

Perspectives

Community College
Leadership for the
21st Century

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Effective campus security consists of more than just a budget line-item and the proverbial "knocking on wood" in today's day and age...Prudent choices follow careful planning, and careful planning begins with a focus on the protection of people first.

- Minu Youngkin

Emergency management plans are mandated by law; schools should have well-organized, structured [emergency management] plans and students should have a good idea about what steps to take if an emergency arises.

- Gary Margolis

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Safety on Oakton's RADAR

Joianne L. Smith, PhD

President

Oakton Community College

Des Plaines, Illinois

Campus safety and security is a concern of students, parents and administrators at colleges and universities across the country, and Oakton Community College is no exception. Promoting a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning to thrive is a key priority for the college that enables the completion of other college priorities.

Oakton's philosophy for campus safety is simple. The college focuses on prevention—trying to stop incidents before they happen. This proactive, coordinated, objective, and thoughtful approach to early prevention involves the identification, assessment, intervention and management of situations that pose, or may reasonably pose, a threat to the well-being of the Oakton community.

No law enforcement agency, body of laws, or set of rules can ensure the safety of everyone unless each member of the college community exercises reasonable caution and awareness.

Oakton's "triangle of prevention" relies on strong collaboration between students and employees, Oakton Police, and Student Affairs. Key activities in this collaboration include student and employee orientations and workshops, community policing, and the college's Risk Assessment to Determine Appropriate Response (RADAR) team.

Expectations for conduct and resources are relayed to students at the college's mandatory orientation and for employees through orientation and also workshops through Oakton's Center for Professional Development. These efforts identify early on what accepted standards of behavior are and also what to do when someone violates the college's standards of behavior.

Each student is provided a student handbook, which is also available on Oakton's website. In addition to listing the many services available to students, the handbook lists the college's academic policies and also the code of student conduct, nondiscrimination, and sexual misconduct policies, sexual misconduct complaint procedure, and sex crimes prevention reporting.

In addition to orientation days, employees are provided online training regarding the various types of campus crimes and how to report them, in addition to workshops dealing with a variety of safety topics.

Oakton Police officers work hard to keep the community safe and promote a peaceful environment at the college's

Des Plaines and Skokie campuses. Officers offer a broad range of services, from patrolling the campus to walking students and employees to their cars after dark. These examples of service to the Oakton community help the police build ties with the campus community.

Community policing involves working closely with members of the campus community—students, faculty, staff and even visitors. Among the proactive safety solutions and services offered by Oakton Police are campus patrols, automobile assistance for lock-outs, parking lot escorts, and campus safety workshops.

In fall 2016 alone, Oakton Police conducted three seminars as part of the college's campus safety workshop series. These provided instruction about how to recognize concerning behaviors and respond appropriately in order to prevent violence in the workplace and on campus. The seminars included the following topics:

- ▲ **Personal Safety.** This presentation reviewed the safety precautions that individuals can use to prevent an attack on their personal safety as well as the methods they can use to respond to an attack if one should occur at home, in public places (including at school), and while walking to and from a vehicle.
- ▲ **Emergency Procedures.** This presentation examined procedures to follow during emergency situations, including natural and man-made disasters, that can be used anywhere and at any time, as well as procedures specific to Oakton Community College.
- ▲ **Clergy Act.** This session reviewed and clarified topics covered in the online Clergy Act training offered to employees. The presentation covered reportable crimes, persons responsible for reporting, and reporting procedures and also covered risk reduction and bystander intervention techniques.

Oakton is among the few community colleges that employs licensed mental health professionals on campus who can assess, refer, and provide short term treatment for students in need.

While the Police Department works hard to ensure the campus community's safety, the primary responsibility for overall safety and security rests with each and every one in the community. No law enforcement agency, body of laws, or set of rules can ensure the safety of everyone unless each member of the college community exercises reasonable caution and awareness.

Preparation is key to effectively responding to situations that may impact the safety of individuals or the campus community as a whole. In addition to working closely with local law (continued on page 4)

EMERGING LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES

Safety is a primary and constant concern for college leaders and for the entire college community. It is critical for community colleges to develop a culture of safety on campus since incidents may occur ranging from active shooters to assaults of all types, rapes, sexual misconduct, sexting, bullying, stalking, and cyberstalking. Whatever the emergency, every college today should have a crisis management plan in place to address hazards and mitigate the damage. We posed the following question to emerging and national leaders. Their answers appear below.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

What steps can college leaders take to protect the campus and create a culture of safety?

Andrew Crawford, MEd

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Cuyahoga Community College –
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The notion that “creating a culture of safety” on college campuses is achieved through a few action steps or the implementation of college-wide policy seems a bit naïve for today’s college leaders. It is quite possible that the elements needed to support the wide array of safety concerns likely will transcend the boundaries of campus. We are beginning to see that administrators, staff, and faculty can no longer be the sole drivers for these endeavors. Partnerships with community leaders and local agencies are necessary to establish a safe campus environment that mitigates the opportunity for crime or any other form of misconduct. In fact, it may be more accurate to suggest that our students must own these efforts, as institutional advancement begins and ends largely with the student body. Building and maintaining a campus culture that promotes civility may prove to be the key variable for addressing safety on college campuses. According to Elsner and Boggs (2005), community colleges are socially embedded institutions. As such, our colleges are affected by behaviors in the larger society. The idea that society in general is becoming less civil requires one to look no further than our current political landscape. Talk radio, television shows, political advertisements, and the press are timely examples of where people are often personally attacking each other rather than debating ideas.

Building and maintaining a campus culture that promotes civility may prove to be the key variable for addressing safety on college campuses.

So how does all of this connect with college leaders addressing campus safety? The truth may be that the strategies needed to address safety concerns are unique to each individual campus. Although certain measures could be adopted collectively, trainings and education sessions that fit each campus community will differ from institution to institution. The unique set of characteristics that distinguish each culture most likely will drive the direction for an inclusive campus safety plan.

What may be most pertinent is ensuring that cross-functional support, community collaboration, and student involvement is prominent in creating a plan for institutions advancing their individual campus safety agendas. If during that process civility and respect are foundational core components, it is almost certain that realistic solutions will be generated. Leaders have an obligation to confront instances of incivility. Nevertheless, to manufacture this climate of trust and respect on our campuses, an inclusive approach is the responsibility that all members of the campus community share (Elsner and Boggs, 2005).

Reference

Elsner, A. P., & Boggs, R. G. (Eds.). (2005). *Encouraging civility as a community college leader*. Washington, DC: Community College Press.

Andy Crawford serves as the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at Cuyahoga Community College – Metropolitan Campus, where the Office oversees the enrollment center, special services, student life, athletics, and counseling. Andy also serves as the Deputy Coordinator for Title IX, oversees the student judicial process, and chairs the Behavioral Intervention Team. He earned his MEd at Ohio University and is seeking his doctorate in the Ferris State University DCCL Program.



Rich Seiler, MBA

Manager of Auxiliary Services
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Whether providing a safe workplace environment, protecting students, faculty, and staff from abusive behaviors, or preparing for emergency situations, leadership should consider three strategies for creating both a safe and supportive learning environment and a culture of safety. The strategies identified by Earl Blair (2013) for workplace safety can be adapted to higher education and include: having a leadership that understands and supports a safe culture, developing and building awareness of meaningful safety rules and programs, and becoming a reporting culture.

A culture of safety starts with leaders who set the example for the rest of the campus, and who proceed to embrace the programs and policies that are developed. They should encourage a culture on campus that embraces diversity, is inclusive and welcoming to all, and is a place where students, faculty, and staff feel safe to express their ideas and opinions. Leadership needs to devote resources to campus safety, show that they care, and participate in program development.

For guidance on what programs are necessary for the campus, leadership can look to organizations like the National Safety Council and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (2017) provides several resources and offers a five-step process for reducing risk factors for students which includes:

- ▲ assessing the campus to clarify needs and identify existing resources,
- ▲ building an infrastructure to support safe learning environments,
- ▲ selecting strategies to implement,
- ▲ implementing the strategies, and
- ▲ evaluating the programs and services.

Program awareness is necessary to help the campus community understand the safety issues that are a concern. The community should know how to recognize the problems that may occur, how to prevent them, and how to respond. Leadership needs to identify multiple ways of communicating with students to identify resources and how to access them, and explain prohibited behaviors which will not be tolerated on a college campus, especially those behaviors related to sexual misconduct and Title IX. Safety training is important and should include emergency simulations for active shooters, bomb threats, and severe weather.

Finally, reporting is necessary for a culture of safety. Provisions need to be made for students, faculty, and staff to report incidents and potential threats confidentially. These can include reporting to the campus risk/safety officer, Title IX compliance officers, campus police, employee and student confidential reporting systems, and early alert reporting systems.

References

Blair, E. (2013). Building safety culture: Three practical strategies. *Professional Safety*, 58(11), 59-65.
National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments. (2017). *Higher education*. Retrieved from <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/training-technical-assistance/education-level/higher-education>

Rich Seiler is Manager of Auxiliary Services at Harper College. He started his higher education career 37 years ago, operating college bookstores for Follett Higher Education and Barnes and Noble College Stores. He has worked for Harper College for 27 years, currently overseeing several contract auxiliary operations and the college's conference and events management office. He holds an MBA from National-Louis University and is currently enrolled in the FSU DCCL program.



NATIONAL LEADER PERSPECTIVE

Safety is a primary and constant concern for college leaders and for the entire college community. It is critical for community colleges to develop a culture of safety on campus since incidents may occur ranging from active shooters to assaults of all types, rapes, sexual misconduct, sexting, bullying, stalking, and cyberstalking. Whatever the emergency, every college today should have a crisis management plan in place to address hazards and mitigate the damage. We posed the following question to emerging and national leaders. Their answers appear below.

8 Steps to Creating a Culture of Safety on Campus

Robin Hattersley Gray

Executive Editor
Campus Safety Magazine

High-profile campus tragedies — be they active shooter attacks, which are rare, or sexual assaults, which happen to more than one in five college-aged women — have a profound effect on students and educational institutions. Other incidents involving hazing, high-risk drinking, mental health issues, and more happen with alarming frequency and negatively impact a campus as well, even if they don't always make the evening news.

These statistics show that a community college that overlooks safety and security does so at its own peril.

The financial impact of safety and security issues is also significant. The Center for American Progress, for example, estimates the Virginia Tech mass shooting cost the school and local/federal governments about \$48.2 million. Even larger is the price tag of the Penn State Jerry Sandusky child sexual abuse scandal, which the Associated Press reports could total a quarter of a billion dollars when all is said and done.

These statistics show that a community college that overlooks safety and security does so at its own peril. The following steps can help institutions of higher education foster a culture of protection.

1. Support security, public safety, and emergency management efforts with college president participation and resources. A culture of safety starts at the top. To get a good understanding of the issues facing the institution and the funding needed to address concerns, college presidents and other administrators should participate in disaster drills, full-scale emergency exercises, and regular safety/security training. Public safety, security, and emergency management should also be prominently featured in the institution's long-term plan.
2. Ensure the top campus security/law enforcement executive reports directly to the college president. This will ensure the president is fully informed about the protective measures that are needed.
3. Conduct annual perception of safety and campus climate surveys. Climate surveys should assess students' attitudes and knowledge regarding sexual harassment and assault, dating violence, racism, LGBTQ issues, alcohol and drug use, hazing, and other issues in the campus community. They should also assess whether students know when and how to report misconduct. Perception of safety surveys can help campus public safety officials identify where students, faculty, and staff have safety concerns. These surveys also foster awareness on campus of the services the public safety department offers.
4. Regularly conduct site assessments to identify vulnerabilities. These assessments might uncover building structure and campus layout issues that make an institution more vulnerable to crime, natural disasters, Hazmat issues, terrorism, and other hazards. These vulnerabilities can then be addressed with security technology, updated policies and procedures,

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officer deployment, and/or building renovation

5. Develop threat assessment/behavioral intervention teams that respond to individuals exhibiting concerning behavior. This behavior might be a threat to shoot someone else, take their own lives, or some other type of behavior that threatens the health and well-being of others or of the person(s) making the threat.
6. Install emergency notification systems. When an emergency occurs, campus officials must have the ability to warn students, faculty, and staff via multiple technologies. Several technologies should be deployed so that the strengths of one system can compensate for the weaknesses of the others.
7. Fully support the campus public safety/police/security department. This entails ensuring these departments are adequately staffed, equipped, and paid. Officers should receive training on the National Incident Management System, Incident Command System, lethal weapons (when applicable), less-lethal weapons (when applicable), Clery compliance, Title IX compliance, use of force/restraints, verbal de-escalation, mental health, security equipment operation, active shooter response, Hazmat incident response, bomb threats, CPR/first aid, racial/cultural/gender/sexual orientation sensitivity, implicit bias, and more.
8. Teach faculty, staff, and students how to identify a threat, report it, and respond ("If you see something, say something"). Training should also cover bystander intervention (for sexual assaults) and alcohol and drug abuse prevention and intervention. Additionally, school personnel should receive training on verbal de-escalation and participate in emergency exercises and drills. The college should develop several different modes of delivering safety training to staff as well as students (in-person, online, and via public relations and advertising).

Perception of safety surveys can help campus public safety officials identify where students, faculty, and staff have safety concerns.

Although this list may seem overwhelming, it only scratches the surface. There are many other steps that aren't on this list, as well as myriad nuances to the points that have been listed. Campus public safety, security, and emergency management are extremely complex topics, and many experts have dedicated their entire lives to addressing these issues.

That said, community college presidents who take these steps, do their research, and ask for help from qualified experts will be well on their way to developing a culture of safety and security. Good luck, and stay safe!

Robin Hattersley is the executive editor of *Campus Safety Magazine* and www.CampusSafetyMagazine.com, and has been covering security and campus law enforcement since 1998. Robin earned her undergraduate degree from California State University-Long Beach. She is a specialist in university, school, and hospital security, public safety, emergency management, and emerging security technologies, and has authored award-winning editorials on these topics. Robin joined CS in 2005, has been featured on national and local media outlets, and was formerly associate editor of the trade publication, *Security Sales & Integration* magazine.



QUICK TAKES
Highlights
from the Field

The handbook for campus safety and security reporting, 2016
 by The U.S. Department of Education

When choosing a postsecondary institution, along with academic, financial, and geographic considerations, campus safety is a vital concern for students. The HEA contains specific campus safety- and security-related requirements, but allows institutions flexibility in complying with them. This handbook was revised to assist educators in understanding and meeting the various HEA requirements and in laying the proper foundation for complying with the Clery Act and other HEA safety- and security-related reporting requirements.

Access this work here:
<http://bit.ly/2IHnxsV>

Results of the national campus safety and security project survey
 by the CSSP Project Steering Committee

Too little is known about the specific plans and procedures colleges have implemented to address today's all-hazards state of campus safety and security. Recent reports found that campus presidential leadership in developing a disaster plan, and acting as the chief public relations official during and after a disaster, are critical aspects of emergency preparedness. This report documents the current state of emergency preparedness and the scope of campus safety and security today.

Access this work here:
<http://bit.ly/1Kf0gEY>

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Safety on Oakton's RADAR (continued from page 1)

enforcement and emergency management agencies—including Des Plaines, Skokie, and Cook County—an internal team works to identify and mitigate potential safety risks.

Oakton's Risk Assessment to Determine Appropriate Response (RADAR) team assesses available information regarding an individual student or employee and determines an appropriate course of action. By intervening with a student or employee who has exhibited behavior that is of concern, the college hopes to prevent escalation of disturbed or disturbing behavior and ultimately ensure that there are no future acts of violence. A multidisciplinary team approach allows for maximizing information, improving communication, and considering multiple perspectives regarding how best to respond to a situation.

A college is not just an educator of students, or a trainer of employees, it is a cultural and economic engine whose ability to reenergize its environment is essential to the vitality of the community in which it exists.

Oakton was among the first institutions of its type to establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team. The team was established in 2009 before there were statutory requirements to have threat assessment teams and violence prevention plans. Since then, the program has gone through several iterations and has participated in ongoing professional development related to best practices.

The team consists of representatives from the Office of Student Affairs, including the vice president for student affairs and assistant vice president; two representatives from Oakton Police, including the chief; the director of counseling and a counselor; and Oakton's coordinator for access, equity, and student rights.

Within the parameters of existing state and federal statutes, members of the team have access to all pertinent records and information held within each member's department, which would aid in fully investigating, reviewing, and determining a course of action to properly resolve incidents reported to the team.

The team reviews all referred incidents of actual or potential violence as soon as reasonably possible, recognizing that some referrals require immediate attention. A fact-based assessment process is used to determine if a threat exists, and an appropriate, incident-specific action plan is developed, taking into consideration the potential for incidents of targeted violence. Appropriate action is then undertaken to mitigate the threat.

Of course, in order for RADAR to be effective, it is imperative that members of the college community report concerns about a student or employee. All members of the college community are expected to report behavior which they interpret to be a threat to self, others or property. Behavior that is thought to be an immediate threat shall be reported to the Oakton Police. Police and counselors are empowered to request immediate involuntary mental health commitment for a referred subject who is determined to pose an immediate threat of harm to him- or herself or others. Suspended students are provided with preliminary hearings on any suspensions and allegations that gave rise to them. If necessary, a full judicial board hearing is conducted as soon as possible following the preliminary administrative hearing.

Behavior that is not an immediate threat may be reported to any member of the RADAR team.

Silence will not produce the desired outcomes. Only through accurate reporting and honest discussions can an institution effectively tackle problems such as these.

Brown bag conversations take place regularly around Oakton's two campuses, discussing topics such as racism, violence against women, and diversity topics. These are important issues at college campuses across the country as they are in society at large.

Prevention of sexual assaults and violence against women has recently become a greater focus at the college. In fact, Oakton employees undergo Title IX training as part of a human resources program to create awareness for this national problem.

Oakton students, faculty, staff, and administrators also recently took part in the national "It's On Us" campaign to draw attention to this issue, as well as get students to take a pledge to end sexual assault. Up2Us has made multiple presentations to campus groups including student-athletes, again shining light on sexual assault and violence against women.

These prevention and awareness activities, along with the systems in place to assess situations and respond appropriately, work to not only prevent crimes from taking place, they also fairly and respectfully deal with the crimes if they occur. Oakton encourages victims to step forward, report crimes, and utilize the campus resources available to them.

Oakton makes many resources available to the college community. In fact, Oakton is among the few community colleges that employs licensed mental health professionals on campus who can assess, refer, and provide short term treatment for students in need.

By working together as a campus community, utilizing strong student programs and services, Oakton provides a safe and healthy campus and learning environment that challenges and inspires students to be academically and personally successful.



Joianne L. Smith, Oakton Community College's fourth president, continues the college's strong tradition of student success. During her years at Oakton prior to being selected president, Smith worked tirelessly to increase student engagement and to promote an inclusive and caring environment for teaching and learning. Her "All for One" initiative is intended to move the college forward in terms of key student success metrics with a wildly important goal of improving fall-to-fall new student persistence.

Smith's presidency began on July 1, 2015, following 13 years of service to Oakton as dean of students (2002-2004) and later, vice president for Student Affairs (2005-2015). Her prior experience includes assistant director of University Residence Life at Northwestern University (2001-2002), dean of Brainerd Commons at Middlebury College (1999-2001) and work as a licensed psychologist, a license she still maintains in the state of Illinois.

Throughout her career, Smith has remained active in Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA), the leading association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. In 2014, she coordinated the Chief Student Affairs Officer track of the Region IV-East Conference and was regional conference co-chair in 2013. In addition to NASPA, Smith sits on the American Association of Community Colleges' Commission on Diversity, Inclusion and Equity. Smith earned both a Ph.D. and master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University.