



Case Study in Starting a Campus CERT Program

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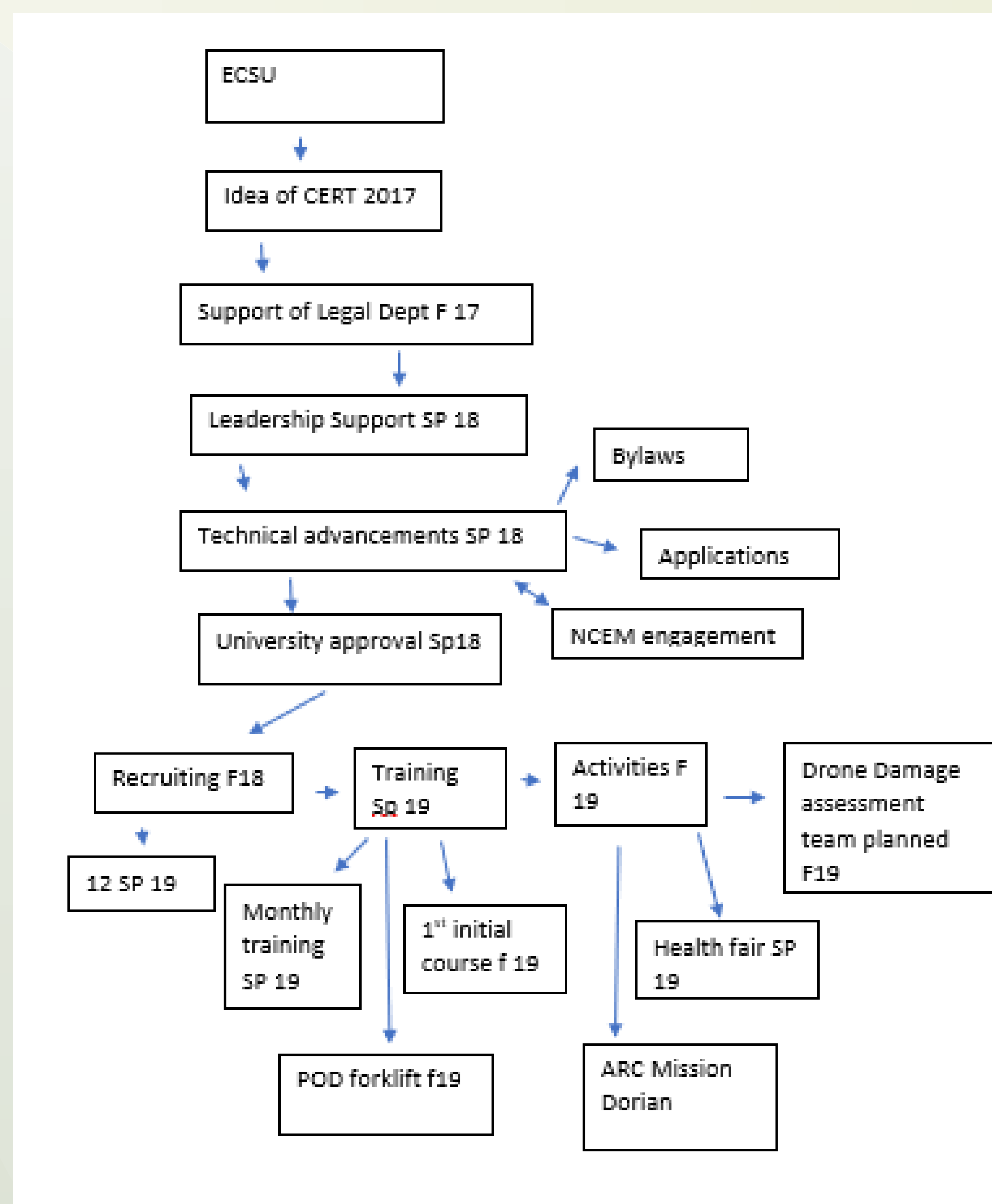
Poster Participation Category –
Non-Competitive Division -Student
Undergraduate

ECSU Department of Aviation & Emergency Management

Abstract

Colleges and Universities often talk about their commitment to their community, but many overlook the important role that students can play in helping with the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery efforts for emergencies and disasters not only on their own campus but in their community. Higher education institutions do not consider the impact that they can make in community safety simply by encouraging the inclusion of emergency and disaster related information through their student's tenure. The formation of an active campus community Emergency Response Team (CERT) can go a long way in not only helping with disaster management but also in producing graduates that are better equipped to help make their families, organizations and communities more resilient to emergencies and disasters. This case study examined the steps that one HBCU university took to create a functioning campus CERT with the hope of helping other campuses starting similar programs.

Formation of ECSU Campus CERT



ECSU Activities



ECSU has integrated CERT and STEM classes, in projects such as the IMMERSE summer school funded by Burroughs Wellcome for a 3 year summer school mixing STEM and disaster preparedness together.

Identified Challenges

The formation and continuation of a Campus CERT is not without challenges. While ECSU has been fortunate with great support internally and externally other campuses have not been so lucky in their endeavors. Leadership support from the top is crucial in the success of a Campus CERT. Other challenges include:

- Financial resources
- Liability concerns
- Maintaining CERT Champion(s) on campus
- Time for both students and staff

Recommendations

The Campus Community Emergency Response Team at ECSU has proven to be able to build disaster resilient skills in the students and community members, strengthen the positive image of the university, motivate students in their college goals and much more. This project provides the following recommendations:

- The formation of active CERT programs on all campuses
- Increased support from the federal government in the program(s)
- Incorporate preparedness skills and knowledge in general course work



ECSU CERT members showing off their shirts.

Advantages of Campus CERT

- Collaborate with other Emergency Response Organizations
- Create relationships between the students, faculty, and staff
- Allows CERT Training to reach different people and communities

Diagram depicts the path that ECSU took from the formation idea of CERT to activation.



The CERT team frequently conducts outreach missions that teach the community to be better prepared for disasters.

Useful Links in Starting a Campus CERT

- Campus CERT Starters Guide. [Campus CERT Starter Guide \(ready.gov\)](#)
- Information on safety insurance etc. <https://www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team>
- Planning and execution of campus drills and exercises. <https://www.fema.gov/hseep>
- University Utah approved online CERT didactic training [Community Emergency Response Team \(CERT\) | School of Medicine | University of Utah Health](#)

Contact Information & Acknowledgements

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This project was mentored by Dr. Kevin Kupietz

For more information concerning this project or other information concerning preparedness for disasters contact the ECSU Emergency Management Program kdakupietz@ecus.edu or [ECSU Emergency Management | Facebook](#)



Our CERT attended training courses with New Mexico Tech, learning about counter UAS technology and skills.



The ECSU CERT team has been awarded the National Cert Association Innovation Award for their combined efforts.



Elizabeth City CERT was the first university team to land, and practice loading/unloading an Osprey on campus.