

# **CREATING A SAFE CAMPUS**

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In addition to his significant accomplishments as a police administrator, Nichols serves as a law enforcement consultant to both university and municipal police agencies. He has been an expert witness in several cases related to campus security. He has assisted public school officials in developing safety and security procedures. A former public school teacher, he currently serves on the Jacksonville City Board of Education. He has distinguished himself as a guest speaker, lecturer, and workshop presenter for professional associations and police groups.

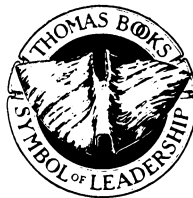
# CREATING A SAFE CAMPUS

## A Guide For College and University Administrators

*By*

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## PREFACE

Higher education officials understand the significance of a positive and attractive campus environment in which their students can pursue their academic, social, and personal goals. They also appreciate the image projected by a pleasant campus and the impact that can have on prospective students, parents, alumni, board members, and the public. Recognizing that the perceptions of these constituencies are critical to the institution, assiduous college and university administrators know the importance of creating a safe campus.

Crime and violence have intruded our campuses. Once considered sanctuaries from the outside influences of criminals and perpetrators of evil doings, today many campuses reflect the ills of our society. As the crime rate in the United States has dramatically escalated in the past decade, so has fear and anxiety among everyday Americans. These concerns are especially shared by the mothers and fathers who send their children off to college only to be inundated with media reports which depict college campuses as danger zones where students are murdered, raped, and robbed at will. While few of our nation's campuses are actually ravaged by crime and violence, the issue of safety on campus has become a critical one for students, parents, and higher education officials. In fact, campus crime was raised to a national awareness level as evidenced by the passage by Congress of the Campus Security Act of 1990, a significant law requiring colleges and universities to report crime and develop better security programs. Issues of liability, negligence, duty of care and other legal matters relating to student safety also gained the attention of both public and private university officials.

While some campus administrators have moved to comply with legal mandates and to enhance security measures, many officials have not yet developed a broad-based, comprehensive approach to creating a safe campus. Consequently, they continue to deal with recurring problems of crime, violence, and a wide array of misconduct which diminish campus life and create a serious perception dilemma for the institution. The first

three chapters of this volume are designed to offer college and university officials a realistic view of today's campus environment. They also present issues and threats which impact the campus community and its students. The remaining seven chapters offer practical recommendations which are presented in terms of critical components for creating a safe campus. These seven critical components are: (1) effective student affairs; (2) effective police and security services; (3) community policing; (4) secure campus housing; (5) physical/environmental security; (6) records, reporting, and disclosure; and (7) a collaborative approach. Perhaps the common denominator in accomplishing this is the idea of a campus-wide, shared responsibility. Reducing crime and the risks associated with violence, disorders, and misconduct is not just a police or security concern, but rather it should be a collaborative effort.

This book should assist student affairs professionals, campus judicial officers, housing personnel, campus police/security officials, faculty, and university administrators, whatever their titles, in their concerted efforts to create a safe campus. It is written for campus officials at varying types and sizes of institutions to include public or private, urban or rural, four-year or two-year, commuter or residential, liberal arts or technical, professional or undergraduate, and small or large. I hope that this book will contribute to the recognition and acceptance of sound principles and practices that will enhance the quality of life on our campuses across the nation.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Preface</i> .....	v
<i>Chapter</i>	
1. The College Campus in Transition .....	3
2. Issues and Impacts of Campus Crime .....	12
3. Threats To a Safe Campus .....	27
4. Effective Student Affairs .....	48
5. Effective Police and Security Services .....	66
6. Community Policing on Campus .....	83
7. Secure Campus Housing .....	103
8. Physical/Environmental Security .....	124
9. Records, Reporting, and Disclosure .....	140
10. A Collaborative Approach .....	153
<i>Index</i> .....	173



# **CREATING A SAFE CAMPUS**



## Chapter 1

### THE COLLEGE CAMPUS IN TRANSITION

#### THE EARLY YEARS

Higher education institutions in America have fostered enormous changes and have influenced our society's social, political, and economic transformation for more than three centuries. Colleges and universities have made significant contributions to a growing nation through research, service, and teaching. Scientific breakthroughs, technological advancements, cultural enrichment, and educational improvements are all direct impacts of higher education. In turn, colleges and universities with their varied missions and goals have been constrained, propagated, and molded by political officials, government programs, the national economy, and a constantly changing political/social agenda. These postsecondary institutions have, at times, endured the impacts of an insufficient national wealth, world wars, depression, inflation, political upheaval, and social convulsions. At other times they have been the recipients of huge federally funded programs, legislative mandates, philanthropic contributions, record enrollments, and burgeoning economies. To some extent it can be said that America's higher education institutions and the nation with its political/social/economic nature have a reciprocal relationship. In many ways colleges and universities often mirror society's health, wealth, and national agenda.

This is of particular significance when examining environmental aspects of the college campus. This was true as far back as the late 1600s when colonial college officials labored to replicate the elaborate quadrangular dormitories found in Oxford and Cambridge. They felt that these living arrangements would create a special intellectual and social atmosphere. However, due to an insufficient national wealth and little or no government support, these early American colleges' "barracks-like dormitories were not designed to foster the characteristics of a close and well-knit social life . . ."1.

Today's colleges and universities also experience the impacts of our

nation's political and economic agendas. Even in the mid-1990s, nearly three centuries removed from the colonial colleges, colleges and universities face financial aid cut-backs and an increasing austere national economy which threaten academic programs.<sup>2</sup>

The issue of campus crime, violence, and student misconduct offers a poignant example of how campus environments reflect the mood and conditions of society at large. In the early years of American higher education, college campuses were generally tranquil communities where little real crime occurred. Minor infractions and violations were usually the responsibility of faculty members.<sup>3</sup> Much like American society during those years, some upheaval did occasionally occur. During the early 1800s, a few isolated student riots, disruptions, and brawls were reported on several American college campuses. In 1807, at Princeton more than half of the student body was suspended for a violent rebellion. The usually quiet campus of Harvard was disrupted by a brawl in 1820 and in 1834 experienced a student riot. In 1841, town-versus-gown confrontations occurred between Yale students and local New Haven firemen.<sup>4</sup>

These incidents simply mirrored similar conditions of a growing nation. During this same period the most common complaints received by town constables and local police were minor misconduct, i.e., disorderly conduct, drunkenness, and fighting. Like the college campuses of this era, a few isolated towns and cities experienced riots—some minor and some disastrous. For example, as early as 1805 constables in Charleston, South Carolina were authorized by city ordinances to control “tumultuous riots.”<sup>5</sup> Sometime later in 1863 the bloodiest riot in United States history occurred in New York City (1,200 people killed and 8,000 injured!)<sup>6</sup> Despite these uncommon incidents, street crime and random violence in America did not reach the proportions of modern day crime rates. Crime was certainly not on the national agenda of issues of concern to Americans. These preindustrial years were marked by a rural, agrarian society which found little need of police forces, especially in small towns and cities, until the mid-1800s. Campuses similarly had little real crime and no need for security forces or police. They remained generally idyllic settings reserved for a relative small number of elite who could afford the luxury of higher education.

## INFLUENCES OF CHANGE

A century later, the picture changed significantly across the country and on many of our nation's campuses. Several major factors came together just prior to and during the 1960s which transformed higher education since colonial times to a multi-billion dollar industry it is today. These factors included increased enrollments, increased endowments, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement, the popularity of recreational drug use, a social revolution, and program adaptations for nontraditional students. Perhaps the single most influential impact on higher education was federal funding. The National Defense Education Act of 1958 provided millions of dollars in student loans to undergraduates, graduate fellowships, and subsidies to university-based teacher-training programs. By 1960, the federal government was spending for research programs alone over \$750,000,000 a year in educational institutions and allied research centers. By 1962, over two billion dollars had been loaned through the Housing and Home Financing Agency to colleges and universities (public and private) to build dormitories and other revenue-producing facilities. The Higher Education Act of 1965 was the first federal measure to provide a broad permanent program of financial aid to both public and private colleges as well as to individual college students. This omnibus act provided millions of dollars to higher education institutions to solve community problems, improve and expand libraries, and to raise the quality of academic programs.<sup>7</sup> America moved rapidly from a few small colleges serving the wealthy and socially elite to the world's most egalitarian system of higher education.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

These tremendous impacts on American higher education also caused a dramatic environmental change to the campus. Increased enrollments coupled with a more diverse student population created a different social atmosphere. Political and cultural issues—the civil rights movement, drugs, the draft and Vietnam War protests—became rallying points for many students. As in the nineteenth century, the 1960s reflect parallels with the campus climate and that of American society. In both the South and North, civil rights demonstrations brought protestors into direct confrontation with the police. The frustration of African-Americans finally exploded into violent disorders in 1964. Riots broke out in Los