yards. Speed ranges from 25 to 40 miles per hour with estimated speeds within the tornado of 500 miles per hour.

3. The cloud associated with a tornado is a dark, heavy cumulonimbus (thunderstorm) from which a whirling funnel-shaped pendent extends to or near the ground.

4. Precipitation usually occurs preceding the storm first as rain, frequently with hail, and as a heavy downpour immediately to the left of the tornado’s path.

5. The sound of a tornado has been described as a roaring, rushing noise, like the sound of a train going through a tunnel or over a trestle.

C. Definitions

1. Tornado Watch: A tornado warning is issued when the conditions are favorable for the formation of a tornado.

2. Tornado Warning: A tornado warning is issued when a tornado is actually sighted visually or by radar.

D. Communications

1. Communications of Tornado Warning to the campus community may be by (insert notification procedures (e.g., weather warning sirens, telephones, radio and television) and how residents of dorms / campus apartments will be notified).

E. Protection

1. Personnel and students should immediately seek shelter in the lowest levels of buildings on an interior hallway remaining clear of exterior windows and doors.

2. Immediately evacuate buildings without reinforced construction such as auditoriums, gymnasiums, and large rooms with wide free-span roofs.

3. If caught in open country, move away from the tornado’s path at a right angle. If there is no time to escape, lie fat in the nearest depression, such as a ravine or ditch.