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CAMPUS CRISIS MANAGEMENT

A Comprehensive Guide for
Practitioners

Second Edition



Campus Crisis Management

Campus Crisis Management is a practical resource that helps campus administrators evaluate, revise, or establish a comprehensive crisis management plan appropriate for their college or university. Filled with examples, assessment tools, and checklists, this book describes the individuals who should be involved in developing a campus plan, what a plan should include, as well as a variety of crisis events and issues that should be addressed in a comprehensive crisis management plan. Including contributions from renowned practitioners at all levels, this fully revised, new edition contains the must-have information on crisis management, such as:

- How to develop a comprehensive crisis management system
- The different types of crises using the crisis matrix
- The structure, operation, and training of a crisis team
- Strategies for working with the media
- New chapters addressing behavioral intervention teams, active shooter situations, Title IX guidance, campus demonstrations, outbreaks of infectious and contagious diseases, and special event management.

From a senior administrator working with an institution-wide emergency operations team, to a new professional looking to develop plans and protocols to respond to critical incidents, *Campus Crisis Management* is a comprehensive guide to planning and preparing for campus emergencies of any scale.

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Practitioners**

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**Edited by
Eugene L. Zdziarski, II,
Norbert W. Dunkel, and
J. Michael Rollo**

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Preface

While administrators in higher education have been managing campus crises since the beginning of American higher education in the 1600's, broad public attention to campus crisis began in the mid 1960's when television cameras provided coverage of the shootings at the Texas Tower at the University of Texas to a national audience. Over the course of time environmental, facility, and human crises continued to erupt on college campuses. Significant national and regional disasters such as September 11, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, continued to shape emergency management for schools and communities. It was within this environment that the first edition of *Campus Crisis Management* was published.

However, over the past decade significant incidents have dramatically changed the landscape within higher education. The first edition of this book was published in March of 2007. On April 7, 2007 the shooting at Virginia Tech occurred. Less than a year later, an active shooter incident occurred at Northern Illinois University. These incidents, reshaped campus crisis management.

Today, in addition, to prevention, response, and recovery, a comprehensive approach to crisis management includes *protection* and *mitigation* as dominant phases in the process. Institutional administrators must coordinate their actions with their city and county emergency management coordinators in response to large-scale events. Campus crisis management plans now address crisis events which may not have been previously considered such as active shooters, terrorist attacks, contagious diseases, and the like. Modern campus protocols include procedures for issuing emergency alert messages, timely warnings, and sheltering in place. These are but a few of the changes addressed in this new edition.

Like the first edition, *Campus Crisis Management* provides a framework in which to hold discussions about the subject on college and university campuses and offers a comprehensive guide to campus crisis



management. The book describes the individuals who should be involved in developing a campus plan, what a plan should include as well as a variety of crisis events and issues that should be addressed in a comprehensive crisis management plan. The book discusses how to consider comprehensive crisis management planning as a year-round effort, offering examples, samples, and forms. Still, it remains the responsibility of campus staff to use these tools to develop approaches specific to their campus environments.

The original inspiration for this book came from the experiences of the three editors. We have fortunately, or unfortunately as it may be, collectively experienced many crisis events throughout our careers. Although, we read, wrote, and spoke on this topic as a professional interest, we found no publication that provided a comprehensive presentation of what campus staff should consider in crisis management. We have appreciated the reception the first edition received from practitioners, faculty, and students, and we are pleased to offer this new and updated edition.

Through our experiences we recognize that there are a number of experts in areas specific to crisis management. We are excited to have been able to engage these individuals from both the public and private sectors to share their knowledge and experiences in the various chapters.

AUDIENCE

This book is intended for campus administrators of all levels, faculty, and emergency management professionals. *Campus Crisis Management* is designed to be a comprehensive guide to planning and preparing for campus emergencies of any scale.

Whether a senior administrator working with an institution-wide emergency operations team, to a new professional looking to develop plans and protocols to respond to critical incidents within their scope of responsibility, *Campus Crisis Management* provides relevant and practical information and resources. It has served as a desktop reference for administrators across a wide scope of disciplines including executive leadership, campus physical plant, environmental health and safety, campus police and all aspects of campus student affairs operations (i.e., housing, food service, dean of students, counseling, health care, student union, student activities, recreational sports, etc.).

Faculty have also used *Campus Crisis Management* as a required text in a growing number of courses that specifically address crisis intervention and emergency management within higher education. These courses are part of programs such as Administration in Higher Education, Educational Leadership, Student Affairs Administration, and Counseling.

Campus Crisis Management is also a valuable resource and reference for any city or county emergency manager or municipal law enforcement agency that has a college or university within their jurisdiction or that holds a mutual aid agreement. Understanding the unique issues, legal requirements, and operational implications institutions of higher education face during a crisis can make a significant difference in the coordination of campus and community resources.

NEW IN THIS EDITION

Every chapter has been revised and updated with the most recent information and resources. Recent campus crises that have impacted how we prepare and respond to campus crisis have been included to help inform the lessons learned from these experiences. The most recent guidance for developing emergency operations plans in higher education from a variety of federal agencies is incorporated throughout the book, and in particular to the description of the crisis management cycle and the development of protocols for campus crisis management plans.

The most significant change in this edition has been our review of contemporary issues in campus crisis. What was one chapter in the previous edition, has expanded to six chapters that comprise [Part III](#) of this book. These new chapters cover a breadth of topics ranging from behavioral intervention teams and active shooter training programs, to managing special events and expressive activities. Included are chapters addressing the most recent changes to Title IX as well as guidance for dealing with infectious and contagious diseases that was available at the time of publication.

In addition to the text, readers will be able to access supporting electronic materials including sample forms, protocols, and MOU's. The supporting materials will also include the first hand descriptions of 10 campus crises (three environmental, three facility, and four human) and lessons learned by campus administrators that were included in the first edition. Over time we intend to add to this collection of tools and resources.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONTENTS

Campus Crisis Management: A Comprehensive Guide is organized in four parts. [Part One](#) helps the reader understand the foundations of crisis management theory. In [Chapter 1](#), J. Michael Rollo and Eugene L. Zdziarski, II share the impact crisis has had on higher education. They provide a brief history of crisis events in American higher education and define crisis within the scope and context of the academic community. In [Chapter 2](#), Eugene L. Zdziarski, II, J. Michael Rollo, and Norbert W. Dunkel describe

the phases of a comprehensive crisis management process and introduce the *crisis matrix*, a typology that can be used to identify types of crises and how each interrelates and influences the crisis management process.

Part Two describe the common crisis management systems. In **Chapter 3**, C. Ryan Akers and Todd T. DeVoe explore crisis management teams, including team composition and leadership, the structure of the team, team operations, and team training. They also identify essential elements of successful crisis management teams and considerations for a new decade in campus crisis management. In **Chapter 4**, J. Michael Rollo and Eugene L. Zdziarski, II present a comprehensive approach for developing a campus crisis management plan including conducting a campus crisis audit, writing a basic crisis management plan, and the development of situational protocols for common events in the crisis matrix. Michael J. Schoenfeld, in **Chapter 5**, discusses the importance of knowing your audiences, having and executing a crisis communications plan, as well as tools and channels to effectively communicate with internal and external constituencies in times of a crisis. In **Chapter 6**, Norbert W. Dunkel and Jorge J. Campos highlight the approach of campus staff working with emergency personnel services and other outside agencies. In **Chapter 7**, Kirk Dougher discusses rendering psychological aid to individuals impacted by crisis events. Developing a plan to attend to the mental health needs of campus community members and its caregivers is a key component of your crisis management system. In **Chapter 8**, Maureen E. Wilson and Jody A. Kunk-Czaplicki offer an extensive set of resources including sample plans, checklists, case studies, and the like that readers can use in training their campus crisis management teams.

Part Three takes an in depth look at several contemporary crisis management issues. Todd Adams and Stephen Bryan, in **Chapter 9**, describe the evolution of behavioral intervention teams, as well as their role and responsibilities to the campus community. They also present a framework for assessing cases, as well as case follow-up and record keeping. In **Chapter 10**, Melanie V. Tucker and Brian O. Hemphill present a comprehensive active shooter training program that addresses each of the phases of the crisis management process. They also offer operational, physical, technological, and communications strategies for enhancing your institution's program. Melissa M. Nunn and Mónica Lee Miranda tackle Title IX issues, high risk drinking behavior, and hazing in **Chapter 11**. They describe the essential components of a sound Title IX program, as we share practices to reduce sexual misconduct, hazing, and high-risk drinking behaviors. In **Chapter 12**, Nancy E. Chrystal-Green and Ashley B. Knight share their insights into managing expressive activities on campus and acknowledge the differences in how these events may be handled at private versus public

institutions. In [Chapter 13](#), Katie L. Treadwell and Thomas Grace discuss the challenges of managing a wide array of special events and offer campus administrators a comprehensive set of considerations for each phase of the crisis management process. In the midst of a global pandemic, Norbert W. Dunkel, Eugene L. Zdziarski, II, and J. Michael Rollo share in [Chapter 14](#), emerging practices in responding to outbreaks of infectious and contagious diseases.

[Part Four](#) focuses on not only what we have learned from managing campus crises but considers how we can sustain campus preparedness into the future. In [Chapter 15](#), Adrienne Frame and Stephen C. Sutton provide a review of lessons learned from selected human, facility, and environmental crises. Using small vignettes from institutions impacted by these crisis events they review elements of crisis management, such as planning, staffing, resourcing, and communicating. In the final chapter, [Chapter 16](#), Eugene L. Zdziarski, II, J. Michael Rollo, and Norbert W. Dunkel provide concluding remarks and summaries of the key elements of crisis management systems and the future of crisis management.

The Appendix, provided by Ed Book reminds us that when the crisis is over and the recovery is well underway, it is time for the campus to take a step back and debrief the process. The debriefing checklist focuses on continuous improvement, rather than finding fault.



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We would also like to thank Heather Jarrow, and the staff at Routledge/Taylor and Francis Group for supporting the second edition of *Campus Crisis Management*, and the countless hours they put in getting it to print.

Gene Zdziarski wishes to thank his wife, Catherine, and daughter, Laura Ann, for their support and encouragement to pursue this second edition, as well as their understanding and forgiveness when campus commitments intruded on family life. He also extends his thanks and appreciation to his colleagues at DePaul, and other institutions at which he has had the privilege of working, for their tireless efforts to support their campus communities in times of crisis. The selfless manner in which these individuals have given of themselves, and continue to do so during this global pandemic, is truly inspiring.

Norb Dunkel wishes to thank his wife, Kim, and son, Nicholas. Since retirement, they have kept him busy with many projects but always provided him time to write and edit. He also wishes to thank his colleagues and friends for their relentless work during the Novel Coronavirus 19 pandemic. With institutions moving to exclusive online teaching for the spring and summer months of 2020, staff and faculty have had to innovate and create new approaches and policies to continue to provide education to the students. These faculty, staff, and students have been amazing and can be counted among the heroes of higher education.

Mike Rollo wishes to thank his wife, Amy, for her support and encouragement to continue this important project and for her unending patience



over the years of late-night calls, long weekend retreats, missed dinner, special events, and all of the other interferences to family life that occur when working in student affairs. He also wishes to thank the amazing professionals who dedicate their lives to helping students at colleges and universities overcome their challenges, manage their difficulties, and reach their potential. The daily care and compassion provided to them and their families in the most difficult of circumstances makes a difference in so many lives and slowly changes the world.



PART I

Foundations of Crisis Management



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The Impact of Crisis

J. Michael Rollo and Eugene L. Zdziarski, II

Thanks to the variety in institutions of higher education today, opportunities abound for enriching student lives and enhancing our society by educating and preparing the next generation of leaders and citizens. Regardless of their background, precollege preparation, interests, or social status, students have opportunities to interact, learn, and experience life in all its wonder and intricacies. Urban, rural, public, private, large, small, faith-based, secular, commuter, residential, and other terms are used to categorize our institutions. Yet, despite our tendency to separate institutions into groups that seek to establish commonalities across what appears to be a diverse array of entities, one absolute that binds them all together is their core of students, faculty, and staff who live and learn at their campuses. With this interplay of people and institutions, the inevitable reality is that incidents and events that are characterized as crises are certain to occur. The impact of crises on the facilities and the institutions' ability to accomplish their educational mission must be addressed, but it is the human side of the equation that begs our attention as educators committed to serving our communities.

TODAY'S ETHIC OF CARE

Historically, educational institutions' control of student behavior and ability to function in loco parentis were the standards by which we measured our relationship to students and our commitment to the families who placed their children in our charge. That outdated legal relationship no longer guides our actions or philosophical positions. However, it did lead us to a modern institutional commitment to caring, respect, and concern for our students' growth and development (Rhatigan, 2000).

This transition from legal guardian to caring educator has been gradual, and we remain connected despite our arm's-length legal relationship with

students. Bickel and Lake (1999) describe the death of *in loco parentis* as resulting from the civil rights movement, when students increasingly distanced themselves from universities and colleges and challenged institutions' ability either to control their behavior or to intercede in their personal lives. This distancing between students and institutions led to a period in which the institutions acted as "bystanders." As a result of increasing legal challenges and court decisions, institutions had no legal duties to students and were not responsible for harm (Bickel & Lake, 1999). Institutions seemed helpless to influence student life, and they struggled in the court of public opinion as student populations began to appear more disruptive and in need of greater direction and guidance. The need for some protection from harm, some entity to which to look for assistance, has led us to a new model, prevalent on campuses today, whereby it is believed that we have a duty to care for the students in our charge. Although some see this as a return to *in loco parentis*, it is more likely a period of transition, as a new relationship between students, their families, and the institutions that serve them evolves to address today's expectations. The legal decisions that continue to refine this relationship must be monitored constantly and used to update the policies and procedures we follow in serving our students. However, the underpinning of this relationship, regardless of how we characterize or label it, is the ethic of care. Caring for the individual, providing support to those who can benefit from attention to their needs, and enhancing the human experience as educators and mentors underlie much of what we do in higher education. It may be the most important value we hold to direct our actions and responses during times of crisis, when tragedies overwhelm us as individuals and communities.

By basing our actions on an ethic of care for our students, staff, and faculty when we respond to crises, we put a human face on our institution. Although we all want our problems, concerns, and personal issues to matter to the institution, the institution as a bureaucracy tends to operate on its own set of values and priorities to accomplish its mission regardless of individuals' personal needs. If the institution is to be successful in responding to crises over the long run, it must reach out to its constituencies with compassion, concern, and sensitivity to the situation at hand. The staff charged with first response must be free to engage the community affected by the tragedy without restrictions. The spokesperson for the institution, whether it is the president, a member of the media relations staff, or any number of possible administrators, must be able to speak directly to the affected communities about the desire to help ease any suffering or loss.

At some institutions, it is expected that this will occur as a matter of course. Families choose to send their children to smaller institutions with the belief that they will receive more personalized attention. Although

many assume this is a clear expectation among parents of children at private colleges or universities, public institutions are not free from this expectation. At large institutions, although there may be a desire for personal attention, there is also likely a realization that students will be more anonymous on campus. The irony is that, in times of crisis, especially large-scale events, larger institutions are more likely to have the resources to respond to the situation whereas the small, “caring” institutions can easily be overwhelmed by the scope and complexity of the tragedy. Indeed, when the large, “impersonal” institution does respond with care and compassion, the benefits of this unexpected response are dramatic. Inability to respond compassionately may be expected from a large bureaucracy, but it is totally unacceptable at a small institution, especially if it has presented itself in its recruitment of students as a supportive environment.

Regardless of the size of the institution or expectation of the constituencies, the impact of the institutional response over time is profound. Did the college or university reach out to the student and his or her family and friends? Did the institution assist the academic department, and was the staff able to work through a difficult loss? Was there a sense of support and compassion among the staff? The emotions that arise out of these interactions go home with families and are shared with neighbors and friends. Stories of care and concern are told in residence halls and other living units, passed between students, and handed down to next generations. They are conveyed in the departments and help form a network of support among the staff and faculty as they return to their normal routines.

The converse is, of course, also true. The families who are helped but not cared for, interacted with but not embraced, responded to but not engaged, will return to their homes with a much different sense of what happened. The faculty or staff member who returns to the classroom or office with no sense of concern from the institution has no opportunity to enlarge the institution’s role as a community that cares for its members, one that reaches out to others in time of need and responds with compassion and dignity.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE

Over the past 50 years, as advances in technology have expanded the reach of televised media and communications, campus tragedies have become more prominent in our lives, regardless of where they occur. Our understanding of what can occur on college campuses affects our planning and preparation. Several specific incidents stand out—not so much for their uniqueness as for the impact they have had on our thinking and response to subsequent events, even when they are relatively minor in comparison.

Neither the size nor the location of the institution, nor the scope of the crisis, has been as important as the impact of these crises on our collective communities of higher education.

University of Texas at Austin, 1966

The Texas Tower at the University of Texas at Austin stands as one of the most dominant landmarks on a college campus in the United States. At 307 feet, its height, in comparison to other buildings in the area, draws your eye to it immediately. Although not as tall as the nearby state capitol building, it is built on higher ground and thus gives the appearance of being taller (MacLeod, 2005). Constructed in 1936 as a centerpiece of the campus and community, it has, unfortunately, since 1966 been indelibly linked to the actions of Charles Whitman on August 1 of that year. After murdering his mother and wife earlier in the day, at approximately 11:30 a.m. he entered the tower with a footlocker full of weapons and ammunition and proceeded to the observation deck on the 28th floor. Over the span of the next 96 minutes, he killed 14 people and injured dozens, using skills that had earned him a sharpshooter's badge while serving in the U.S. Marine Corps (MacLeod, 2005).

Although neither the first nor the last shooting on a college campus, this incident stands out for its undeniable impact on the community and the nation. On-site television coverage of news events was still developing. In 1966, a television camera was a bulky and cumbersome apparatus to use and most television crews were still using film to capture images for delayed broadcasts, but with an incident of this magnitude. In a state capital with established local media, details were provided immediately to the local population by way of on-site radio coverage (KLBJ: The story of Austin radio, n.d.). Students and area residents recall tuning in to the radio and hearing about the tragedy as it unfolded (Preece, 1996). Despite being warned to stay away by local radio reporter Neal Spelce, who was crouched behind his mobile broadcast unit in the shadow of the tower, area residents, including students, instead loaded their high-powered deer rifles and headed to campus to return fire alongside local police officers (Preece, 1996). Later, film shot by Gordon Wilkinson, a reporter from KTBC, captured the definitive images of the tragedy, including images of the wounded and unforgettable images of students who risked their lives to rescue fellow students (Preece, 2011).

Just one week earlier, it had been discovered that Richard Speck had killed nine student nurses in their dormitory in Chicago. With this event still in mind, the media's on-site coverage of the Austin killings turned the nation's attention to that campus. The August 12, 1966, cover of

Life magazine—one of the standards by which we as a nation gauged the importance of an event in that era—showed a photo of the Texas Tower taken by Shel Hershorn through the bullet-shattered glass of a store window in Austin; it connected us all to the incident (Life Magazine, 1966).

In addition to an increasing sensitivity to this type of tragedy on campuses, police agencies across the nation began developing a new type of response. The first Special Weapons and Tactical Teams (SWAT), created at that time, were believed to be a direct response to this incident (Snow, 1996). These teams forever changed our university security operations.

Kent State University, 1970

Reaction to the military draft of college-age men was beginning to manifest in larger and more violent disruptions on college campuses in some communities. The internal conflict between their ambivalence toward the war in Vietnam and a desire to serve their country as their parents had during World War II was growing. On the campus of Kent State University in Ohio over a four-day period in May 1970, the demonstrations escalated in violence and destruction. Windows in local businesses were smashed, the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) building on-campus was burned to the ground, and the National Guard was brought in to control the situation. On May 4, the university banned a planned noon rally, believing that the National Guard's presence made the demonstration illegal. Shortly after noon, the demonstrators (described as a core group of about 500 and as many as 2,000 "cheerleaders" who came to show support) began to throw rocks at the National Guard troops, who had ordered them to disperse. Through clouds of tear gas, the troops moved forward to disperse the crowd with loaded weapons, and after retreating to the top of Blanket Hill, turned and fired into the crowd. Four students were killed and nine wounded in a period of 13 seconds (Lewis & Hensley, 1998), and the now-famous Pulitzer Prize—winning photo of Mary Vecchio, a 14-year-old runaway, screaming over the body of Jeffrey Miller was splashed across the front pages of newspapers and magazines around the country (Tuchman, 2000).

Campuses would never be the same again. Antiwar efforts expanded, students who had previously been ambivalent about the issue were galvanized to action, and new allies of the core antiwar demonstrators added their support. Campuses closed or canceled classes for varying periods of time to minimize additional disruption, but the trust between the students and the institutions they attended was damaged significantly and would require years to repair. In some cases, it never has been repaired.

Lehigh University, 1986

In April 1986, Jeanne Clery, a 19-year-old freshman, was brutally raped and murdered in her residence hall room on the campus of Lehigh University. The person accused of the crime and ultimately convicted and sentenced to death in the state of Pennsylvania was a student at Lehigh who had entered through a series of propped-open doors in the girls' residence hall (Beyette, 1989).

This personal tragedy of the Clery family became the centerpiece of a national initiative by her parents to require colleges and universities to report the occurrence of crimes in their campus communities to prospective students and families. Their efforts were fueled by the belief that colleges and universities were routinely hiding and covering up violent crimes to protect their institutions' reputations. Sympathetic legislators agreed with them, and through the lobbying efforts of Campus Security Inc., a non-profit organization founded by the Clerys, created the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990. This legislation and its evolution since 1990 into what is now known as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act has changed the nature of the discussion on college campuses at orientation programs, putting front and center the expectations of today's parents regarding the responsibility of institutions to protect and warn their children about potential harms.

That doors are sometimes propped open in a residence hall should come as no surprise to anyone who has ever lived or worked in a living unit on a college campus. Helping young people understand the security risks of living away from their families for the first time is an ongoing challenge for student affairs and campus safety officers. It was the Clery's position that many of our colleges and universities did not take this responsibility seriously before their daughter's death. Whether colleges and universities were doing a good job or not in this area is no longer an issue. The personal tragedy of the Clery family, which initially affected only a small circle of family and friends, now affects us all as all campuses, and especially student affairs professionals and public safety officers, are required to be accountable to families and students as risk managers. This incident lives on with us every day on college campuses since 1986. Connie and Howard Clery have achieved their goal: Their daughter lives on in our collective memory and has helped avert subsequent tragedies like theirs.

Pan Am Flight 103, 1988

In the early evening of December 21, 1988, international terrorism first touched U.S. college campuses when Pan Am Flight 103 exploded at

31,000 feet and crashed to the ground in pieces in and around Lockerbie, Scotland. Among the dead were 11 citizens of Lockerbie and 259 passengers, including students from numerous institutions returning home for the Christmas holidays from study abroad (Bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, 2000). Syracuse University had the largest contingent, with 35 students, but students from other universities were also on board and brought the tragedy home to their campuses and homes outside the spotlight shining on Syracuse (Palmer, 2019). As at Kent State and UT-Austin, the power of the media and the visual images of the horror of an airplane crash connected us all. Video of smoking wreckage, the seared earth in Lockerbie where the fuselage had hit, and the largest piece of the 747 fuselage lying in a field near the town, demanded our attention and sympathy. The latter image continued to be shown repeatedly on the cover of news magazines and as backdrops in subsequent news stories and is so closely identified with the tragedy that it has become an icon of this sort of event. The story took on a life of its own, with theories of conspiracy and collusion by governments, mismanagement, and poor security on the part of Pan Am, and numerous human interest stories featuring mistaken notifications of death, changed travel plans that resulted in survivors who had taken other flights, and the unending pain and suffering of the families who lost their loved ones so unexpectedly due to a terrorist act.

Once again, the scale of this tragedy and its impact on our campuses changed the way we view our off-campus experiences but also affected our sense of safety from forces in the world that until this incident seemed far away. Although new and dreadful terrorist acts have occurred more frequently in the years since, we can still look back at this incident as the beginning of a new era in the American realization of international terrorism and its effects on our country. Where since the end of World War II we had felt impervious to attacks, we were now entering a period of highly visible, high-impact, media-conscious terrorism that targeted our citizens, and by relation, our students and learning communities.

The University of Florida, 1990

The age of the 24-hour news channel and satellite television trucks that allowed any story of local significance to immediately become a national story dawned in August 1990, when the bodies of four students at the University of Florida and one from nearby Santa Fe Community College were discovered over a five-day period in Gainesville. The ensuing onslaught of media attention in the midst of a police investigation to identify and capture what appeared to be a serial killer led to widespread panic among students and families connected to Gainesville. The attention brought to

bear on the institution forced it to spend significant financial and staff resources to respond to a public only loosely connected to the university. What had been the cover of a magazine and a series of newspaper articles immediately following the 1966 incident in Austin in 1990 turned into two weeks of daily news conferences, false arrests, repeated broadcast of videotape of bodies on gurneys being removed from apartments, human interest stories about fear and panic in the community and university, sensationalized television talk shows, and law enforcement efforts to stop rumors of secret morgues and unreported additional deaths (Students at University of Florida struggle to cope with grisly murders, 1990).

The university's use of the media to communicate with the public was also new. It took advantage of the massive interest by the national and state media. Coordination of official responses by the central administration allowed the university to tell its story of concern and support to all who wanted to listen and ultimately allowed the students to return to campus and resume normal operations despite an unresolved police investigation. The national media was forever tied to subsequent events on college campuses, regardless of their scope. No photo opportunity or sound bite was out of reach, and in fact, all were available for immediate broadcast and publication as events unfolded. This was in marked contrast to the response to a similar incident at Florida State University that had occurred back in 1974, when one Saturday night Ted Bundy murdered two women in a sorority house on that campus. The university staff had all day Sunday to prepare before the national and state media descended on Tallahassee on Monday. But in 1990, it became clear that this kind of time to plan a coherent and consistent response was no longer available. The planning now had to become part of any campus's general preparation for responding to tragedy and crisis.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1991–1992

Not all crises come in forms visible to the naked eye. Over a 15-month period spanning 1991–1992, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and surrounding communities were stalked by a sinister yet invisible killer: meningococemia. A bacterial infection that begins with flu-like symptoms causes an inflammation of the lining of the brain and the spinal cord or blood infections. Treatment with antibiotics during the earliest stages of the infection are usually successful, but because the symptoms resemble those of the flu, effective treatment may be delayed, causing devastating results in some cases (University of Illinois immunizes 5,700 after 2 meningitis deaths, 1991). The group living conditions of

many student populations, such as campus residence halls or Greek letter chapter houses, exacerbate the potential for transmittal of the infection. Coupled with substantial misinformation about meningitis, the fear of contagion and harm resulted in a health crisis for the institution that required a large-scale response. Meanwhile, eight students at UIUC and one at neighboring Parkland College were infected with meningococemia, and tragically, three died. Yet 5,700 students at UIUC were given oral antibiotics after the first two students died in 1991, and over the next year, 18,000 more were given free vaccinations in an attempt to stop the spread of the infection and ease the tension in the community (U. of I. student has meningitis-related infection, 1992).

Subsequent to this incident, some states, under focused lobbying by drug companies and interest groups, have required colleges and universities to inform incoming students of the increased risk of infection associated with living in high-density communities like residence halls in an attempt to have more of them vaccinated prior to enrollment. As new vaccines are developed, this particular type of large-scale health crisis may disappear. However, the ability of institutions to mobilize their resources to respond to health crises remains an important piece of any crisis preparation. With bioterrorism now a strong concern at the Department of Homeland Security, large-scale events and high-visibility populations of young people at colleges and universities make attractive targets for release of toxins and viral agents that could quickly cause widespread health crises.

California State University, Northridge, 1994

Each region of the world has its own unique natural disasters to which local residents must respond. The U.S. Gulf Coast and East Coast must prepare for hurricanes, whereas parts of the Midwest must be ready to respond to tornados or heavy snow. The West Coast is forever linked in the public's mind to earthquakes and their devastation.

On January 17, 1994, Southern California experienced a 6.7 magnitude earthquake with its epicenter only a mile from the California State University, Northridge (CSUN) campus. At the time considered the most costly natural disaster in U.S. history, with damage estimated at up to \$40 billion (Rodrigue et al., 1997), this tragedy is viewed as a case study in how to recover effectively.

Throughout Los Angeles, the devastation was overwhelming, with over 114,000 buildings damaged, 9,000 injuries, and 72 deaths, including two CSUN students. Particularly hard hit (though not suffering the greatest damage in the area) was the CSUN campus: All 107 buildings were either damaged or destroyed, at a resultant cost of \$400 million. Despite the

damage, CSUN opened the spring semester only four weeks late with classes being taught in tents, trailers, inflatable buildings, even on fields. Extraordinary actions and a total commitment to recovery were necessary for this to occur in so short a time span. Despite significant damage to the main library (90% of the books had been dumped on the floor by the motion of the building), the core of the building was restored to service in the fall of 1994. (CSUN Oviatt Library, 2014). The emotional impact on the community and the campus was substantial, forcing many residents to leave the area and placing heavy debt burdens on those without insurance who chose to rebuild. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) played a big role in helping fund the recovery, with all the usual bureaucratic complications of documenting need and recovery costs. FEMA provided \$63 million as the federal share of the \$320 million needed to restore the campus. The financial impact of a crisis can put at risk an institution's future ability to function at any level, or at best, can affect it negatively by draining resources for growth that must be used just to rebuild to status quo.

University of Wyoming, 1998

Sometimes personal tragedies transcend an incident and become the basis for a new awareness about unresolved problems in our society on a national scale. Much like the events surrounding Jeanne Clery's death, this is how the events in Laramie, Wyoming, played out over the weeks surrounding what at first glance seemed a single act of bigotry and violence against a young man named Matthew Shepard. Shepard died after being brutally beaten, tied to a fence, and then abandoned in a remote area outside of Laramie. During the course of the investigation, the public would discover that two men who had masqueraded as gay men to gain the confidence of the openly gay Shepard had given him a ride from a local bar (Hurst, 1999). The subsequent explosion of grief and anger, coupled with the onslaught of homophobic reactions from across the nation, brought this horrible act to the forefront of our collective consciousness. Inside of a few days, this deeply personal family tragedy became a cause for the LGBT community to rally around and point to as an example of the ongoing prejudice against gay and lesbian Americans. The institution became subject to a media problem of different proportions. The president of the university recognized that, "A small town with no television station and one daily newspaper that publishes less than two dozen pages daily, six days a week, was stunned by the arrival of network satellite trucks and correspondents camped on the lawn of the Albany County Courthouse representing all of the alphabet media (NBC, CBS, ABC, FOX, CNN) and

Court TV.” (Dubois, 2003). Now, in addition to the television and print media seeking photos or video and sound bites to fill the 24-hour news channels, the public weighed in across the Internet, overwhelming the computer and human resources of the University of Wyoming. Internet coverage and direct e-mail attacking the campus administration and media staff required responses to clarify misconceptions and exaggerations (Dubois, 2003). Thousands of e-mails, both in sympathy for Matthew Shepard and expressing hatred and bigotry toward homosexuals, inundated the institution’s mail servers. The overload placed substantial stress on the university network and the ability of university media staff to respond effectively. The university web site was used to circulate positive stories about the university to attempt to counteract the negative and sensationalized news stories appearing in the print and electronic media. The internet had arrived as a major force in communicating during a crisis.

Texas A&M University, 1999

When our students share cherished traditions, we assist in maintaining them as opportunities to develop teamwork and leadership and provide a connection across time for our campuses to establish a sense of belonging. Many traditions are intimate and personal for those involved, others based on legends or folktales from the institution’s past. Others still may be highly ceremonial, requiring direct engagement by the community as participants or on-site observers. Until 1999, one of the most profoundly unique traditions on a college campus was the annual Bonfire, held at Texas A&M University during the week leading up to the football game with the University of Texas. Hundreds of students would organize into highly structured units to share in the honor of participating in a 90-year-old tradition that was without equal.

As is often the case with campus tragedies, they happen despite the best efforts of dedicated and well-meaning professionals to avoid them. Preparation for different contingencies and thoughtful and carefully managed risk management reviews provide us with a sense of security. But in the early morning of November 18, 1999, all the planning and careful preparation by generations of students, faculty, and staff came crashing down when 12 individuals lost their lives in the tangle of logs that had been the Bonfire construction site.

The ubiquitous availability of cell phones spread word of the tragedy quickly through the campus and the state. Recovery and identification of the injured and killed took place under the glare of emergency lighting and curious and concerned bystanders. Electronic intercepts of communications between students and among university staff by local media caused

information to be released prior to notification of kin, further damaging the university's image. As at the University of Wyoming, communication systems including e-mail and telephone lines were overwhelmed, putting yet more stress on the campus community's support system (Bonfire collapse Texas A&M University: College Station, Texas-November 1999, 1999). With this increasingly frenetic intrusion by outside media, the institution's ability to respond effectively and in a timely manner was eroded. Resources had to be reallocated from direct service to the community to focus instead on communicating with the many constituencies that demanded attention. The loss of the 12 individuals at Texas A&M led to the loss of a very special student experience, the Bonfire, for future generations of students, and it took something away from the institution that it will probably never regain.

New York City—Washington, D.C.—Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 2001

Planning, training, and preparing for campus crises require an ongoing and inward focus on available resources that can be brought to bear on foreseeable incidents. No one imagined that what we all saw on our television sets on September 11, 2001, would ever happen. How could we have prepared our country or our students for the trauma inflicted on New York, Washington, and the Pennsylvania countryside? What was a clear and immediate danger and horror to the citizens directly affected by these terrorist acts became a crisis of faith in our personal and national security when the towers of the World Trade Center collapsed as rubble right before our eyes on live television.

It appeared on that day that “everyone was a New Yorker” and the nation grieved together. College campuses across the United States became places of mourning, with traumatized individuals and hurriedly organized ceremonies of remembrance arranged by staff as worried and concerned as all other citizens. Fearful families struggled to reunite while airline service was totally disrupted with the uncertainty of our safety. There appeared to be no end in sight from an enemy characterized as far away and at the same time living among us. A war with an enemy we did not understand had begun, and we began to realize it would affect us for the rest of our lives, and most likely the lives of our children too. Our society entered a permanent state of crisis, with color-coded warnings and dire predictions of subsequent terrorist acts. University campuses were no longer islands of scholarship and learning for our best and brightest. They were now “soft targets” in a war without traditional battle lines, and our crisis plans became immediately obsolete.

Hurricane Katrina, 2005

The hurricane season that runs from July to November of each year has taken on increased national interest with the advent of 24-hour weather stations and news coverage. Watching a disaster approach for weeks via satellite imagery, with hourly updates of the destruction it causes along the way, becomes mesmerizing to the residents in its path. After Andrew (a Category 5 hurricane) hit South Florida in 1991, campuses had become more conscious of the impact a major storm could have on their lives. The devastation to Miami and three of its higher education institutions (the University of Miami, Florida International University, and Miami-Dade Community College) have been studied since that time to help us prepare for the possibility of another event of this magnitude. Little did we know that the benchmark we used as the worst possible situation would be surpassed.

Katrina began as a Category 1 hurricane, striking the Florida coast just north of Miami on August 25, 2005 resulting in the death of 14 people. After crossing the Florida Peninsula into the Gulf of Mexico, it gained strength, and after briefly becoming a Category 5 storm, made landfall on the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005, as a Category 3, with sustained winds of 125 miles per hour recorded at Biloxi and Gulfport Mississippi. Possibly the largest hurricane of its strength ever recorded, it caused destruction all along the Gulf Coast from Mississippi to Louisiana, with its greatest impact on the city of New Orleans (Rushton, 2015) Katrina will forever be remembered for the impact it had on New Orleans as a storm surge breached the levee system that protected the city from Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River and flooded a significant part of the city in up to 10 feet of water. Over 1 million people were displaced, destruction was estimated at as much as \$75 billion, over 1,800 deaths occurred, and much of the city of New Orleans was abandoned as unlivable. As of December 2005, over 4,000 residents were still unaccounted for, with many presumed dead. If the residents still unaccounted for are reclassified as deaths, Katrina may ultimately be considered the second most deadly hurricane in U.S. history (Brunner, 2005; Pickrell, 2005).

The infrastructure of New Orleans was in ruins. In addition to losing such basic services as water, security, transportation, and sanitation, the educational system across the city disappeared, the result of either rising water or the evacuation of students. With the destruction so complete, the institutions of the city were unable to reopen even after the levees were repaired and the water was finally pumped back into Lake Pontchartrain. Students at the city's universities (Tulane, Loyola, Xavier, Dillard, Southern, and the University of New Orleans, to name the most prominent)

sought enrollment in institutions across the country, and many institutions opened their doors to them as “walk-ins” or “temporary transfer students.” The institutions themselves were left to rebuild without a significant portion of the staff and faculty, who were also unable to return to their homes. Over \$200 million in damage to Tulane and the loss of tuition income for the fall semester forced the university to lay off 230 faculty and terminate five undergraduate programs and more than half of its doctoral programs. Eight nonrevenue NCAA athletic programs were also terminated (Johnson, 2005). The three historic African-American institutions were hit harder than Tulane and the University of New Orleans and had fewer resources with which to recover. Dillard University, Xavier University, and Southern University shared \$1 billion in flood and fire damage affecting over 8,000 students. Dillard at one point floated in upwards of 10 feet of water and lost three residence halls to fire. At Southern University, Chancellor Edward Jackson conjectured that all eleven buildings on their campus would have to be replaced at a cost of \$500 million (Romano, 2005).

Although all the institutions reopened for spring semester, only about 73% of the students formerly enrolled at the city’s four-year institutions returned. Dillard University’s campus remained closed, but the university was able to secure one-third of the rooms at the Hilton to house the 1,000 students who reenrolled. Tulane, Xavier, and the University of New Orleans, even with repairs, used trailers provided by FEMA placed in parking lots and playing fields to house staff and students, as housing in the city remained in short supply. Predictions aside that more students will continue to return the institutions to pre-Katrina enrollment levels, all of the institutions continue to this day to face a daunting task to full recovery. The impact of this loss of fiscal and human resources will forever change them all and may indeed force the closure of the weaker ones if substantial financial assistance is not obtained. Scott Cowen, president of Tulane University, stated: “This is the most significant reinvention of a university in the United States in over a century” (Johnson, 2005). Delgado Community College had only half of its 17,400 students return in the spring, and two technical schools in the city were unable to open in spring 2006. With a student population made up primarily of local residents, it is understandable that the recovery may be longer for these institutions as the citizens of New Orleans must first return and restore some normalcy to their lives before they can begin the task of balancing work, family, and a college education (Konigsmark, 2006).

One of the few bright spots to be found in this tragedy was the remarkable level of inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration. Almost immediately, public and private institutions across the nation opened their doors to displaced students so that they could continue their education during

the recovery process. The Tulane University Medical School moved to Baylor University to continue its programs, and due to the lack of patients in New Orleans in a drastically reduced city population, remained there after the reopening. Help even came from inside New Orleans, as Tulane and Loyola Universities offered space to Dillard and Xavier to assist them in their successful efforts to reopen in spring 2006. The American Council on Education (ACE) and the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) jointly developed CampusRelief.org. Described on this web site as “Campus to Campus Disaster Assistance,” it serves as a clearinghouse of information for students, faculty, staff, and institutions to assist in the recovery and relocation process. As college campuses face new challenges, this service may continue and possibly grow in usefulness and importance to institutions.

Despite the devastation and personal tragedy that resulted from Katrina in Louisiana and the other Gulf Coast states, this new collaboration between institutions has offered an opportunity for universities and colleges with differing missions to focus on the role they all view at their center: providing postsecondary instruction to students on a residential campus. Lessons can be shared, and now it appears that even resources can be shared, among institutions that before Katrina seemed divided by an uncrossable chasm formed through history, traditions, and culture. Tragedy and crisis have a way of changing how we view the world around us. Even universities—so set in their ways and committed to following their own agendas—can be moved to new models of service and teaching when given the opportunity.

Virginia Tech, 2007

As we are confronted with each new tragedy on our campuses, it would seem that we would eventually be immune to the shock of the next event, or even indifferent as one more tragedy takes its place in our collective memory. Our false belief that “we have seen it all” can be shattered in a moment and once again forever change how we see our campuses and the potential for crises to occur when we least expect them. On April 15, 2007, on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), events of the day rippled through the university and subsequently other higher education communities across the nation. Over the span of approximately three hours, a student, Seung Hui Cho, shot and killed 33 members of the university community and wounded another 22 individuals making it the deadliest shooting on a school campus in history, easily outdistancing incidents at the University of Texas at Austin and Columbine High School in Colorado. After killing two individuals in West

Ambler Johnson residence hall at 7:15 a.m., he walked across campus to Norris Hall, a science and engineering classroom building, where some of the building exit doors had been chained, methodically walked through the halls and classrooms shooting students and faculty he encountered (Hauser & O'Connor, 2007).

The gunman was well known by members of the university community to have mental health concerns, including faculty, the university's Care Team, and the counseling center. However, in a post incident review, it was determined that due to differing interpretations of the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) appropriate information sharing between campus professionals was impeded (Report to the President on Issues Raised by the Virginia Tech Tragedy, June 13, 2007, p. 7). Individuals with important information about this troubled student was not shared with critical staff who might have interceded to avoid the tragedy. The impact of the incident and the extensive review by the University, the State of Virginia and the Federal Bureau of Investigation determined that this widespread confusion about federal and state laws governing health care provided in educational settings led to failure to share information and passivity in responding to a student clearly in need of mental health services (Mass Shootings at Virginia Tech, Report of the Review Panel, 2007).

As a result of the shootings at Virginia Tech, it is now commonplace for institutions to form "students of concern" committees comprised of student affairs professionals, police representatives, faculty and mental health providers. These groups meet regularly to share information, discuss appropriate referral practices and monitor the known behavior of students who may be struggling with some aspect of their life as a student. In more recent years, many of these committees have either evolved or have incorporated a process to assess potential threats that could result from the behavior of students and others on campus. There is still no proven way to accurately predict violence by individuals, but it is widely believed that sharing information and providing appropriate levels of mental health support can mitigate potential problems before they ever reach the threshold of violence to self or others. In actuality, institutions don't have the resources to do more than routine checks and balances without becoming a bureaucracy with oppressive management structures (Genshaft, 2014) but the challenge remains; identifying individuals in need of services and when able, provide an array of services that alleviate threats, and provides care and support to members of the community. Changes on college campus as a result of the tragedy in Blacksburg Virginia have made most campuses safer, but not immune to senseless acts where violence occurs due to mental illness or anger.

Penn State, 2011

Crises that are the result of the act of an individual or group of individuals can be singularly frustrating for an institution to address. At Pennsylvania State University on November 4, 2011, a Grand Jury Report was released charging Jerry Sandusky, a former assistant football coach, now retired, with 40 criminal counts of sexually abusing eight young boys over a 15-year period. Also charged were Athletic Director Tim Curley and Senior Vice President for Finance and Business Gary Schultz for felony perjury and failure to report abuse allegations. The impact on Penn State began immediately. On November 7th both Curley and Schultz resigned from their positions. On November 9th, Joe Paterno the iconic football coach who was universally revered in the Penn State community, announced his plan to retire at the end of the 2011 season, but hours later, the university trustees announced that both he and President Graham Spanier were fired effective immediately (Ganim, 2011, November 5).

In the independent investigations and criminal proceedings that followed since 2011, the missteps of the university and its administration provides a case study of how not to handle the reporting of criminal activity that occurs with institutional knowledge. Jerry Sandusky retired as assistant football coach under Head Coach Joe Paterno in 1999, but retained his access to campus athletic facilities in an emeritus status. It was determined that he used university athletic facilities to work with troubled boys from The Second Mile, a group foster home he founded in 1977. Many of the incidents of molestation occurred in the Lasch Building housing the Penn State Football program of which Mr. Sandusky had a key, and open access. To make matters worse, after a report in 2002 by a graduate assistant reported seeing Mr. Sandusky molesting a student in a shower in the Lasch Building, Mr. Sandusky was “banned” from bringing children affiliated with his charity to the building, but it was never enforced, and the incident was never reported to law enforcement authorities. The more law enforcement investigated the allegations, the more troubling the incident became. Officials uncovered years of sexual abuse of 26 young boys by Mr. Sandusky, many on the Penn State campus, and an alleged cover-up of reports to university authorities in the Athletic Department and to other high-ranking university authorities, including the President, as far back as 1971. An independent investigation lead by former FBI Director Louis Freeh found that the leaders of Penn State showed a “total and consistent disregard” for child sex abuse victims while covering up the attacks of a longtime sexual predator. Coach Paterno died in January 2012, just months after the incident became public, without ever speaking to law enforcement authorities. The repercussions of these incidents resulted in

significant impact to the individuals involved and the university. Some of the most significant include:

- Jerry Sandusky was convicted in June 2012 and sentenced to not less than 30 years and no more than 60 years in prison.
- In July 2012, the NCAA announces a \$60 million fine against Penn State and bans the team from postseason for four years among additional penalties.
- In March 2017, both Mr. Curly and Mr. Schulz both plead guilty to misdemeanor charges of endangering the welfare of children, and served three and two months in prison, respectively.
- President Spanier was convicted of endangering the welfare of children, but in April 2019 his conviction was vacated when a court decided the criminal statute used to convict him was not in place when the incidents occurred.
- The university was fined \$2.4 million by the Department of Education (the largest in history) for violating the Clery Act.
- In January 2018, Penn State announces it has paid \$109 million in legal settlements to the 26 victims of Sandusky.

During a span of over 40 years, this tragedy of pain and suffering for many of these young boys could have been avoided with different decisions along the way. Cover-ups of criminal acts are never in the best interest of an organization and when discovered cause a crime or violation to become a crisis (CNN Editorial Research, 2019, November, 27) Penn State University is changed because of the mishandling of the reported acts of Mr. Sandusky but so are we all, as states have subsequently added legislation to hold public officials, especially educators, accountable for reporting any allegation of sexual abuse of a child. Summer camps on college campuses, a staple of summer semesters at colleges and universities, seem so much more problematic after the discoveries at Penn State. While they were always opportunities with a high level of risk, the programs and staff who bring young children to our campuses each summer, now receive extra attention and oversight.

Penn State-Fraternity Hazing, 2017

The history of fraternities and sororities on college and university campuses is also a history of hazing as a rite of passage and entry into these popular secret societies. They promise social acceptance and lifelong connections to an organization comprised of like-minded men or women, but at a price. At its mildest and most benign, hazing of new members to an

organization consists of pranks, teasing and innocuous work details ostensibly designed to prove commitment and to build bonds between members of a select and special group of young men or women. If it only were to stay in that form, hazing would not be the national problem that it has become over the past 40 years. Incidents of increasing danger, risky behavior, physical violence, and abusive drinking of alcohol by members of selective organizations, especially Greek letter social clubs, have resulted in injury and death of young men that could easily have been avoided if more mature and thoughtful individuals had stepped in at key moments. Efforts by student affairs staff and state laws passed through the dedicated work of surviving parents after a tragic loss, endeavored to stop the senseless loss of another student from hazing, but to no avail. This circumstance appears to be different. It seems a line was finally crossed by the events at the Beta Theta Pi house at Penn State on February 2, 2017.

The events that transpired that night reveal a story familiar in so many ways; a group of young men in a fraternity house, drinking excessively throughout the evening. As events started to deteriorate, poor judgement and refusing to seek assistance from medical providers compounded a dangerous chain of events. Timothy Piazza, spent the evening with his fraternity brothers drinking vodka and alcohol in excess before falling multiple times, including once down a flight of stairs. His blood alcohol content was calculated to be between .28 and .36, significantly over the legal limit of impairment of .08. The result of his falls included multiple brain injuries, a fractured skull, and a lacerated spleen. Fraternity members chose to take care of him themselves and did not call 911 until the next morning. He died as a result of his injuries two days later (Bacon, 2019, April, 3).

Members of the fraternity involved in the evening's activities were initially charged with multiple misdemeanors and felonies including hazing, providing alcohol to a minor, tampering with evidence, and involuntary manslaughter. Most of the night had been documented on surveillance footage from security cameras in the fraternity house. Three of the members were sentenced to jail and fined after pleading guilty, though they were later permitted to serve their time in house arrest. The fraternity was barred from the university and strict new regulations were imposed on Greek life, restricting the use of alcohol and permissible parties (Stolberg, 2017, May 5). President Eric Barron has been a leader in a national anti-hazing crusade, led in part by Piazza's parents, and laws to toughen penalties against hazing have been passed in Pennsylvania and other states. Barron has teamed with the presidents of Florida State University and Louisiana State University (both with hazing deaths since Piazza's) to try and change the status quo by developing a national score card to evaluate and improve Greek life organizations and eliminate hazing (Brown, 2018,

August 2). The discussions continue between presidents, Greek life leaders, and student affairs staff on campuses across the country. Due, in part to Timothy Piazza's death, campuses today are quicker to take action against a Greek chapter or an entire Greek life community when hazing is discovered. The challenges remain and abusive drinking and hazing continue, but the responses and level of action is different and more direct and substantial than prior to the events at Penn State. More importantly, the presidents of institutions are more engaged and their support to take strong and swift action provides universities the ability to make substantial changes if they choose.

Campus Activism

Since 2008, several national movements developed across the United States and found support on college and university campuses. Sparked by the deaths of young black men in confrontations with police officers, an organic, "leaderless" movement against the wealth inequality in the United States (Gautney, 2011), a movement supporting victims of sexual abuse started in 2006, that exploded on to the national scene in 2017 with the #MeToo hashtag quickly becoming a national phenomenon (Nicolau & Smith, 2019), and a national movement against gun violence started by survivors of the 2018 mass shootings at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland Florida all generated high visibility events in the national news. Sit-ins, teach-ins, marches, walk-outs, and social media campaigns on Twitter and Facebook, were used by students to raise awareness on our campuses and put us all on notice that a new generation of activism by students had arrived.

Since the anti-war and civil rights movements that embroiled campuses in the 1960s and 70s, no large-scale movement has galvanized students to this degree. The focus of each of the actions cited above have to date, segmented the student population, and none have been able to connect the impacted groups into a larger and more powerful coalition of interests. Each one is influential and powerful in their own right, but limited in its impact on the national scene by the size and scope of their adherents. The issue for all of us in higher education is to watch for the spark that will unite these movements (and those yet to come) into a voice with breadth and depth across the population. What will unite this new generation of activists into a force to be truly reckoned with and demand our undivided attention in the years ahead? Will our experience with the alt-right political movement and Occupy Wall Street prepare us for the clashes and conflicts inherent in campus demonstrations to change the status quo? Who will be the voice on university campuses that prepares administrators for the day

when students and outside community members come together in significant numbers and demand action? Now is the time to prepare, train, and plan for what will possibly be upon us in the years ahead. Crisis managers, university administrators, and student affairs staff will be expected to appropriately respond to the peaceful and disruptive forces that materialize. Plans must be in place for potential events using all available resources and predictions of what could develop. We owe it to our students and our institutions to be ready for what comes next.

WHAT IS A CRISIS?

History has shown that campus crises have had a significant impact on higher education—our students, their families, and society as a whole. Having just listed a series of crisis events, the temptation is to plunge forward with the assumption that everyone knows what a crisis is. But the reality is that how we define crisis varies significantly from one individual to another and from one institution to another. For example, everyone has probably heard a colleague describe a particularly difficult workday as one spent “running from one crisis to the next.” In our culture we also use terms like midlife crisis, identity crisis, or marital crisis. In addition, the media often offers such news story headlines as “Middle-East Crisis” or “Crisis in [Insert Any Country].” But how can the same word be used to describe one individual’s workday, a challenging life transition, a war that has affected the global community for decades, and the complex and wide-ranging disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina? Although each of these examples conveys a general understanding of the concept of crisis, the specific meaning clearly varies greatly.

The same is true in the professional literature on crisis and crisis management. Although there is general agreement and understanding of the concept, there is no common or widely accepted definition of the word (Auerbach & Kilmann, 1977; Coombs, 1999; Hermann, 1972). Each author seems to develop his or her own unique definition. Some of the more frequently cited definitions of crisis are these:

- “An organizational crisis (1) threatens high-priority values of the organization, (2) presents a restricted amount of time in which a response can be made, and (3) is unexpected or unanticipated by the organization” (Hermann, 1963, p. 63).
- A crisis is “an unstable time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending—either one with the distinct possibility of a highly undesirable outcome or one with the distinct possibility of a highly desirable and extremely positive outcome” (Fink, 1986, p. 15).

- A crisis is “a disruption that physically affects a system as a whole and threatens its basic assumptions, its subjective sense of self, its existential core” (Pauchant & Mitroff, 1992, p. 12).
- A crisis is “a major unpredictable event that has potentially negative results. The event and its aftermath may significantly damage an organization and its employees, products, services, financial condition, and reputation” (Barton, 1993, p. 2).

CHARACTERISTICS OF CRISIS

Although similar in concept, each of these definitions emphasizes different characteristics that the authors felt were important to explaining and understanding the concept. These characteristics often influence how organizations and individuals interpret or perceive a crisis. If we examine these definitions, we can find some common characteristics: a negative event or outcome, the element of surprise, limited response time, disruption of operations, and a threat to the safety and well-being of people. Further discussion of these characteristics can be helpful as we seek to understand the nature of crisis and develop a definition of crisis management that is appropriate for the college and university setting.

Perception of the Event or Outcome

Most people would describe a crisis as being a negative event or having a negative outcome. A crisis event often poses a threat to an organization or institution. It can threaten an organization’s mission and goals, its people, its financial status, its reputation, or its continued existence.

It can also be argued, however, that a crisis can be both a positive and a negative event. Steven Fink (1986), sometimes referred to as the father of modern crisis management theory, suggests that a crisis can have either a desirable or an undesirable outcome. He claims that a crisis’s not necessarily bad, but involves the elements of “risk and uncertainty” that people generally attribute to negative outcomes (Fink, 1986, p. 15). He notes that the Chinese symbol for crisis is a combination of two words—danger and opportunity. How an organization responds to and resolves a crisis can clearly have an impact on its future. Herein lies the importance of effective crisis management.

Element of Surprise

Another characteristic often associated with a crisis is the element of surprise. This characteristic, however, is frequently debated in the literature.