CAMPUS SAFETY: WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

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CAMPUS SAFETY: Where We Are — Where Are We Going?

The decade of the nineties has received many labels. Considering the topic today, the nineties could very easily be labeled, “the decade of campus security and safety.” It may have begun in 1990 with the establishment of the Campus Security Act, which received its impetus because of the Jeannie Cleary murder. Then, there was the Florida State University Ted Bundy case, the Gainesville, Florida murders with Danny Rolling, and many other tragic deaths and injuries on campuses across the country. These horrendous crimes initiated numerous amendments to the Higher Education Act such as the Campus Security Act and its many revisions. Now, the newest re-authorization of the Higher Education Act allows colleges to inform parents any time a student under 21 violates drug or alcohol laws. There has been a great deal of national activity, media coverage, and policy adjustments by campus administrators relating to campus safety through the nineties. There is more to come, therefore, the “decade of campus safety and security” label fits.

With the flurry of activity and attention to awareness programs relating to sexual assaults and general safety prevention programs on college campuses, has there been any improvement? Does all of this attention have an effect on the amount of crime on campus? Within the most recent Higher Education Act re-authorization publication (1998), the “Congressional Finds,” noted the following as part of the justification for the new amendments, “The reported incidence of crime, particularly violent crime, on some college campuses has steadily risen in recent years.” Is this a true statement? Taken literally it is, but as far as the general college scene is concerned, it is not. I am sure we can find a campus or several that have had a steady rise in their crime rate. However, generally speaking and according to the FBI Uniform Crime Report, there has been a dramatic decline in campus crime in the last three
years, at least on the campuses where reports were made to the FBI. Reference for this statement is the FBI Uniform Crime Reports published each year, usually in December. The statistical data in the Crime Reports voluntarily submitted from various law enforcement agencies within the 50 states. These are crime statistics from the previous year in a separate section within the crime statistics report for colleges and universities. The number of reporting institutions has reflected only a modest increase over the last six years. Only 377 institutions reported in 1988, which increased to 465 in 1997. While the voluntary reporting increased in 1997, the total reporting is still considerably less than the whole of approximately 3,000 higher education institutions in the United States. It is a voluntary program unlike the Campus Security Act.

The method used for gathering this specific data was a matter of addition, subtraction, and percentage development. The report does not provide the exact totals of each category listed within the report. The report is divided into, Reported Violent Crimes and Reported Property Crimes. The categories under violent crimes include murder, rapes, armed robbery, and aggravated assaults. The categories under property crimes, include burglary, larceny theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. The details of the statistics being discussed are outlined Tables 1 and 2 on the following pages.

As noted earlier, congressional findings were not necessarily accurate. There exists a decline in violent and property crime on campuses. Note on Table 1 that from 1994 to 1997, there was a decline of 17% in violent crimes and on Table 2, a decline of 13% in property crimes. All categories show a decline even though in the area of rapes, it is only 1.1%. There were dramatic increases in all categories from 1988 to 1991 which could be due to the number of institutions reporting, however, that is also about the same time the Campus Crime Act came into effect and the law enforcement agencies and university administrators may have been more
attuned to the necessity for accurate reporting even though this report is based on volunteer information.

Between the third and sixth reporting years there was also a major decline in the properties crimes; burglary went down by -13%, larceny theft, by -10%, motor vehicle theft by -11%, and arson by -11%. In the area of violent crimes, only two categories were on the decline and that was rapes by -5.1% and aggravated assaults by -9.1%. Between the sixth and ninth reporting years is where the most dramatic decline is realized.

**FBI – CAMPUS CRIME STATISTICS**

Reported Violent Crimes In Three Year Increments  
1988to 1997

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<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murders</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>+33.3%</td>
<td>+62.5%</td>
<td>-76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapes</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>+51.2%</td>
<td>-5.1%</td>
<td>-1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Robberies</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>+56.1%</td>
<td>+5.6%</td>
<td>-18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assaults</td>
<td>1336</td>
<td>2127</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>1543</td>
<td>+59.2%</td>
<td>-9.1%</td>
<td>-20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2069</td>
<td>3257</td>
<td>3090</td>
<td>2541</td>
<td>+57.4%</td>
<td>-5.1%</td>
<td>-17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Institutions Reporting</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>+15.9%</td>
<td>+6.2%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the area of violent crimes (Table 1), murders were down by -76.9% which with these small numbers is not as significant as it appears. Rapes are down only -1.1%, armed robberies by -18%, and aggravated assaults by -20%. It should be noted during this time increment, there was less than 1% change in the number of institutions reporting. In the area of property crimes (Table 2) in this final increment, burglaries were down -17%, larceny by -12.4%, motor vehicles by -12.2%, and arson by -18.9%. Though there is no guarantee that the same institutions report year after year, a general observation of the list of 465 institutions reporting over the years, there does not appear to be but a few changes of institutions.

**FBI – CAMPUS CRIME STATISTICS**

**Reported Property Crimes In Three Year Increments**

1988 to 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>12,611</td>
<td>14,934</td>
<td>12,919</td>
<td>10,617</td>
<td>+18.4%</td>
<td>-13.5%</td>
<td>-17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny-Theft</td>
<td>91,419</td>
<td>111,783</td>
<td>99,951</td>
<td>87,515</td>
<td>+22.3%</td>
<td>-10.6%</td>
<td>-12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>3,729</td>
<td>4,294</td>
<td>3,787</td>
<td>3,136</td>
<td>+15.2%</td>
<td>-11.8%</td>
<td>-17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>+41.2%</td>
<td>-11.4%</td>
<td>-18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>103,201</td>
<td>131,635</td>
<td>117,210</td>
<td>101,716</td>
<td>+21.7%</td>
<td>-10.9%</td>
<td>-13.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number Institutions Reporting

|                  | 377 | 437 | 464 | 465 | +15.9% | +6.2% | < 1% |

One of the questions that surfaced in reviewing the statistics was how do the college and university statistics compare to the national statistics. In the areas of murders, rape, and armed robbery, there was minimal difference; almost less than 1% difference from what happened on the college campus and what was happening nationally (see Table 3).

Table 3

**FBI - Campus Crime Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C/U</th>
<th>National</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murders</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapes</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Robberies</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>&lt; 3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assaults</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny-Theft</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences occur in the armed robberies, aggravated assaults, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft. For example, in 1997 of all the crimes committed on campus, 1.5% of those crimes were aggravated assaults. Nationally, 7.8% of all crimes were aggravated assaults and with armed robberies colleges had < 1%, and nationally it was > 3.8%. For burglaries on the college campuses it was 10.2% of the crimes and nationally burglaries were 18.5% of the
crimes. In the area of larceny and theft on college campuses, 83.9% and nationally it was 58% of the crimes. Table 2 shows that larceny-theft by far has the largest number. It was over 100,000 in 1991; and in 1997, only 87,000. This is the only category where the percentage of crimes on campus exceeded the national percentage. This might be due to the fact that the college statistics represent the college age group 18-24 and the national averages include all age levels. Age level may well be a significant factor in the larceny-theft crimes since it has been quoted that 80% of college criminal activity is student-on-student and most of these incidents appear to be theft. Also, the general population demographics of the college campus is not necessarily the same as society in general. Though it appears to be getting closer every year. Motor vehicle thefts total on campus were 3% in this category; nationally, it was 10%. In reviewing the comparison data for the previous seven years, it appears that the 1997 data is very similar to past years.

Progress has been made and the statistics validate that there may be light at the end of the tunnel. This is probably due to multiple types of programs both on and off campus. The Campus Security Act surely has motivated a number of campuses to institute numerous awareness programs. Many of these awareness programs resulted directly from tragic situations that occurred on campuses. One of the purposes of today’s program is to discuss the future direction of college and university safety programs and what is required to make that journey. In order to begin, it is important know where campuses are before determining where they are going. Based on the statistics and information here, campus administrators may be heading in the right direction, but there is still a need to continue with even better and more student involvement in safety and security programs.

The second portion of this presentation will concentrate on where we are going and what we should be doing to further minimize campus crime. Sexual assaults, as noted in the
statistical report, have not dropped as dramatically as other crime categories on campuses. There is obviously more work to be done to educate students, adjust facilities, and enhance enforcement. This is clearly denoted in some of the changes in the Campus Security Act.

The Campus Security Act notes in sub-chapter 1 of chapter 34 of Title 42 regarding a statement of policy relating to the institutions' sexual assault programs which must be aimed at preventing sexual offenses and well as noting the procedures followed once a sexual offense has occurred. This statement has probably contributed more to higher levels of awareness along with the actual establishment of policies and procedures on campus than possibly anything else. The Campus Security Act also notes that the policies must include educational programs to enhance awareness and establish possible sanctions to be imposed following the final determination of an on-campus disciplinary procedure regarding rape. Also, to be included are procedures students should follow if a sexual offense occurs. Procedures are needed for on-campus disciplinary action in case of alleged sexual assault, and ensuring the accused and accuser are entitled to the same opportunities to have others present at the campus disciplinary procedure as well as the accused and accuser being informed of the outcome of any disciplinary action proceeding brought by the alleged sexual assault. Further, by informing students of their options to notify proper law enforcement authorities, notification of student administrators, counseling, and mental health services available to the victim and the accused, and student options available with assistance in changing academic programs and living situations. When these requirements were first added to the Campus Security Act, it emphasized the importance of programs and procedures needed in this very important area of criminal offenses on campuses. Though there has been some decline, it is an area which deserves concentrated effort in developing more effective programs and awareness among the student population as well as staff members. The education needs to be all inclusive for men
and women; not either/or. A non-gender effort focusing on basic rights of individuals and essential respect for individuals without discrimination for their ethnicity, politics, or gender. These basic ideals must continue to be part of the educational programs because what we are currently doing does not seem to be making a significant impact.

Even though the FBI statistics indicate that campus crime is decreasing, there are still concerns and criminal activity is still taking place on campuses across the country. The Campus Security Report published by Rusting Publications in Port Washington, New York, has been successful in staying abreast of criminal activities occurring on campus as well as informing their readers of prevention programs established by various institutions. As an example, in a quick review of the past several issues, August 1988 issue, Florida A & M University in Tallahassee, Florida, has stepped up their residence hall security following two violent residence hall robberies. Students were robbed and beaten at gun point in their residence hall. Bernard Kelly, Associate Director, stated that he thought 95% of the problem was a matter of people not checking identification at the door. Another problem noted was that a key card access control system had just been introduced, but they did it in the middle of the term and many of the students were showing up at the door without their IDs and access cards and the entrance to the building was becoming very confusing. The actual steps that A & M took included installing door alarms and an extensive educational program to raise awareness for all students. They began a parents awareness program to ensure that they were getting parental support for their security measures. They added ten more security officers to begin a walking patrol program as well increasing the number of monitors at the doors when people were checked in for visitation. They enhanced their judicial sanction programs for breach of security policies within the institution.
Another example of a university taking a pro-active approach was the University of Mississippi (September 1998). Mike Stewart, Chief of Police for the campus, said that by adding police sub-stations throughout the campus, it made the university police officers more visible to the general public and contributed considerably to the decline of crime on campus. Two of the substations were placed in the residence halls and one in the student union. Substations are located in high-traffic and high-profile areas such as the entrance of the student union, next to the post office, or near the ATM machines. This program did not require any more police officers, however, the overall results have paid off for the University of Mississippi.

The major emphasis of the July 1998 issue of The Campus Security Report has been the handling of sexual assaults and the abuse of alcohol and drugs. There are various examples of programs implemented by college campuses that appear to be effective. The University of Northern Arizona noted that, “narcotics and alcohol arrests have been on the downward slope for the past three years (p. 7).” There are several things that combined in a campus program have netted these declining results. One is an increase in enforcement by police officers, second is stricter disciplinary codes for students who have been arrested for narcotics possession which lends to an automatic removal from the residence halls. Third is a greater emphasis on substance abuse education and counseling is mandatory for individuals who have been charged with these types of violations. Fourth is that twenty-five students were trained by the campus police department as campus aides who work from 7:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. in performing basic security functions by assisting police officers when a suspicious activity is observed.

In order to provide assistance, the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International has developed a general check-list for housing professionals to use to
complete a security/safety audit. (See Appendix A) The checklist questions are to be used as guidelines for a safety and security audit of housing facilities. Some items will not apply because of institutional philosophy or because of institutional size, organization, or location. Many approaches may be used in response to the checklist questions. One approach might be to respond to the questions with YES, NO or N/A for not applicable. Another approach might be to respond to the questions using a five-point Likert Scale. With this type of scale, a “1” would correspond with NO and “5” would correspond with YES; “2”, “3”, and “4” represent the degrees of variation between NO and YES.

The audit should be taken by a specially appointed safety-security group or committee representing all departments. There must be a thorough university commitment from the president to the support staff in meeting the security committee’s objectives. The problem of crime on campus cannot be solved by any one department or individual. The team approach is essential when assessing campus safety and security programs. Staff, faculty, residents, off-campus students, parents, and boards of trustees must all work together in order to resolve these problems. The audit is one of the first steps toward a comprehensive plan to help reduce the risk of crime on campus.

Recently, the Campus Security Report (October 1998), had a special report on Virginia’s statewide attack on campus alcohol abuse noting programs from James Madison University, Bradford University, and the University of Virginia. Each one of these institutions have designed a comprehensive program which involves all agencies of the university in developing preventative programs to increase effectiveness of enforcement. The statewide task force came up with the following recommendations; (1) notifying parents when their dependent children are in trouble because of alcohol-related problems. (2) delaying fraternity and sorority rush from the fall semester to the spring semester. (3) aggressively enforcing alcohol and drug
policies, and (4) rebuilding the campus culture from one that tolerates illegal and binge drinking to one that promotes scholarship, citizenship, and responsibility. The list also included measures that apply to law enforcement agencies, alumni associations, high schools, middle schools, alcohol producers and distributors, and the Virginia General Assembly. It appears that only a massive, totally inclusive program is going to make a real difference on the problems of alcohol and drug use. Picking away bit-by-bit here and there does help, but it does not make the same impact a comprehensive program can make, which is totally supported by the university and the state legislature. The new amendments to the Higher Education Act have given the institutions more options in dealing with alcohol abuse since institutions may now contact parents; however, each institution administrator must determine if and when to make a call. This decision that appears to be very simple to some, but complicated to others, could easily bring about another amendment within the next year which could require contact with parents. The Campus Security Act is a typical example of government agencies or state agencies, having to respond to public pressure by enacting policies that colleges and universities should be developing. Institutions have been complacent about their safety programs related to crime on the campus and someone else came along and said if the colleges and universities are not going to do anything, we will. One needs to look only at the numbers of institutions voluntarily submitting the campus crime statistics to the FBI to determine what kind of effort is being put forth. As the Campus Security Act continues to be adjusted and refined, it becomes more and more difficult for institutions to comply with external requirements and, unfortunately, it becomes more and more costly.

The significant point is the necessity to be pro-active. If the local campus administrators do not immediately plan—it will be done for them or to them. This is a formula practiced by higher education for at least forty years; administrators and academics sit back and
someone else comes along and establishes policies which should have been created by
individual campuses. Colleges and universities need to take advantage of the opportunity to
establish policies and procedures that are effective, logical, mutually agreed upon, and best for
the local campus community.

In summary, colleges and universities have seen a major decline in crime as
documented by the FBI statistics for 1997. It is the author’s opinion that this positive result
came from individual campuses that established current policies and procedures as outlined in
the Campus Security Act. Institutions are responding positively to the needs for better security
and police force’s are involving students in their programs as security aides or patrols.
Campuses are paying attention to and are involved in programs such as property ID, residence
hall “adopt a cop” programs, and the campus substation programs. These are all positive
models for other campuses to use as examples for improving their programs. There are many
good examples across the country of responsible colleges and universities taking responsible
and quick measures to establish a safe environment for students and staff. These campuses are
not waiting for a tragedy to take place before taking action. Being pro-active is essential to
avoid the time, energy, and funding that goes into defending a major law suit. Liability is
walking on campus in any possible scenario. We cannot eliminate it, but surely, it can be
minimized by taking immediate pro-active measures.
Residence Hall and Apartment Safety and Security

General Security Checklist

This safety/security checklist is of a general nature and pertains primarily to hardware and programs. It does not replace the ACUHO-I Safety and Security Environmental Assessment. It can, however, be used as a preliminary to the Environmental Assessment.

Each checklist item is rated on a 1 to 5 scale with 1 as low and 5 as high.

☐ Written safety and security policies and procedures
☐ Housing safety and security committee
☐ Written long-range plan (5-years)
☐ Plans are included in annual housing budget
☐ Annual security audits are conducted
☐ Housing master key (card) policy
☐ Lost card/key policy and procedure with records
☐ Non-resident accessibility policy and procedures
☐ Safety/Security publications for residents
☐ Communication process for informing residents of crime
☐ Procedures for students to report a crime
☐ Hall entrances and well-lighted exits
☐ High risk areas posted and lighted
☐ Shrubbery trimmed in potential risk areas
☐ Adequate “Blue Light” emergency phones
☐ Phone located at hall entrance doors
☐ Bike racks well-lighted placed at entrances
☐ Security screens on ground floor windows
☐ Level of security at all entry doors
☐ Level of security at all exit doors
☐ Level of electronic door access system
☐ Use of closed circuit television
☐ Level of security of interior doors
☐ Level of desk services for security
☐ Level of control by staff of access of non-residents
☐ Individual rooms equipped with one-inch deadbolt
☐ Individual rooms equipped with peep-holes
☐ Interior hallway doors equipped with peep-holes
☐ Individual room door lock cores rotated
☐ Safety/Security bulletin boards in each hall
☐ Apartment door lock cores changed for each new occupant
☐ Fire alarm system meets all state and local codes
☐ Fire drills scheduled and recorded
☐ Level of security in halls during breaks
☐ Night time escort service
☐ Published procedures for reporting security problems
☐ Staff wear IDs and/or uniforms
☐ Level of crime prevention programs in the halls
☐ Level of involvement of UPD in crime prevention
☐ Level of Residence Hall staff in crime prevention programs
☐ Level of prevention information provided to new students
☐ Level of crisis management programs
☐ Level of support for off-campus students in security education
☐ Level of student attitude toward personal security
☐ Level of staff training in safety/security procedures
☐ Level of staff on-call system
☐ Level of effectiveness of housing security patrols
☐ Level of support for housing staff in crisis situations
☐ Level of staff and faculty attitude toward personal and institutional security measures
☐ Level of general public and parent support for campus security
References


