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## Longhorn EMS to offer practice to student EMTs

By Regina Dennis

If you're ever in need of urgent medical attention on campus, don't be surprised if one of your classmates shows up to your rescue as the paramedic.

Brandon Glenn, a nursing freshman, is starting an organization that will serve as a first response team for medical emergencies, the first group of its kind at UT.

"We're looking to start doing emergency responses in the fall of next school year," Glenn said. "Right now we're just trying to raise money and grants to financially support the organization."

Longhorn Student Emergency Medical Services will receive emergency calls from UTPD, and a two-person response unit will arrive at the scene. At least one person will have to be a certified emergency medical technician or emergency care attendant, while the other can be a student volunteer.

"It's not essential to have EMT or ECA certification," Glenn said. "We would like to eventually have it offered as a course here at UT and count as class credit towards your degree plan, but that's something we'll work on in the future."

Tony Abraham, a biology sophomore helping to start the organization, said the group will also benefit students planning to enter the medical field by helping them get a feel for what the job entails.

"Seconds count. It's important to respond to an emergency situation as quickly as possible and give the proper medical attention," Abraham said. "EMS response will really give practice in the field for that."

Longhorn Student EMS will register as a corporate EMS team with Austin-Travis County EMS, which will be responsible for transporting patients to an emergency medical facility if needed. Warren Hassinger, spokesman for Austin-Travis County EMS, said that the organization must first be certified through the Texas Department of State Health Services as a first-response team.

"Once they are certified, they will have to pass the Austin-Travis County standards of care test before they can

be sanctioned to practice," Hassinger said. "From there, they may be coordinated by our medical director for different response assignments."

Hassinger said that after Longhorn Student EMS is cleared for emergency response, calls will be directed to them as deemed appropriate.

"If a person dials 911, the call will be sent through to Austin-Travis County EMS. But if we see that it deals with something on the UT campus, we will notify [Longhorn Student EMS] and let them respond to the situation," Hassinger said.

Other universities in the U.S. already have student EMS organizations, including Rice University, Duke University and Texas A&M University. A&M has two separate emergency care entities - EMS and Emergency Care Team. They are composed of 200 student volunteers, who are either certified EMTs or have received intensive medical training. Jennifer Bourdeaux, a Texas A&M graduate and Emergency Care Team president, said that members learn about the medical field through the organization.

"They definitely get a lot of hands-on experience," Bourdeaux said. "Being put in that scenario makes them feel extremely comfortable in providing medical care later on."