COURSE OUTLINE
Introduction to Emergency Communications

Course Description
FS 115. Introduction to Emergency Communications. 3 hours credit. This course will enable the student to demonstrate competency in the principles, practices, and standards of emergency telecommunicators. The student will be introduced to emergency communications history, hiring, and training requirements. The student will be eligible for entry level employment as a call taker or dispatcher in an emergency communication center and to earn additional certifications to increase marketability upon achieving initial certification.

Required Materials
For complete material(s) information, refer to https://bookstore.butlercc.edu

Butler-assessed Outcomes
The intention is for the student to be able to
1. Explain emergency communications history, hiring, and training requirements.
2. Demonstrate competency in the principles, practices, and standards of emergency telecommunicators.

Learning Outcomes
1. Achieve Emergency Telecommunicator certification from International Academies of Emergency Dispatch.

Learning PACT Skills that will be developed and documented in this course
Through involvement in this course, the student will develop ability in the following PACT skill area(s):

Communications Skills
Reception and interpretation of messages - Through classroom discussion and group work, the student will explain emergency communications history, hiring, and training requirements as well as develop effective listening and communication skills and phonetic spelling styles used during radio communications.

Major Summative Assessment Task(s)
These Butler-assessed Learning Outcomes and the Learning PACT skills will be demonstrated by
1. Presenting a group project that demonstrates knowledge of emergency communications history, hiring, and training requirements while demonstrating effective listening and communication skills required by emergency communicators.
Skills or Competencies
These actions are essential to achieve the course outcomes:
1. Identify the level of multi-tasking required for telecommunicators.
2. Demonstrate effective call control techniques used in emergency call taking.
3. Identify the proper application of policy, procedure, and protocol in telecommunication duties.
4. Cite the attributes of a successful telecommunicator.
5. Understand how what you don’t say can be heard and felt by the caller.
6. Explain the concepts of effective listening and apply them to the tasks involved with public safety communication.
7. Explain the steps of the communication cycle and apply them to the tasks involved with public safety communication.
8. Explain the basics of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology and the challenges this technology may present to emergency number systems.
9. Explain the basics of emergency number technology, and how it is tied into the communications center.
10. Explain the use of TDD/TTY technology for communication with the speech-impaired and hearing-impaired community.
11. Explain the basics of public safety radio technology, including repeaters, consoles, and control equipment.
12. Explain how emergency telecommunicators use protocols to properly classify calls for service.
13. Describe the time-life priority incident classifications used for calls for service.

Learning Units
I. Overview
   A. History of emergency communications
   B. Exploration of the profession

II. Career details
   A. Expected pay range and benefits
   B. Common requirements
   C. Job descriptions
   D. Testing methods

III. Roles and responsibilities of the telecommunicator
   A. Mission statements
   B. Policy, procedure, and protocol
   C. Horizontal vs vertical dispatch
   D. Ethics, values, professionalism, and image
   E. Media relations
   F. Confidentiality

IV. Emergency telecommunication technologies
   A. Telephone technology
B. Wireless communication systems
C. Voice over internet protocol
D. Alarm systems
E. Emergency number technology
F. TDD/TTY technologies
G. Manual dispatching
H. Computer-aided dispatch systems
I. Archiving/logging systems
J. Radio systems

V. Telecommunication essentials
   A. Communications cycle
   B. Strategies for effective communication
   C. Listening skills
   D. Diction and enunciation
   E. Telecommunication techniques
   F. What you don’t say can be heard and felt
   G. Types of callers
   H. Types of calls
   I. Basic rationale and goals for call processing
   J. Routing, transferring, and relaying calls and information
   K. Answering the emergency number phone
   L. Use of approved protocols
   M. Information processing
   N. Using good judgment

VI. Call management
   A. Customer service and call management
   B. Emotional callers
   C. Emotional content and cooperation score
   D. Predictable caller behaviors
   E. The gap theory
   F. Five techniques of call management
   G. Cultural diversity and communication
   H. High-risk calls

VII. Police call classification
   A. Types of calls
   B. Protocol and call classifications
   C. In-progress, just-occurred, and past-event calls
   D. Law enforcement call classification specifics

VIII. Fire/rescue call classification
   A. Types of calls
   B. Protocol and call classification
IX. Medical call classification  
   A. Types of calls  
   B. Medical chief complaints  
   C. Trauma chief complaints  
   D. Time life priority chief complaints  

X. Disaster preparedness for telecommunicators  
   A. Types of events  
   B. National incident management system  
   C. Incident command system  
   D. Effects of a disaster on the PSAP  
   E. Preparing for disaster and a telecommunicator  
   F. PSAP mutual aid programs  

XI. Radio broadcast procedures  
   A. Radio communication  
   B. Broadcast rules and procedures  
   C. Responder safety monitoring  
   D. National radio communication regulatory agencies  

XII. Legal aspects of public safety communications  
   A. Law and ethics  
   B. Confidentiality  
   C. Terms and concepts  
   D. Legal liability and community expectations  
   E. Risk management and liability  
   F. Dispatch danger zones  

XIII. Quality assurance and quality improvement  
   A. A clear, reproducible, standardized process  
   B. Certification and recertification  
   C. Case review  
   D. Case review feedback  

XIV. Dispatch stress  
   A. Comprehension of stress  
   B. Stressors unique to public safety communications  
   C. Stress and burnout recognition  
   D. Management of distress and burnout effects  

Learning Activities  
Learning activities will be assigned to assist the student to achieve the intended learning outcome(s) through lecture, reading assignments, instructor-led class discussion, analyzing actual news footage, 9-1-1 recordings, and radio recordings, as well as other activities at the discretion of the instructor. These activities may be either face-to-face or online.
Grade Determination
The student will be graded on learning activities and assessment tasks. Grade determinants may include the following: daily work, quizzes, chapter or unit tests, comprehensive examinations, projects, presentations, class participation, and other methods of evaluation at the discretion of the instructor.

A national certification exam serves as the written final examination and is worth 80% of the final grade.