



Rutgers Newark Campus Threat Assessment Team and Guidelines for Preventing and Responding to Campus Violence *updated October 2009*

Introduction

The 2007 tragedy at Virginia Tech reminds all in higher education of the vulnerability of our college campuses. Acts of violence and threats, whether from students or strangers, staff or faculty, can destroy the fabric of community and the well-being of the campus. Rutgers Newark is aware of the vulnerability of its open campus which is, in many ways, seamless with the Newark community.

Although the campus has in place crisis management systems to help us recognize and respond to potentially threatening individuals or situations, we continue to assess the need to improve our processes and systems in order to evaluate campus safety and security to the best of our ability and to respond to the mental health needs of our students to prevent danger to them and to others. Therefore, the campus has established a *zero tolerance* policy for violence against all members of the campus community – in the workplace, classroom and on campus property. These guidelines apply to all faculty, staff, students and visitors at the campus.

Threat Assessment Team (T.A.T.)

The Rutgers-Newark *Threat Assessment Team* (TAT) is a multi-disciplinary team and component of the campus emergency management system. The primary responsibility of the TAT is to address and respond to situations involving threats or acts of violence on campus. Its membership (see below) is based on situational need and will be drawn from administrators charged with specific functions related to campus safety, as well as representatives of key campus constituencies.

First Responder Authority will typically be with the Campus Public Safety Department, which will work closely with the TAT when a situation escalates and institutional level responses are required, especially where weapons are involved. Campus Safety will also report such incidents simultaneously to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration and the Vice Provost for Student and Community Affairs

The TAT will consist of senior level administrators, led by the Director of Campus Safety as Chair, and will meet several times a year (and at least once a semester) to review emergency plans, coordinate plans to address threats, and assess campus capability as follows:

- Identify and review response options, in consultation with police
- Ensure effective implementation of appropriate crisis management and intervention protocols
- Assess the post-event needs of the campus community
- Undertake training for TAT members and campus personnel, as needed
- Educate faculty, staff and students to the risk of interpersonal and workplace violence

The TAT may review the frequency and severity of past incidents of campus violence and identify organizational factors that increase the likelihood of campus violence and recommend actions to improve these conditions. Ad hoc members may be added to the TAT on a case by case basis as additional needs are identified.

These guidelines do not replace the use of judicial affairs or the Code of Conduct whose policies and procedures may provide more appropriate relief in a given situation.

T.A.T. TEAM COMPOSITION

Director of Public Safety	Mike Lattimore, Co-Chair	Ext. 5581
Vice Chancellor, Student and Community Affairs	Marcia Brown, Co-Chair	Ext. 5541
Vice Chancellor, Human Resources	Carol Martancik	Ext. 5500
Asst Vice Chancellor, Student Life	Gerald Massenburg	Ext. 5541
Dean of Student Affairs	Connie Wibrowski	Ext. 5541
Dean and Director of Housing and Residential Life	Timothy Johnson	Ext. 1415
Dean, Academic Foundations Center and EOF Director	Deborah Walker-McCall	Ext. 3579
Director of Counseling Center	Pamela Heard	Ext. 5805
Dean and Director, Paul Robeson Center	Clayton Walton	Ext. 5568
Director, Office of Communications	Helen Paxton	Ext. 5262
Associate Dean, Administration, FASN	Sarah Frodelly	Ext. 5213
Associate Dean, Business School	Sharon Lydon	Ext. 5737
Associate Dean of Students, Law School	Andy Rothman	Ext. 5671
Dean, Law School	John Farmer	Ext. 5551
Office of General Counsel	Lisa Wahler, Legal Advisor	732-932-7318

Definitions

Threat

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something as understood by a reasonable person. Threatening behavior may be direct, indirect, veiled, conditional, verbal/non-verbal, and/or physical actions that create fear or apprehension of bodily harm to self or others. Violent behavior includes intentional verbal and/or physical attacks that cause injury or emotional trauma. ¹

Types of Threats:

- **Direct:** identifies a specific act against a specific target in a straightforward, clear and explicit manner.
- **Indirect:** Violence is implied but the treat tends to be vague, unclear, and ambiguous.
- **Veiled:** strongly implies but does not explicitly threaten violence.
- **Conditional:** Generally warns that a violent act will happen unless certain demands or terms are met.

Categories of Threats:²

- an assault or threat by someone during the commission of a crime who has no relationship to the University or any of its student, faculty, staff or administrators.
- an assault or threat by someone who has a relationship with the University (student, faculty, staff) who commits a violent act while a service is being rendered (teaching, programs, services)
- a threat from a current or former student, faculty, staff or administrator who threatens another current or former student, faculty, staff, or administrator
- a threat from an outsider with no prior relationship with the University against a known member of the University community – student, faculty, staff or administrator.

Threat Assessment Team (TAT) Violence Response Protocol

¹ Reference FBI Office of Attorney General Threat Assessment Model – School Shooters: A Threat Assessment Perspective

² Portions reprinted courtesy of California State Fullerton c.2003

The primary responsibility of the TAT is to address and respond to situations involving threats or acts of violence on campus. Violence, threats, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior by members of the campus community or visitors will not be tolerated. Such behavior can include verbal or written statements, gestures, or expressions which communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm. All reports of incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with by appropriate staff. Individuals who commit such acts may be removed from the premises and may be subject to disciplinary action, criminal penalties, or both, in accordance with University policy and procedures and state and federal laws.

I. Purpose

To effectively respond to, investigate and appropriately deal with actual or threatened incidents of campus violence. The Response Team will investigate, assess, manage and assist the campus to recover from incidents or threats of violent behavior. Persons investigating should endeavor to determine whether the report of a threat is valid and not the result of vengeance or other improper reason on the part of the complainant. Persons investigating should take whatever immediate action is appropriate, including removing the employee or student from the campus.

This protocol covers incidents in which the victim, perpetrator or accused is an employee or student. Incidents in which the perpetrator or accused is not an employee or student subject to campus disciplinary procedures will be referred to the campus police for appropriate law enforcement action.

II. Situation

Campus police officers will respond to actual incidents of campus violence. Where possible, following a threat or perceived threat, the TAT threat referral form should be completed and submitted to the campus police, Supervisors, HR Director, and/or the Asst. Chancellor for Student Life and used by the TAT Response Team as part of a factual record.

IV. Investigation

Response to incidents of campus violence will consist of several elements. These will include investigation of the threat or incident, professional assessment of the threat, and review and recommendations by TAT response team to ensure appropriate action is taken regarding the individual or individuals involved and post incident assistance.

The TAT Response Team will be comprised of professional staff including; the Chief of the Campus Police, the Director of the Counseling Center, the Director of Housing and Residence Life, and the Asst Chancellor for Student Life, who will work closely with the Vice Chancellor for Student and Community Affairs and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration, to assess known acts that threaten campus safety.

Team members may designate qualified alternates to sit on the Response Team when the primary team member is not available. Additional subject matter experts are also consulted, as may be needed. The Response Team will consider all available information and facts discovered in the investigative phase and make recommendations to TAT Committee, Director of Human Resources, Director of Housing and Residence Life, and to the Office of the Chancellor for a final determination. The TAT Response Team will operate to ensure that all reasonable protective measures are considered to maximize campus/individual safety.

Employees:

Tat Response Team investigation of an incident involving an employee will include the employee's immediate supervisor, or employees of the Human Resources Department. In cases where possible criminal acts are involved, violence is threatened or violent acts have been perpetrated, the campus police shall perform the investigation. Actions following an incident of campus violence involving an employee will include formal or informal debriefing with supervisors and co-workers and recommendations which may include referral to professional counseling or other intervention strategies deemed appropriate. Based on the investigative findings and recommendations, the Director of Human Resources may take such disciplinary action as is consistent with State and Federal law and campus policy. Human Resources, together with the campus police will coordinate preventive measures, including referrals to the employee assistance program, advising managers and supervisors, making referrals to the TAT Response Team, and providing other resources to the campus community to support victims of violence.

Students:

Tat Team Investigation of an incident involving a student will include Student Affairs, Housing and Residence Life, Office of Student Life and Leadership and the Office of Student Affairs in the Chancellor's office. In cases where possible criminal acts are involved, immediate violence is threatened or violent acts have been perpetrated, the campus police shall perform the investigation.

Actions following an incident of campus violence involving a student will include formal or informal debriefing with Student Affairs, Housing and Residence Life, Office of Student Life and Leadership and the Office of Student Affairs in the Chancellor's and recommendations ranging from referral to professional counseling, removal or other intervention strategies deemed appropriate.

Based on the TAT Response Team investigative findings and recommendations, the Vice Chancellor of Student and Community Affairs may take such disciplinary action as is consistent with campus policy, including involuntary withdrawal, in consultation with the Chancellor.