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Crisis Management and Student Conduct on College Campuses: The Role of Adminstrative Discretion

Aisha Sherea Kenner
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

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Crisis Management and Student Conduct on College Campuses: The Role of Administrative Discretion

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy

by

Aisha Kenner
Southern Illinois University
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, 1996
Southern Illinois University
Master of Science in Higher Education, 1998

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University of Arkansas

This dissertation is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

_____
Michael T. Miller, Ed.D.
Dissertation Director

_____   _____
Val Hunt-Whiteside, Ph.D.   G. David Gearhart Ed.D.
Committee Member   Committee Member

ABSTRACT

Crisis Management is a very important part of higher education on college campuses across the nation. Violent events that have occurred in recent years have caused universities to examine how they respond to critical incidents that have negatively affected students, faculty and staff. Because these incidents have resulted in death, injury and other negative consequences, more consideration is given to various aspects of critical incident management such as administrative discretion. This study concentrated on examining the intersection between crisis management and administrative discretion at institutions of higher education (IHE).

Mental health status, laws with relation to information sharing and disability and other critical issues can factor into the decisions that are made when addressing crisis incidents on campus. Incident management and threat assessment are critical issues that must be considered when examining the interaction between policies, administrators and students.

Higher education administrators registered in the Association for Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), were sent an electronic survey that questioned them regarding crisis management and threat assessment processes and procedures and administrative discretion. The survey was forwarded to 88 potential participants and was completed in whole or part by 19 administrators. It was determined that the clear majority of campuses have crisis management and threat assessment plans and groups and that administrators perceive themselves to have discretion when making determinations regarding students who have been involved in acts contrary to campus conduct standards. Administrators at these institutions of higher education utilized various organizations when developing and designing polices and were collaborative in their approach to revising and updating policies. Examining all facets of administrative discretion and critical incident management will allow higher education institutions to adequately prepare to respond to violent incidents that are likely to occur in the future.

INDEX Words: Crisis Management, Critical Incident Management, Threat Assessment, Mental Health, Crisis Response, Threat Assessment, emergency management

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Chapter I

Introduction

A.   Context of the Problem

Many images of college campuses depict them as safe, tranquil environments where students can safely study and pursue their interests as they develop and mature. The rising number of violent acts on campus, however, has begun to dispel this perception and college campus leaders are struggling to respond (Nicoletti, Spencer -Thomas, Bollinger. 2009). The reports of violence are persistent and frequent, thereby making crisis management and threat assessment all the more important for institutions of higher education. Some of the more recent incidents include the three campus shootings occurring in October of 2015. A shooting at Northern Arizona University that resulted in one person being killed, a shooting at Texas Southern University that left one dead and a shooting at Umpqua Community College where 10 people were killed paints another picture of a college campus.

The violence of 2015 was not unique. In past years there have been frequent shootings and a number of campuses have experienced death due to acts of violence: Oikos University in Oakland California, the mall branch of New River Community College in Christiansburg Virginia, Virginia Tech, the University of Alabama-Huntsville, Northern Illinois University are just a few institutions that were forced to deal with the after-effects of these incidents. In October of 2002, gulf war veteran Robert Flores shot and killed a nursing instructor and then himself on the campus of the University of Arizona. On September 7, 2007, Douglass Pennington killed himself and his 2 sons during a visit to Shepherd University in Shepherdstown West Virginia. In 1991 at the University of Iowa, Gang Lu, a graduate student in physics killed

five employees, including 4 members of the physics department and wounded two others before fatally shooting himself.

In June of 2016 two men were killed in an apparent murder suicide at the University of California, Los Angeles. In May of 2017, one person was killed and two others were wounded in a stabbing at the University of Texas. According to EveryTown.org, one hundred sixty college campus shootings have been documented since 2013. Research has suggested there are methods to assist students in distress and to promote positive mental health outcomes (Hackman, Knowlden, Sharma 2016). Violent incidents are a burden to the students, faculty and staff at higher education institutions. Reducing these incidents and the devastating negative consequences are imperative.

Institutional preparation for crisis such as shootings and other violent acts require strong leadership to link institutional priorities and student welfare with those who are in direct contact with faculty and students who may be at risk (Kapucu & Khosa 2012). There are critical elements that institutional leaders must consider such as, how they go about developing crisis management response policy, including the specific plans and procedures that can save lives. Through collaborative processes, these response plans may make better use of campus resources and the insights of those with direct knowledge of the culture, structure, and operation of campuses. Institutional leaders must also consider the extent to which campus leaders can create an environment for innovation or provide adequate crisis management processes for those who will implement campus response strategies (Zdziarski 2016). It is important to determine how discretion detracts from or enhances the effectiveness of the crisis management strategies of a given campus. Determining the balance between exceedingly strict and noticeably lax polices is important.

B.   **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose for conducting the study was to determine how administrative discretion intersects with crisis management policy on college campuses. The determination of how administrative leaders interpret and make individual decisions regarding institutional policy formation and implementation is critical in determining how institutional leadership organizes to safeguard campus. This also includes the individuals who work on the front lines of higher education, interacting with students and are responsible for their safety and welfare as crisis management plans are created and implemented.

C.   **Research Questions**

To address the purpose of the study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What has been the context of crisis management on a contemporary higher education college campus?

2. What processes did college administrators use to address violence, or the threat of violence, on a contemporary college campus?

3. How were best practices used to develop institutional campus threat response policy?

4. How were faculty, staff, and students trained to implement crisis management policy and respond to threats of violence and violence on campus?

5. What level of discretion was afforded to and used by college campus administrators in the planning and implementation of institutional crisis management policies?

6. It is assumed that although many of the examples of violent acts referenced, occurred at non-APLU institutions, acts of violence also exist throughout all higher education institutions in the United States.

D.   Definition of Terms

To address the purpose of the study, the following terms were operationally defined in the study:

*Administrative discretion***:** The exercise of professional expertise and judgment, as opposed to strict adherence to regulations or statutes, in making a decision or performing official acts or duties.

*Crisis***:** an event, which is often sudden or unexpected, disrupts normal operations of the institution or its educational mission and threatens the well-being of personnel, property, financial resources, and/or reputation of the institution.

Crisis management: the umbrella term that encompasses all activities when an organization prepares for and responds to a significant event. This term can include responses to natural disasters, campus violence, sexual assault, and the plans often incorporate the resources of multiple offices on a college campus and in the college's host community.

Street-level Bureaucrat: According to Lipsky, "typical street level bureaucrats are teachers, police officers and other law enforcement personnel, social workers, judges, public lawyers and other court officers who grant access to government programs and provide services within them" (p. 3). At public land-grant institutions, deans of students, vice chancellors for student affairs and other similar positions are considered street level bureaucrats because they have substantial interactions with troubled students through conduct processes and are responsible for executing the conduct process which grants access to the institution and its services. In a university's housing department a resident director or designee can be considered a street level bureaucrat for similar reasons such as the continued access to university housing facilities and services contained within.

Threat assessment: structured group process used to evaluate the risk posed by a student or another person, typically as a response to an actual or perceived threat or alarming behavior.

Threat assessment team: multidisciplinary team responsible for the careful and contextual identification and evaluations of behaviors that raise concerns and that may precede violent activity on campus.

B. **Assumptions**

1. The study accepted the assumption that institutional administrative leadership has the ability to develop and employ strategies that encompass communication plans, mental health considerations, fiscal needs and legal implications of the campus community in crisis management policies.

2. The study accepted the assumption that institutional leadership has the ability to employ systems that allow the membership (students, faculty and staff) to be prepared in the event of a crisis that requires a response in terms of prevention, risk mitigation and crisis response.

3. The study accepted the assumption that institutional leaders require policies, plans and procedures developed that are effective and can be evaluated, updated and enhanced.

4. The study accepted the assumption that institutional leaders will truthfully, candidly, and voluntarily respond to the survey.

5. The study accepted the assumption that the respondents will indicate that they have a level of discretion in determinations that are made regarding responses to critical incident management on college campuses.

6. The study accepted the assumption that campus leaders would assume a level of responsibility for the response to crisis incidents occurring on campus.

C.   Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

1. This study was limited to public land-grant institutions and may not be applicable to private institutions or historically black institutions as each of those may have different standards and expectations of its students based on admission criteria and institutional mission.

2.   I have worked in some capacity of student conduct since my graduate assistantship in 1997. I also worked in student conduct and crisis management at both the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the University of Arkansas. I have very precise opinions about student mental health and its effect on a student's ability to be successful at an institution of higher education. In addition, I believe that the policies used to address disruptive and violent behavior must take into consideration a student's mental health status and their ability to engage on a campus in a positive, civil, non-disruptive and non-violent manner. My view is that there is a place for discretion in the implementation of crisis management policy and student conduct although it must be utilized in an effective, efficient and defensible manner for it to be beneficial. I believe that my years in judicial affairs and critical incident management allow me to view the results of this survey in an objective manner and that my views and opinions will not influence the survey or interpretation of responses.

D.   Significance of the Study

This study is important to administrative leadership and campus staff members that make decisions regarding effective ways to manage disruptive, violent and threatening behavior and threats on campuses. This study will provide insight into crisis management strategies that are effective on college campuses and how the administrative structures to approve and alter

management plans are structured. This study is also intended to provide information regarding the types of situations that are perceived to be crisis management appropriate and information regarding those offices that are best suited to address the crafting of process and policy to address those behaviors.

E.   Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the framework for the study. The main purpose behind this study was to determine how and if discretion had an effect on how crisis management policy was viewed and implemented on college campuses and what best practices were used to develop and update said policies. There was also an attempt to determine if administrators view discretion as an important part of how crisis management is implemented on college campuses. In order to make a determination it is critical that administrators involved in the development and review of those policies are surveyed to determine their views on the use, implementation and review of those polices.

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

A.   Review of Related Literature

College campuses are a mixture of students from different socioeconomic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. These college students are engaged in an educational process that is intended to result in degree attainment. However, there are factors that disrupt the orderly achievement of these higher education goals. The following information pertains to college student mental health, violence on campus, pertinent laws, crisis management and threat assessment in contemplating emergency response on college campuses.

Mental health issues are an important part of the landscape of higher education that must be considered in discussions regarding campus safety and security. Violent incidents occurring on college campuses in the past 25 years have forced institutions of higher education to contemplate how to assess threats to the campus environment in addition to the management of crisis incidents that could result in substantial community disruption (Drysdale, Modzeleski & Simons 2010). Threat assessment, violence and mental health considerations have resulted in studies focused on the growing levels of violence and disruption in educational environments. This literature review will examine mental health, threat assessment, campus conduct practices and administrative discretion in student conduct. These elements often have an influence on how crisis incidents are addressed on college campuses.

B.   Violence on Campus

In past years there have been shootings across the United States such as Oikos University in Oakland California where 7 people were shot and killed by a former student, the mall branch of New River Community College in Christiansburg Virginia, where two women were wounded

by a student at the college who announced his intentions online minutes before the shooting, the shooting at the University of Alabama-Huntsville where 3 were killed and 3 wounded by a professor, and the student shooting at Northern Illinois University that resulted in 5 deaths and 17 injuries. These incidents seem to pale in comparison to the deaths and injuries that occurred during the shootings at Virginia Tech where 32 students, faculty and staff were killed and 17 were wounded by a student. In 2015 there was a shooting at Northern Arizona University where one person was killed and 3 were injured, a shooting at Texas Southern University which resulted in one death, and a mass shooting at Umpqua Community College, which left 10 people dead. An incident occurred in 2011 at Pima Community College in Arizona where a congressional representative was seriously injured and several students killed by a student who attended the college. These situations disrupt higher education and present difficulties for the management of safety concerns in higher education locations. It appears that every year there are several shootings on college campuses that cause higher education administrators to review their policies and renew their focus on attempting to ensure that they are providing as safe an environment as possible for the students, faculty and staff that are on college campuses. These incidents, although tragic, allow institutions to analyze and develop better practices for responding to threats and incidents of concern on campus.

A joint government report issued by the Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center, the Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, and the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit indicate that there have been 272 incidents of violence affecting colleges and universities in the United States as of 2010 (Drysdale, Modzeleski & Simmons 2010). Although recent episodes of campus shootings and mass murders on campus are part of present-day public awareness, there have been many other occurrences of violence on college

campuses across the nation. In each of these episodes, administrators and first responders managed the incident. The administrative management of campus crisis is important because there may be distinctions in how situations are addressed and how polices are executed because of administrative discretion. It is clear that federal agencies and institutional leadership establish policy with regard to school violence with a clear vision for the use and implementation of policy. Therefore, the manner in which administrators on college campuses address violent events affect how legislative and institutional policy is implemented.

Although the shooting at Virginia Tech, murders at Northern Illinois University and incidents such as the shooting at the University of Alabama are part of contemporary public awareness, there have been other instances of violence on college campuses across the nation. According to the joint report, the first documented event occurred in 1909 when a non-affiliated person shot and killed his girlfriend, then turned the gun on himself. Since then there have been frequent incidents of violence on college campuses across the nation. In the majority of incidents, the perpetrator had an affiliation with the targeted university and a majority of perpetrators were male. As of 2010, these crimes had resulted in 281 deaths and 247 injuries (Drysdale et al. 2010).

These types of murders, murder-suicides, and acts of violence that have taken place on college campuses across the nation present challenges to institutions of higher education because of the responsibility to provide a safe campus environment for individuals on campus. Although it is understood that protection on any campus is not an absolute guarantee, parents and other stakeholders have an expectation that colleges are taking the necessary precautions to provide a reasonably safe environment. Perhaps one of the most infamous shootings resulting in mass casualties was the 1966 shooting committed by Charles Whitman at the University of Texas. The

incident resulted in 16 deaths and 31 injured before Whitman was shot and killed by police.

These cases demonstrate the importance of crisis management, emergency response and

behavioral intervention on college campuses. This study will examine how critical incidents

and/or violent incidents are managed on college campuses and the corresponding response from

a management and behavioral intervention perspective.

Violent incidents have resulted in death and injury and have had a detrimental effect on

students, faculty, and staff at institutions and in surrounding communities (Akers 2008).

Research that suggests methods to assist students in distress and minimize loss of life and

financial resources are becoming more essential (Ethan, D. & Seidel, E. 2013). It is vital to

determine structures that allow college campuses to protect and safeguard rights of students with

mental health concerns, provide services that assist students in distress, and continue to develop

strategies designed to protect campuses from violent incidents.

The National Association of Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

(NASPA) recommended Emerging Practices for Student Affairs in Addressing Campus Violence

in 2008. The model proposed a framework aimed at "planning for and responding to,

emergencies such as incidents of violence using a Crisis Management model" (p. 1). The model

consisted of four phases: "a), prevention and mitigation, b), preparedness, c), response, and d),

recovery"(p.9). Prevention and awareness included ensuring that student affairs play a leading

role in developing and making available training opportunities for students, faculty and staff. It

was implied that "attention should be paid to the culture of the environment on the campus to

promote those facets that encourage a culture and climate that reduces the risk of violence" (p.

11). Risk reduction practices included a focus on bullying, alternative approaches to conflict

resolution and student engagement. It was also suggested that a model for threat assessment be

employed by the campus and that all individuals responsible for providing information be trained on what to look for and how to adequately report concerns. It was suggested that special attention be paid to the infrastructure and processes to ensure that institutions have access to as much information on the front end of the admissions process. It was intimated that information sharing processes and legalities must be a primary consideration in policy formulation.

Training and awareness was a large component of the NASPA 2008 recommendations. It was indicated that "reducing the risk of violence through minimizing alcohol and substance abuse and being aware of the practice of requiring all members of the community to undertake appropriate training and knowledge that allows them to draw on information to be used in the event of a crisis" (p. 13) is critical. It was stated that it is imperative to ensure that campus security departments are accredited and that graduate preparation programs address issues of violence. It was suggested that faculty, staff and students be adequately trained and that all efforts are consistent with federal laws such as FERPA, HIPAA and Clery. It was strongly suggested that mental and behavioral interventions be utilized and encouraged. Finally, it was stated that threat assessment teams should be adequately and appropriately staffed and trained.

The NASPA model also include a recommendation that a communication plan be developed and implemented addressing components such as campus warnings, media, and academic affairs and faculty involvement and response. It was further determined that plans should take into consideration as many contingencies as possible such as a student's family coming to campus. Media designated areas, training for student leaders; emergency call center operations and multimodal messaging systems were also central components for the Crisis Management model. It was determined that it is important for campuses to devise response plans that contribute to a safer campus.

C.   Mental Health

Mental health is an important backdrop for the examination of crisis response on college campuses. Psychological concerns and behavioral health have become important topics on college campuses in the aftermath of campus disasters. In recent years, violent crimes perpetrated on college campuses highlight the importance of examining the interplay between mental health and violent crime.

In June of 2004 the Centers for Disease Control reported that violence is a major cause of morbidity and mortality, particularly among young people and that homicide and suicide are the second and third leading causes of death, for persons aged thirteen through nineteen years of age in the United States. It was stated "although suicide commonly is associated with anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal; research suggests a link between violent behaviors directed at oneself (i.e., suicidal behaviors) and violent behaviors directed at others among adolescents (p.474). Certain students who engage in extreme forms of violence, such as school shootings, exhibit suicidal ideation or behavior before or during the attack" and that suicidal behavior could be linked with involvement in less severe forms of violent behavior such as fighting (p474). It should be pointed out that this demographic is the same population of individuals who are enrolling on college campuses across the nation.

Penn State's Center for Collegiate Mental Health's (CCMH) study in 2015 examined college student mental health focusing on students, parents and counseling centers. The study noted the increase in anxiety levels of students in higher education and the influence of mental health in various campus critical incidents. For the purpose of this study it was important to examine questions such as; is there an increased demand for mental health services and are students genuinely more mentally unstable; and if so, why (p. 1)? This report reviewed data

from participating college and university counseling centers describing college students seeking treatment. It is important to recognize that the report only considered students searching for mental health services and not the general student population.

The CCMH 2015 annual report outlines mental health facts that are disturbing while providing insight into the students who are currently on campus. The study indicated that there has been a relatively large growth in counseling center appointments across a five-year span (p.2). It was indicated that the rate of counseling center appointments rose seven times as opposed to institutional enrollment rates despite the fact that lifetime prevalence and hospitalization rates for previous mental health treatment appears to have remained stable over the five-year period examined in the study. It is also suggested that the self-reported rates of distress have decreased only slightly. The self-reported information indexes include scores on eating concerns, hostility, substance abuse family distress and other factors. Depression, generalized anxiety and social anxiety were not only the most common issues reported in counseling centers but also represent a persistent growing trend.

The CCMH 2015 report indicates that the lifetime prevalence for non-suicidal self-injury numbers are slowly increasing, as is the lifetime prevalence rate for serious suicidal ideation. It was stated that although the rates have remained relatively low over the past five years, these students use an average of 27% more appointments than students who do not report suicidal ideation or suicidal concerns. It is also important to note that 20% of students seen in counseling centers utilized more than 50% of the appointments (p. 2). Many recent studies and research make a case for increased mental health resources in the community.

The Center for Collegiate Mental Health indicates that the demand for counseling center services is continuing to grow at a rate that is five times faster than institutional growth rates

(p.7). It is unclear what these statistics can be attributed to although theories range from issues such as lack of resiliency; lack of coping skills and ineffective parenting styles. Emmons indicates that "while life may have had more risk and periods of extreme stress in the past, today we are living with constant , unremitting stress to which we are poorly adapted" (p. 239). It is indicated that the increase in counseling center visits may have been triggered by some of the trends that encourage the normalization of help seeking behavior, mental health education, suicide prevention efforts, efforts to reduce the stigma of mental health and the many intervention efforts that have been present on college campuses in recent years.   Reports indicate "a decade of effort, aimed at building communities that are responsive to the mental health concerns of at-risk students have been successful" (p. 4). Proactive measures aimed at education, prevention and risk reduction continue to be in order.

The Center for Collegiate Mental Health report points out that there is an increasing demand for services without commensurate increases in the resources being provided to counseling centers in terms of funding and personnel. Data indicates that in 2014-2015, students who visited university counseling centers attended on average of slightly less than 5 visits, including the initial intake appointment. It was indicated that institutions should reevaluate funding options, as longstanding funding metrics may no longer be suitable.

According to Mowbray, Mandiberg & Stein (2006), between 12-18% of college-aged students met the criteria for a mental health disorder. Psychological disorders are an increasing source of student difficulties while in college. Mowbray et al 2006, further indicated that many students with mental health disorders such as bipolar, schizophrenia, anxiety, major depression and other illnesses are at a heightened risk of dropping out of college. Barrios et.al (2001) wrote that schools are responsible for providing skills that promote safety and prevent unintentional

negative occurrences throughout their lived. It was indicated that schools are becoming better able to equip students with life skills that contribute to healthy lifestyles. These type of preventative approaches are endorsed by many in higher education.

The ACHA-National College Health Assessment II (ACHA-NCHA II), a national research survey organized by the American College Health Association (ACHA) to assist college health service providers, health educators, counselors, and administrators in collecting data about students' habits, behaviors, and perceptions on the most prevalent health topics. The survey is very instructive when considering how mental health concerns affect todays' college students. The data from 2000-2008 is the largest compilation of health related higher education student information. The data provides a vast amount of self- reported information regarding student health concerns including psychological information.

The ACHA survey uncovered troubling statistics regarding college student mental health. For example, forty three percent of students surveyed reported feelings of hopelessness within the past 12 months while 84% of students reported feeling overwhelmed and 54% reported feelings of loneliness within the past 12 months. In addition, 58% of students reported feeling very sad, thirty percent reported feeling so depressed that it was difficult to function. It was determined that 47% of students surveyed reported overwhelming anxiety while 36% reported distressing anger and while six percent considered suicide, 1.5% reported having attempted suicide. Ultimately 5% reported having one of the following issues; anorexia, anxiety, ADHD, bipolar disorder, bulimia, depression, insomnia, sleep disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, some addiction, schizophrenia, panic attacks or other mental health conditions. These types of statistics make the existence of adequately staffed counseling centers and the ability to attend to psychological issues on college campuses all the more important.

Drug and alcohol use and abuse are other important components of mental health. An article by Allen and Langfellner (2016) indicated that "drug use is highest among people in their late teens and twenties-college-aged students (NIH, 2014)' (p. 28). Also reported in 2012, was that 23.9% of 18-20 year olds reported using an illicit drug in the past month with more than half beginning with marijuana and the prescription painkillers.   It was also reported that heavy drinking was also described as a problem on college campuses and a large percentage of college students reported having binge drank within the past month. According to a NIH 2014 study, "in 2012, 17.7 million Americans (6.8%) of the population were dependent on alcohol or had problems related to their alcohol use" (p. 34). Drug and alcohol use was a focus of the 2015 Center for Collegiate Mental Health study. The study determined that men reported more alcohol and drug use than women but women are more likely to express concern about their own and others alcohol or drug use and further report the need to reduce consumption and/or use (p. 24). Men were more likely to report having binge drank but are more likely to have received some treatment for alcohol or drug use within the past 5 years (p. 25). These statistics may also have some part in crisis management and threat assessment.

Bertram (2010) indicated that "students with mental health issues are intellectually capable as the rising number of accepted students with diagnosed psychological issues confirm," but these students have trouble like all other students. It was stated that students tend to "isolate themselves, suffer physical ailments and experience shame with relation to their illness" (p. 31). Accordingly, these symptoms often result in absences, late assignments, careless mistakes and general distress, which further contributes to psychological unrest. Bertram indicated that students have the ability to break these disruptive cycles of behavior but they must understand and be made aware of how to do so in appropriate ways. Donna and Phil Satow lost a son due to

suicide which prompted them to establish the JED Foundation. The JED Foundations is a national nonprofit organization that exists to protect emotional health and prevent suicide for the nation's teens and young adult population. The JED foundation collaborates with high schools and colleges to strengthen mental health and substance abuse systems and suicide prevention efforts. The JED foundation has advocated normalizing mental health concerns, the need for creative intervention, and the importance of promoting prevention and seeking treatment. The Satows' described an "effectiveness gap" as a major shortcoming of campuses approach to mental health. They described the "effectiveness gap" as the gap between "proactive outreach measures" and the actual use of mental health services. It was indicated that a lack of creative, consistent, persistent outreach measures could be considered one of the reasons why some students do not utilize the counseling services.

The National Survey of Counseling Directors has been conducted since 1981. The survey list very serious concerns with college students; for example, during recent years, 85% of counseling directors report the following; an increase in assisting students with severe mental and psychological problems, increased reports involving campus sexual assault, more alcohol related problems, an increase in illicit drug use along with more reported learning disabilities, eating disorders and self-injury related behaviors. It was further reported that counseling visits had increased dramatically and many counselors report having to intervene in severe crises. The report indicated that more students are on psychotropic medications and many centers are requesting additional funding to sustain services in light of increasing need. Although there is an ongoing debate, the reality is that there appears to be an unmet need for counseling services on many college campuses and this may have an effect on the type and level of response mechanisms that must be in place to respond to crisis.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) (2015) survey that examined 765 college students from 48 states and found remarkable information pertaining to college student mental health. Diagnostic information submitted indicated that: twenty-seven percent of students suffered from depression, 24 percent had bipolar disorder and persistent depressive disorder and many other students detailed having been diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, eating disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders and schizoaffective disorder. Twelve percent of students had an autism spectrum disorder, eleven percent struggled with anxiety, six percent had PTSD, and five percent dealt with substance abuse disorders (p.1). The article pointed out that mental health disorders are more severe now than in the past. Finally, the article highlighted State University at New York Stonybrook's campus as it had experienced a 28% increase in use and indicated that the overall increase in initial treatment and consultation had risen more than 88% in the past five years.

The National Strategy for Suicide Preventions Objective 4.3 requests increasing the proportion of colleges and universities with "evidence-based programs designed to address serious young adult distress and prevent suicide" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001, p. 66). The Suicide Prevention Resource Center's report "Promoting Mental Health and Preventing Suicide in College and University Settings" stated that suicide is the third leading cause of death for college-aged individuals age 20-24. Additionally, college counseling centers report that suicide; attempted suicide and substance abuse are on the rise on college campuses. In 2004 it was determined that 84% of college counselors perceived that there was an increase in students reporting to centers for more serious psychological issues. According to this study, the CDC reports "suicide emerges as a significant problems during the high school years, increases among young adults 20-24 year of age and continues to increase marginally over the

next two decades of life" (p. 5). These statistics are troubling when considering the average college age population and the mental health concerns that surface during the college years.

Silverman (1997) examined the rates of suicide on college campuses in the Big Ten Suicide Study. It was determined that college students committed suicide at rate of 7.5 out of 100,000 in the 20-24 age group. Although this rate was half the national suicide rate for the same age group, the statistics continue to be alarming. It was determined that suicide rates amongst older students were higher than their younger peers and as women grew older, their suicide rates closely mirror that of male students. There were no discernible differences between colleges in terms of selectivity, competitiveness, or prestige of the school with respect to completed rates of suicide. The study further indicated that mental health issues on college campuses are increasing in both number and severity. It was reported that there have been large increases in anxiety, fear and general worry as well as of dysfunctional behavior such as alcohol and substance abuse, eating disorders, depression, bipolar disorder and others. These issues have a profound effect on crisis management, prevention and education on college campuses.

Studies indicate that rates of depression among college-aged students have increased. A study by Sabra (2013) determined that psychological problems amongst the "student population varies from 2% to as high as 50%". It was further stated that at any given time an examination of individual student well-being would uncover at least one in every 10 students having an emotional conflict that is significant enough to merit professional intervention/assistance (Farnsworth, 1997). It has been stated that anxiety and depression are common mental health problems among the college student population and at any given time 25% of the student population report symptoms of depression. These figures have continued to become more troubling in recent mental health research.

College is a major transitional period in the life of a young adult. Many young people are moving away from home for the first time and dealing with other adjustment issues that may result in mental health concerns and psychological stress. Because there is less stigma attached to the act of seeking help, counseling center visits are on the rise. College campuses are often viewed as safe havens for students because there is access to mental health services with lower cost based on the status of a currently enrolled college student. These factors further underscore the need for comprehensive mental health services on college campuses.

A 2011 study conducted by Monahan, Bonnie, Davis, and Flynn examined interventions by Virginia Colleges to respond to student mental health crises. This study examined the results of a survey administered in the spring of 2010 to counseling center administrators with specific responsibilities in four-year and community colleges in Virginia. The survey was designed to glean information regarding "academic policies governing responses to apparent mental health crises among students and how often they are invoked" (p. 1439). This study was one of the first that reviewed the broad range of interventions designed to prevent harm to students and others. Forty counseling center directors at public colleges as well as one at a private college completed the survey. It was indicated that during the 2008-2009 academic year there were 8 known suicides and 67 attempted suicides. Moreover, public colleges reported 67 suicides attempted while private reported 17. It was reported that students contacted health services frequently and there were over 1000 reports of suicidal and violent ideations. Many colleges notified parents of students who were experiencing mental health difficulties and may have threatened self-harm and it appears that private colleges notify parents much more frequently than public institutions. Many colleges reported a policy of attempting to obtain a release from the student prior to reporting concerns to parents.

There were other approaches for addressing mental health concerns on college campuses including voluntary and involuntary withdrawals. The vast majority of these withdrawals include restrictions and conditions for returning to campus setting. Many institutions also mandate outpatient treatment and include contingencies for information sharing. Virginia Colleges were compelled to act based on the Virginia Tech incident in 2007. The actions in Virginia resulted in many campuses across the nation making changes to institutional policies and procedures concerning threat assessment an incident management.

The non-profit organization Active Minds has been an outspoken advocate for student mental health. In recent years, the organization has been involved in the campaign that overturned counseling center fees such as those at George Washington University and resulted in all students having access to free counseling sessions. GWU did not previously offer any free counseling sessions to students as was industry standard. In addition, the organization was involved in a campaign at the University of Maryland that allowed students with mental health conditions to be issued retroactive withdrawals from classes to lessen the burden of a declining GPA. Another huge success was the University of Dayton Ohio adding a 1-800 crisis hotline number on the back of all student issued ID cards. These types of efforts underscore the importance of mental health initiatives on college campuses.

A 2006 study by Cooke examined the well-being of first- year university students. The article indicated that today's students are drastically different than those 30 years ago due to factors such as the changing financial environment, the increasing number of college graduates, and personal and familial responsibilities. The authors indicated that college degrees are becoming somewhat unremarkable and degrees that are more difficult are becoming the more desired options all the while resulting in additional stress. This study posited that college

students often present worse than the general population in terms of mental health possibly because of issues related to academic stressors, relationship issues and financial difficulties.

Cooke indicated that changes occurring within the academic year due to varying course loads, personal obligations, and other occurrences outside of academic life should be taken into account. This study was important because of its methodology. There was an attempt to measure college student's wellbeing over the course of the year in addition to establishing baseline data pertaining to the well-being of students upon college entry. The researchers attempted to focus on (1) measuring the change in well-being from pre-university arrival, (2), monitoring the profile of psychological well-being across the initial year and (3), identifying how the university student population utilizes counseling services. The study determined that regardless of how a student describes his or her well-being prior to university entrance, there is a greater strain placed on psychological status at all times after they enter a university environment. There appeared heightened levels of anxiety, which may factor into other dangerous behaviors such as alcohol or drug use and or abuse. More importantly, the group identified as vulnerable had heightened levels of anxiety, which could be precursors to depression. It was determined that while a third of the students surveyed reported accessing services, two thirds of students in the most vulnerable group did not. This may point to a greater need for targeted and proactive attempts to encourage those in vulnerable groups to utilize available services.

Carey (2009) concluded "it is time for institutions of higher education to proactively focus on the mental health of their incoming students just as they focus on their academic health" (p. 10). Carey specified that stigmas relating to mental health of college students must be removed and the sharing of information, in a strictly confidential environment, must begin" (p. 10). This study indicates that when students enter college, they are not mandated to disclose

their mental health status. All accounts of the Cho incident indicate that after Cho met the

admission criteria for Virginia Tech, he was free to proceed in his collegiate career without

mention of past or recent mental health distresses. Many believe the lack of disclosure is

problematic and creates numerous areas of concern for college campuses and those that work in

higher education and attend classes.

Van Pelt (2013) indicated that institutions are starting to focus on mental health but are

somewhat stifled in the ways that mental health issues can be addressed. It has been indicated

that privacy considerations can hamper a school's actions. Although mental health professionals

suggest that privacy is a necessary consideration if individuals are to seek the services of mental

health professionals, there are safeguards in privacy policies that are designed to protect both the

student and the institution.   Van Pelt (2013), argued because of the changing student

characteristics and state of mental health, colleges must do more to support them through the

provision of mental health services. Many individuals believe that if college mental health

services are improved some tragedies can be prevented.

The JED foundation developed the Framework for Developing Institutional Protocols for

the Acutely Distressed or Suicidal College Student. It was recognized that it was important to

respond to acutely distressed and suicidal students in a timely and consistent manner. It was

determined that there are multiple issues surrounding both voluntary and involuntary

hospitalization and that administrators should make necessary connections with agency officials

to ensure that proper responsive systems and protocols are in place. Other pertinent issues

addressed were post crisis follow-up, adequate documentation and notification protocols,

information gathering and determination of processes for leave of absence and re-entry

protocols.   The JED foundation indicated that having these factors in place allows an institution a level of heightened preparedness.

There is a significant financial cost associated with college attendance, which may lead to greater levels of stress place on attendance graduation and doing well. Eisenberg et.al, (2009) examined the potential "large economic returns from programs to prevent and treat mental health problems among college students" (p. 29).   The analysis showed that depression, anxiety and eating disorders have a significant association with academic outcomes such as low GPA and increased dropout rates. The authors posited that investing in mental health resources could generate significant economic returns.   Further, Enrique (2012) wrote "95% of college counseling center directors surveyed said the number of students with significant psychological problems is a growing concern in their center or on campus and seventy percent of directors believe that the number of students with severe psychological problems on their campus has increased in the past year" (Psychology.com, 2014). It was further indicated that about 10% of students have seriously considered committing suicide and 40% of students stated that they have been so depressed it was difficult to function.   Research has indicated that although students are seeking help, the variability in resources available on college campuses is astounding. It was specified that while some campuses have counseling centers that are accredited, others send students to career counselors because there is no other sufficient referral options. It was also indicated that students on many campuses indicate having extremely long wait periods to be seen through on campus counseling centers. According to these authors and others, inadequate counseling services will have negative effects for students suffering from mental health concerns. Difficulties adequately addressing mental health issues on college campuses may contribute to safety concerns.

An article in Newsweek entitled "How Colleges Flunk Mental Health by (Baker, 2014) told the story of a student who ingested 20 of his prescription Trazodone pills, thought better of the decision and then went to the universities health services where he was sent to a nearby hospital. At the hospital his mother was called and a determination was made that he was not a threat. In the meantime, he was evicted from his residence hall room and ultimately forced to withdraw from the institution. The student filed a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights alleging that he was discriminated against on the basis of his protected disability. According to the article "despite the very clearly stated law, dozens of current or recent students at colleges and universities across the country –large and small, private and public-told Newsweek they were punished for seeking help "kicked out of campus housing with nowhere else to go, abruptly forced to withdraw from school and involuntarily committed to psychiatric wards". Crisis management and threat assessment strategies may provide a better way to address difficult student situations on campus that have mental health implications.

The Newsweek article referenced two large scale studies that found around 10% of college student respondents had thought about suicide in the past year but only 1.5 percent had attempted suicide. Appelbaum wrote in *Law and Psychiatry* that "policies that impose restrictions on students who manifest suicidal ideations will sweep 999 students who would not commit suicide or every students who will end his or her own life."

D. Crisis Management and Threat Assessment

The current study focused on institutional responses to crisis conditions that occur on college campuses. These types of situations could include targeted threats, violence, homicide, and/or mental illnesses that disrupt communities, etc. To this end, threat assessment and incident management becomes extremely important. Threat assessment is defined as a "structured group

process used to evaluate the risk posed by a student or another person, typically as a response to an actual or perceived threat or alarming behavior" (p. 12). Deisinger (2008) reported that threat assessment was initially proposed after the Columbine High School shooting, but as numerous campus shootings and violent incidents occurred, threat assessment gained recognition and has been endorsed by many including both the Virginia Tech and Illinois Task forces, various national higher education organizations, and many federal and state level governmental agencies. According to Deisinger, a threat assessment and management team (TAM TEAM) is a "multidisciplinary team responsible for the careful and contextual identification and evaluations of behaviors that raise concerns and that may precede violent activity on campus" (p. 5). It is indicated that these proactive steps allow an individual to gain access to services that may assist them, but also allows colleges to take preventative actions to alleviate situations of concern. It is important to point out that threat assessment has multiple functions as it can also be used to address concerns that may not result in violence but may have a negative impact on a student's ability to be or remain successful.

The violent incidents that have occurred in past years make proactive threat assessment important to campuses nationwide. Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams (2008) by Deisinger et.al suggests numerous principles that guide the purpose of threat assessment and management:

1. Targeted violence can often be prevented,

2. Violence is a dynamic process

3. Targeted violence is a function of several factors

4. Threat assessment is about behavior, not profiles,

5. Cooperating system are critical resources

6. Does the person pose a threat as opposed to did the person make a threat

7. It is always important to keep victims in mind

8. Early intervention and identification helps everyone]

9. Multiple reporting mechanisms enhance early identification

10. Multifaceted resources can provide effective interventions.

11. Safety is the primary focus

These principles underscore the importance of having threat assessment teams and strategies on college campuses to deal with difficult situations. Since one of the primary goals is student safety, developing strategic processes focused on prevention are vital. It is further important to ensure that many types of inappropriate student behavior are being addressed. There may be times when a student's disruptive behavior may be the first indication of larger mental health difficulties. Day and Jennings (2007) indicated that the first line of defense in addressing disruptive behavior is an institutions administrative policy. Institutional polices address a wide variety of behaviors and determine processes for assisting and referring students to services that may benefit them. The institution, therefore, has the authority to monitor behavior and students have the right to fair and impartial processes for addressing alleged violations of institutional policy.

An article in *Family Enterprises Incorporated (FEI) Behavioral Health* indicated that "there tend to be signals and precursors to violent behavior, increasingly in plain view, with the advent of the various forms of social media" that tend to be overlooked. It was stated that signals should be taken seriously and that doing so is simply a bi-product of increasing awareness through training and preparation (p. 23). It was indicated that increased knowledge of

the types of behaviors that may be antecedents to violent behaviors in students "can provide an opportunity for threats to be identified and addressed before the behavior reaches crisis level" (p. 23). On the other hand, the article states that if a situation has reached crisis level, adequate training may allow incident mitigation and further assessment to adequately assess the best methods to address the developing situation. It is indicated that the assessment should incorporate information regarding the crisis checklist, incorporation of crisis management policies, a determination of an adequate crisis communication plan, and the effective utilization of social media. Training and preparation should incorporate psychological support and adequate debriefing. The article states that "crisis are, by their very nature, chaotic, confusing and debilitating" but planning ahead can "strengthen response and recovery" (p. 25).

Many articles endorse the idea of advance planning and preparation. After the Virginia Tech incident, many campuses began to review their procedures and make necessary alterations to their policies based on lessons learned from Virginia Tech. *Crisis On Campus* by Kennedy (2007) indicates that many campuses have various security challenges and state that campuses can be thought of as "self-contained small to medium sized cities-with all the activity, vibrancy and vulnerabilities associated with cities (p.22). It was indicated in Homeland Security discussing Virginia Tech that campuses must begin to consider how to maintain the atmosphere of the campus environment all the while providing safe environments for students', faculty, and staff. It was indicated that many lessons were learned from Pandemic Preparation and Natural Disaster Preparations such as those seen in Hurricane Katrina and other affected campuses. It was indicated that these lessons can be adapted to the crisis management efforts on college campuses examining lessons learned from communication failures, technology concerns, shelter sites, ensuring that plans are up-to-date, and many other challenges. Healy indicated "creating a

balance between openness and security is one of the greatest challenges for university officials"
(p.24). An important point of the article was that advancements in security systems come with a
price tag and that educational institutions often do not have the funds available to carry out
massive systematic improvements. The article indicated that "a critical element of emergency
management planning and preparation was the sufficient allocation of resources to upgrade the
equipment and tolls that will promote and enhance security (p. 25)

Deisinger, et.al (2008) indicated that there are often "red flags" that are raised by
mentally-ill individuals before they "act out" (p. 19). It was intimated that the certain
individual's interactions with others on the campus when reviewed in isolation may cause
anxiety but when examined in their totality; there is often a cause for concern. The Virginia
Tech Task force indicated that although Virginia Tech had a well-developed Care Team intended
to assist those students experiencing difficulties, "the team only looked at the particulars of a
given incident at particular point in time and did not obtain a comprehensive understanding of
the situation" in the context of the multiple points of contact that the student had on campus (p.
20). It was later determined that the limited review was insufficient in the broader context of
campus safety. Elizabeth Stone wrote an article for the Chronicle of Higher Education. Stone
indicated that as a faculty member she was concerned about "emotional fragility" of students on
campus. She indicated that she noted this while reading over the shoulder of a student and then
asking her to wait so they could speak after class. Stone noted the difficulties with faculty
student involvement, in that faculty participation in mental health and crisis training is low.
Stone also posited that faculty is more often rewarded for research prowess as opposed to or in
addition to campus and student engagement. Stone spoke of a specific situation where a
presentation that aimed at explaining suicide signs and signals was made available to over 200

faculty members on the eve of a suicide at the college. She indicated that of 200 faculty members only 6 made an effort to attend the session. This severely limits a faculty member's ability to adequately respond to a suicidal student or a student experiencing mental distress.

Deisinger indicated that there is a distinct difference between profiling and prevention. Many college threat assessment plans focus on the act of intelligence gathering from multiple areas to develop a comprehensive picture of students to connect them with services that may be useful. On the other hand, profiling focuses on predicting who is likely to commit a violent attack and is theoretical in nature. Deisinger indicated that profiling focuses on characteristics rather than behavior and that danger lies in focusing on or making assumptions about who is **"likely"** to become violent based on certain traits. Threat assessment is fact-based and focuses on the individual case attempting to determine if the facts support a likelihood of violence; then determining how to intervene to prevent violence.   Profiling on the other hand focuses on prediction and offers no guidance with respect to intervention and threat reduction" (p. 21). It is important to closely examine the processes that are in place to prevent and mitigate threatening and violent behaviors on campus and in the community at large.

The US Secret Service and Department of Education developed a guide to managing threatening situations and creating safe school climates. Threat assessment: a Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe Schools was created and made available in 2002.   The guide indicated that, "there are productive actions that law enforcement officials, educators and others can pursue in response to the problem of targeted school violence" (p. 17). The guide stated that most incidents where violence had occurred were very rarely "sudden and impulsive acts" (p. 17). It was stated that most individuals did not threaten their targets directly. There was no "profile" of a person likely to be involved in a violent attack and many of the

individuals had access to weapons prior to the time of the incident. It was indicated that many offenders were known to have experienced some type of loss or other traumatic experience and most had engaged in some behavior prior to the incident that was cause for concern or indicated a need for help. It was further indicated that many had attempted suicide or made suicidal gestures prior to the bad act and many perceived themselves to have been bullied or persecuted in some manner. Finally, it was indicated that individuals other than law enforcement stopped most offenders in some part. The guide provides information regarding team implementation and management. It is stated that focusing on an integrated approach to addressing school violence is paramount and that "an integrated systems approach can enhance the potential effectiveness of both long and short-term strategies for managing threatening situations" (p. 32).

Sigma, Threat Assessment Associates outlined a systematic process that is designed to "identify, investigate, assess and manage" (p. 30) situations that are or have the potential to become dangerous. The Sigma group provides training on some of the most important aspects of threat management on college campuses such as team configuration, how to encourage and address reporting, how to facilitate an intervention, applicable laws and pertinent policy considerations. Threat assessment and crisis incident management naturally work together. Once a threat is identified there should be processes and protocols in place for the adequate management of those situations.

Nolan, et al (2011) indicated that after the incident at Virginia Tech, most institutions began to see the value of having an incident management or threat assessment team. It has been indicated that not only do campuses realize the importance of having teams that value threat assessment; but safety education has also been embraced. It was further indicated that protection of campus is the primary goal of a threat assessment process and that the importance of

understanding various legal issues is significant to an assessment team. It is imperative to understand that universities assume a special responsibility for the protection of students simply because they are students at the institution. There is a passive duty to avoid doing harm to students while on campus. In the simplest terms, though this duty is different for kindergarten through 12th grade students, the college student relationship is similar to a relationship such as landlord tenant association and the duty to exercise "reasonable care" is present. This includes "reasonable care" in the exercise of access to residence halls, training, supervision and education of employees, as well as the interaction with those who seek mental health care or who report concerning behavior and/or actions. Reasonable care also involves certain Tarasoff principles, which allow mental health professionals to break confidentiality agreements for threatening comments and situations. The idea of reasonable care suggests protection of students, faculty, staff and those that are exposed to campus communities.

Worsley and Beckering (2007) advocated an "all hazards analysis" approach to emergency planning. They indicated that despite the terms used to describe the assessment, i.e. threat assessment, vulnerability analysis, risk assessment, the steps in the process remain unchanged. They believe it critical that a "traditional emergency management structure be used as a framework for higher education emergency planning" (p. 3).

Critical Incident Management (CIM) relates to how institutions construct policy and protocol for responding to critical incidents, often including things such as weather related disasters and disruptive student behavior. Most notably, critical incident management has been developed in response to increasing reports of violent behavior on college campuses and the need to identify best practices to protect campuses from violence (Keller, 2010). There are many considerations when managing crisis situations on college campuses, for example, critical

incident management often requires response from multiple areas of a college campus. Police departments, counseling centers, faculty, staff and multiple areas of campus are involved in responding to a student in crisis.

It is important to define the types of incidents that may be faced by departments and administrators on a college campus at any given time. It is further important to describe the terminology that is used to describe institutional occurrences that results in predetermined types of responses defined in training manuals and institutional protocols. Campus Crisis Management (Zdziarski, 2007), defined crisis, disaster and critical incident as:

> *Campus Crisis*: A campus crisis is an event, often sudden or unexpected, that disrupts the normal operations of the institution or its educational mission and threatens the wellbeing of personnel, property, financial resources, and/or reputation of the institution. Classes may be cancelled and the institution closed. (p. 4).

> *Campus disaster:* A campus disaster is an unexpected event that disrupts normal operations of not only the institution but the surrounding community as well. The event is localized to the campus and does not spill over into the surrounding community (p. 4.).

> *Critical incident:* An event that causes a disruption to part of the campus community. The disruption may affect a department, college, or segment of the campus, but the rest of the institution is able to function without significant interference (p. 5).

Crisis management and threat assessment strategies are very important if a campus is to be prepared for catastrophes that may well materialize. Educational institutions face a number of security challenges that make incident response difficult. For example, most campuses are "open" and although the majority have a security presence, it is impossible to control the ebb and flow of people going on and off the campus at any given moment. In addition, the sheer number of students in a given space can make locating individuals, providing information and keeping unwanted individuals out, very difficult.

In a joint partnership with Illinois Department of Public Health, the Maryland Institute of Emergency Medical Services and the National Center for Disaster Preparedness, the Joint Commission developed an Emergency Planning Guide for America's Communities. The guide provided guidance applicable to small rural and suburban communities. However, much of the information contained in the guide is relevant to most campus communities. The guide indicated that it is important to establish and identify management teams and set goals for preparedness and response. It is likewise important to determine the capabilities and capacity of the environment to ensure that the plan is integrated and able to sustain collaboration, communication and coordination. There is also a need for an emphasis on training and preparing individuals in the community to take care of themselves and each other throughout a disaster as a component of community awareness and engagement. A central facet of the plan is in assessment to critique and improve the plan.

In the Emergency Planning guide for communities, there is a focus on building relationships to ensure that those in authoritative or decision-making positions have the tools and information necessary to make timely and appropriate decisions. These decisions are often inclusive of medical, psychological and logistical considerations. These components are often important components of many administrative training programs.

According to Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer's (1998) *Communication, Organization, and Crisis,* a crisis has four defining characteristics that are "specific, unexpected, and non-routine events or series of events that [create] high levels of uncertainty and threat or perceived threat to an organization's high priority goals" (p. 7). This definition is appropriate in terms of this research. Crisis events can be man-made or natural although both can present serious challenges to student affairs organizations on college campuses. More importantly, FEI Behavioral Health

state "crisis are, by their very nature chaotic, confusing and debilitating but planning ahead, at even the most basic level may not be able to prevent crisis in all cases, but it can strengthen response and recovery" (p.25).

Having detailed how crisis management and threat assessment is an important consideration for college campuses, it is important to discuss legal implications for campuses when determining how to construct policies and important considerations that could affect how students move through the campus conduct system or how mental health information is addressed, shared and accessed.

E.   Pertinent Law

Federal regulations can factor into the sharing of pertinent mental health information on college campuses. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act was passed in 1974 in an attempt to provide privacy and to allow parents the right to access their children's education records. However, an institution can release information without the consent of the student in certain circumstances. For example, information can be released to school officials with a "legitimate educational interest", other schools that a student may be transferring, and specific appropriate parties in relation to financial aid. In addition, information can be released to organizations that may be conducting studies for and on behalf of the institution, to comply with a lawfully issued subpoena, and to state and local authorities within a juvenile justice system. One of the most critical reasons that information can be released is under the "health and safety" provision of FERPA. The health and safety provision of FERPA is very important because it allows important individuals to access and act on critical mental health information that may be vital to the protection of the campus. The limitations of FERPA indicate that information can be disclosed if a student gives consent or "poses a substantial risk of harm to self or others".   The

JED Foundations Mental Health and the Law Report indicates, "IHE's [institutions of higher education] must balance the privacy rights of the individual students against those of the interest of the broader community" (p. 6).

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 is also an important regulation in terms of privacy rights of university students. The HIPAA Privacy Rule "excludes from its coverage those records that are protected by FERPA at schools, districts and post-secondary institutions that provide health or medical service to students". There appeared to have been inconsistency between HIPAA and FERPA, but current federal guidelines have gone a long way to dispelling most of the discrepancy. The Department of Education indicates that it was not believed that Congress intended to "amend or preempt FERPA upon the inaction of HIPAA". The final rule in HIPAA states that records that are subject to FERPA are not subject to HIPAA, and records that are exempt from FERPA's definition of medical records are exempt from HIPAA coverage". (P 82483 of the December 28, 2000, Federal Register HIPAA final rule, p. 14).

It becomes clear that issues of disability may be considered when investigating how a student with a registered disability has behaved on campus. The two primary federal laws that protect people with disabilities from discrimination in higher education settings like colleges and universities are the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, amended in 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Congress subsequently expanded protection for people with disabilities under the ADA through passage of the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA). The ADA guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public and private sector services and employment. Therefore, students who are registered in their campuses disability office will be afforded federal protection. These protections are not

intended to excuse inappropriate behavior but rather to make individuals who are in decision-making positions privy to the full body of information prior to making determinations about a students continued enrollment.

All of these laws play a part in the student conduct process, crisis management, threat assessment and incident management. These rules must be taken into consideration when determining processes, protocols, and procedures for dealing with distressed students and those with mental health concerns.

F.   Student Conduct

Student Conduct is a critical component of this study. The vast majority of students that enter into a campus conduct system are having difficulty in the campus environment. Students may have exhibited behavior that is contrary to community standards, submitted writing assignments that caused concern or behaved in a manner that resulted in students, faculty or staff being concerned. It is important to understand community behavioral standards and the processes that are in place to address maladaptive student behavior and students who have become a cause for alarm.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) was founded in 1979 to develop and provide standards for best practice in the field of student affairs and related student services such as disability services, student conduct, freshman orientation, veteran's services and others. These standards are used by many departments and provide a foundation for service development.

Student Conduct on college campuses is very important for the overall health and safety of the college environment. Students on college campuses are expected to behave appropriately and adhere to community standards that are set forth by the institution attended. These

behavioral standards can be located in Codes of Student Life/Conduct/Standards that are published at every institution. Most students are made aware of these Codes during freshman orientation although conduct codes are widely available on each university website and are discussed in classrooms and other venues. Conduct codes address academic and behavioral standards as well as grievance processes. The student conduct code specifically addresses the behavioral standards of the institution and processes that are used to determine if violations have occurred and sanction/s that will be used to assist students in learning from the process. Most Conduct Codes also include information about the conduct offices responsibility for administering the process and where reports of misconduct should be filed.

According to Stoner and Lowery, the court system initially viewed student conduct on college campuses as an "institutional matter". The court did not opine on institutional processes until Dixon v. Alabama Board of Education. This case set the standard with relation to campus judicial action by indicating that students must be afforded due process when entering into the campus judicial/conduct process. More importantly, discipline on college campuses was viewed as the responsibility of the faculty as evidenced by the employ of a "Dean" of men and women responsible for the administration of discipline on college campus. Over the past 50 years there have been substantial changes in the field of student conduct. To assist with the management of these changes, the Association for College Student Personnel established Commission XV: Campus Judicial Affairs and Legal Issues to address the needs of this relatively new profession and the responsibility of student affairs and higher education with respect to judicial affairs/student conduct on college campuses.

The Association for Student Conduct Administration established three principles for the administration of student conduct programs:

1. The development and enforcement of standards of conduct for students in an educational endeavor that fosters students personal and social development; students must assume a significant role in developing and enforcing such regulations in order that they might be better prepared for the responsibilities of citizenship.

2. Standards of conduct form the basis for behavioral expectations in the academic community; the enforcement of such standards must protect the rights, health, and safety of members of that community in order that they may pursue their educational goals without under interference

3. Integrity, wisdom and empathy are among the characteristics most important to the administration of student conduct; officials who have such responsibilities must exercise them impartially and fairly.

These guiding principles are important for the foundation of the management of student conduct on college campuses. The ASCA is the leading voice for student conduct in higher education and most offices depend on the organization for training, innovation and advice regarding the conduct process and explanations of federal regulations affecting the practice of student conduct on college campuses. ASCA has become a powerful legislative voice and training tool. The ASCA offers insight into conduct procedures and endorses best practices for addressing student behavioral concerns. The ASCA website indicates that ASCA's network of qualified professionals is "dedicated to cultivating student responsibility and accountability through prevention education, investigation and adjudication. It is further indicated that the goals of a judicial process should be educational in nature and focus on the growth and development of the student involved with the process.

The Model Code is recognized as the standard for a vast majority of conduct codes across the nation. The model code was created by Ed Stoner in 1990 and subsequently updated by Stoner and John Wesley Lowery. The Model Code offers recommendations regarding both the content of the code, the processes by which the code should be administered, information regarding conducting audits, basic concepts of due process and institutional and constitutional due process. The model code provides insight into the process and practice of higher education conduct codes. The model code further provides guidance regarding how institutions should operate to protect, educate, and safeguard student rights and administer codes in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.

Student Conduct Codes address both academic and behavioral standards. Conduct Codes address a wide range of behavior such as theft, verbal abuse, forgery, disruption of teaching, harassment, use and misuse of alcohol and drugs, sexual assault and violence. Codes also address the manufacture of narcotics, possession of firearms, disorderly conduct, coercion, intimidation, threatening language and behavior, damage and destruction of property, misuse of computers, academic dishonesty, hazing, and a myriad of other violations that represent a departure from community standards. Most behaviors can be addressed through both criminal and university processes. In addition, the institutional conduct process can occur simultaneously with a criminal process without the risk of double jeopardy. According to the district court in *Esteban v. Central Missouri State College* "the discipline of students in the educational community is, in all but the case of irrevocable expulsion, a part of the teaching process" (290 F. Supp. 622, 1968). In the case of irrevocable expulsion for misconduct, the process is not punitive or deterrent in the criminal law sense, but the process is rather the determination that the student is unqualified to continue as a member of the educational community" (290 F. Supp. 622, 1968).

While the expelled student may suffer damaging effects, sometimes irreparable, to his educational, social and economic future, he or she is not imprisoned, fined, disenfranchised, or subjected to probationary supervision" (290 F. Supp. 622, 1968).

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Standards for Student Conduct Programs addresses the primary components of judicial programs such as the mission, goals and the tangible program. It provides insight into the primary components that should be included in the mission of each conduct program and those programmatic components that allow students to experience growth.

CAS recommends that each judicial office's mission be inclusive of items that address the protection of student rights, embrace the deals of fairness and respect, campus involvement, and the tenets of growth and education. It is also encouraged that conduct offices be involved in the dissemination of the Code and be a part of the development of said policies and procedures.

It is recommended that conduct programs be actively engaged in programs that promote "learning, development, persistence and success" (p. 438). It is strongly suggested that conduct offices be collaborative and consistent with the institutional mission of the campus. It is recommended that each conduct office develop suitable student learning and developmental outcomes based on the six domains as outlined in the CAS standards.

1. Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration and application

2. Cognitive complexity

3. Intrapersonal development

4. Interpersonal competence

5. Humanitarianism and civic engagement

6. Practical competence

CAS further recommended that all conduct programs be assessed based on the learning outcomes that were initially developed and provides tools for completing the assessment.

Ultimately the CAS standards were an effort to operationalize conduct administration in higher education. The standards allow offices and staff to apply certain standards and further encourages the assessment and evaluation of conduct programs. The standards are an important part of effective conduct administration on college campuses, and it is important that conduct offices be reviewed as these offices are often involved in the process of working with and assigning educational and disciplinary consequences for disruptive behavior or behavior that is contrary to rules of conduct at an institution. These standards provide an institution and its leaders with a valuable tool and protection for an institution seeking to properly and fairly work with a student involved with the conduct process.

G.   Chapter Summary

Crisis incidents often result in considerable angst for campus administrative management, students, faculty, staff and campus constituents. Each institution is responsible for creating and managing its own crisis management protocols and ensuring that these policies are implemented in a fair and efficient manner. Mental health, threat assessment, crisis management, pertinent law and conduct standards are important components in efforts to determine how institutional action, response strategies, and discretion and intersect when campuses are incorporating best practices and training protocols for the safety of the campus. While it has been determined that the mental health of today's college students is of critical importance, it can be speculated that there may be an intersection between mental health and some of the behavioral issues that occur on college campuses. It would be to the benefit of college campuses across the nation to determine how to better assist the student population where mental health is a factor.   Student

Conduct is a very important part of a college campus. Students are held accountable for their behavior on the campus through codes of conduct and conduct offices on each campus. Determining the most effective way of addressing maladaptive behavior on a college campus in a fair and efficient manner with strict adherence to the applicable laws is of great importance.

CHAPTER III

Research Methods

A.   Introduction

The purpose for conducting the study was to determine how administrative discretion intersects with crisis management policy on college campuses, as it is critical to determine how crisis management protocols are developed and utilized. It is additionally important to examine how discretion is utilized in decision's that are made concerning the proper management of crisis situations that may occur on campus. Administrative leaders interpret and make individual decisions regarding institutional policy formation and implementation is critical in determining how institutional leadership organizes to safeguard campus and deal with the ramifications of disruptive behavior. This is often inclusive of those persons who work on the front lines of higher education, interacting with students on a consistent and frequent basis to assist them in attaining educational goals.

Campus student affairs departments deal with critical incidents and difficult situations every semester, ranging from acts of violence to sexual assault. As it is important to design proficient policies for addressing crisis conditions, comprehensive practices must be collaboratively designed and implemented that allow for the maximum protection of students, faculty, and staff at institutions across the nation. The review of literature examined student mental health needs, procedures for addressing crisis on campus, legal considerations in incident management and past recommendations for the management of campus crisis. The literature review also considered the role that street level bureaucrats play in policy formation and implementation. This chapter will address the research methods of the study, including the participants, research design, instrumentation, data collection and the analysis for the study.

B.   Researcher Background

My background in higher education is in part one of the reasons why I believe this study is important. I began working in judicial affairs as a graduate student at Southern Illinois University. I worked in the Office for Student Judicial Affairs for one and a half years. During that time there was a heavy caseload in excess of one thousand cases per year. After graduation I worked as an Assistant Dean of Students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the Office for Student Conflict Resolution for 4 years before being hired as an Associate Dean of Students at the University of Arkansas where I worked initially as the director of Student Conduct prior to being promoted and supervising multiple offices in the division of Student Affairs. Having been in the position of training individuals to work in Conduct offices and working with students of concern over the years, I developed an approach that was both in line with institutional objectives and priorities but also respectful of pertinent laws and students rights. Over the course of my almost two decades in student affairs, I have perceived the type and severity of mental health issues becoming more serious and have been involved in managing students accused of various behavioral violations such as threatening conduct and actions, fighting, sexual assault and misconduct and managed students with suicidal ideations, students who have attempted suicide and students who had been diagnosed with multiple psychiatric disorders. While the conduct system has a large part in addressing behavioral components, counseling centers are tasked with managing the mental health of the students, taking into consideration the ADA, FERPA and HIPAA related issues that may limit their ability to take certain types of actions. This study is being conducted at a time when Crisis Management and Threat assessment is very important considering the current educational landscape involving

violence and mental health concerns on college campuses. The ability to review the results of the survey will not be swayed by my past professional roles and or affiliations.

C. Policy Framework

The theory that framed this research was discretion. The study examined how/if administrative discretion of street-level-bureaucrats affect procedural and policy determinations made when addressing crisis situations on campus. The study established how discretion was applied to administrative management of critical incidents occurring on college campuses. Multiple parties including deans of students, judicial hearing officers, campus psychologist and campus police officers and departments often manage crisis on college campuses. These individuals can be considered street-level-bureaucrats because they are responsible for the preliminary and follow-up management of a campus crisis. Lipsky (2010) defined street level bureaucrats as "school, police and welfare departments, lower courts, legal services offices, and other agencies whose workers interact with and have wide discretion over the dispensation of benefits or the allocation of public sanctions" (p. xi). Moody and Mucheno (2000) indicated that decisions made by these bureaucrats are made out of a desire to make their work easier, safer and more rewarding but that they also make choices based on what they determine as the "individual citizen clients worth" (p. 329). These discretionary determinations may have negative or positive consequences. In higher education, administrative decisions may lead to a student being issued educational and/or disciplinary sanctions or separated from the institution

Lipsky (2010) directed that the assessments that street level bureaucrats make could alter policy. Lipsky(2010) suggested that the "policy making roles of street level bureaucrats are built upon two interrelated facets of their position: relatively high degrees of discretion and relative autonomy from organizational authority" (p. 13). According to Lipsky(2010), street level

bureaucrats affect policy by exercising broad discretion in the decisions about the citizens with whom they interact and those actions constitute agency behavior.

Scott (1997) suggested that bureaucratic discretion is dependent upon the context and level to which is it applied (p. 36). He further determined that the "the level of organizational control and client characteristics play an influential role in awarding benefits and services" (p. 35). According to Scott professional fields and individual decision maker attributes play a less important role in the determinations that were finalized in respect to the awarding of benefits. The study indicated that factors extraneous to client need often influenced decisions that are made concerning benefits. Scott indicated that bureaucratic discretion at a micro level is viewed as the "range of choice within a set of parameters that circumscribes the behavior of the individual service provider" (p. 37). Moreover, Scott indicated that discretion from the macro level conveys the idea of a "public agency with considerable latitude in implementing broad policy mandates of a legislative body" (p. 37). In addition, Scott stated that issues such as "workload pressure, an organization's culture, rules and constraints and an organization's external environment" (p. 37) factor into what type of decisions are subject to discretion. These ideas are critical in determining how individual students interact with an institutional conduct process on a campus and what determinations factor into the decisions about how issues are addresses. Ultimately "bureaucratic discretion is an important topic for the field of public administration because it is linked to the achievement of objectives such as good government, effectiveness in service delivery and citizen satisfaction" (p. 36). Administrative discretion is important in the management of crisis as it factors into the decisions concerning how potentially dangerous situations on college campuses are addressed.

In Hill and Hupe's book *Implementing Public Policy*, it was indicated that K. C. Davis led the "attack on discretion" and posited that "a public official has discretion wherever the effective limits on his power leave him free to make a choice among possible courses of action and inaction" (p. 25) Hill and Hupe further argued that rule structures within our discretion should be drawn as tightly as possible" (p. 25). It was indicated, "governmental and legal systems are saturated with excessive discretionary power which needs to be confined, structured and checked" (p. 26). On the other hand, scholars imply that structures lacking discretionary power are difficult to achieve because of the distinction perceived between "strong and weak discretion" (p. 26). It was expressed that strong discretion could be understood when describing a system where a decision maker "creates the standards" and weak discretion can be described as the type where those decision makers must "apply" the standard to an interpretation of the facts. This distinction produces conflict between the belief that discretion can either negatively or positively affect the implementation of policy for the benefit of a particular person, organization or structure impacted by a policy put in place to achieve a clear objective.

Deborah Stone in Policy Paradox outlined the concept of 'good rules.' She described 'good rules' as both "precise and flexible" (p. 291). Stone theorized 'precise rules' operate to ensure fairness by treating like individuals alike, eliminates arbitrariness and discrimination in officials behavior and creates predictability to citizens while symbolizing the rule of law" (p. 292). Stone further suggests that "flexible rules ensure fairness by allowing sensitivity to contextual and individual differences, allowing officials to respond creatively to new situations while creating efficiency by allowing officials to use their knowledge of particular situations, and also symbolize the ideals and aspirations of community which are necessarily vague" (p. 292). According to Stone these sorts of arguments rely on the belief that both rules and discretion have

proper uses and that it is possible to distinguish between the necessary and unnecessary uses of either. Discretion in policy is a subject that has many advocates and detractors.

Studies examining the value of rules versus discretion in public sector decision-making were the subject of academic debate in the early 90's. These arguments remain relevant today and studies such as that by Reinganum (2000) examining sentencing guidelines in an effort to review judicial discretion and plea-bargaining are significant. There have also been studies of policing/law enforcement that caused many to consider the value and objectivity of discretion in different areas of public policy. These studies examine street level bureaucrats in an attempt to determine if discretion creates systemic unfairness and/or administrative efficiency.

Street-level bureaucrats who address crisis response on college campuses manage incident response. Although these individuals are required to consider institutional policies such as campus Codes of Conduct, Board of Trustee policies, and federal laws such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and American with Disabilities Act (ADA), there is the ability to apply discretion when defining how these policies are observed and executed. Maupin (1993) indicates "street level bureaucrats bring their own ideas, expectations values, agendas and abilities into an agency. Maupin further indicates that in dealing with concerns and pressures at the point of service delivery, street level bureaucrats often frustrate the rational achievement of program goals" (337). This study will examine how discretion is utilized in the delivery of crisis management services on college campuses and if that service delivery is "frustrated" or altered by discretion.

May and Winter (2007) studied the impact of "politicians, managers, and the dispositions of street level bureaucrats in shaping actions at the frontlines of policy implementation" (p. 453).

The study can be generalized to a wide variety of street-level bureaucrats as it was indicated that

policy is reinforced and influenced by a bureaucrats understanding of the policy goals, their

professional knowledge and policy evaluations.

By the same token, Lipsky (2010) argued, "the decisions of street level bureaucrats, the

routines they establish, and the devises they invent to cope with uncertainties and work

pressures, effectively become the public policies which they carry out" (p. 51). He wrote that this

process of street-level policy making does not involve the advancement of the ideals many bring

to personal service work to the extent that it may be hoped for" (p. 51). Lipsky's (2010) street

level bureaucrat's role is often used as justification for methodological strategies that focus on

the work as opposed to the policy output. For Lipsky (2010), the implementation of policy is

about "street level workers with high service ideals exercising discretion under intolerable

pressure" (p.52). Lipsky (2010) indicates that attempts to control bureaucrats hierarchically,

"simply increases the tendency to stereotype and disregard the needs of the client" (p. 52). For

those individuals that work in student conduct, it is important that they are trained on conduct

procedures for the institution in addition to student development aspects and legal considerations

that aim to protect the interest of the student.

Violence on college campuses is an unfortunate and frequent part of higher education.

The presence of violence, threat assessment protocols, mental health concerns, contrary laws

with relation to parental notification, confusing federal and state laws along with the demands of

parents, constituents and others make it more important to put processes in place that operate to

make campuses, students, faculty and staff as secure as possible in these open environments. The

troubling realities of higher education demand that attempts be made to analyze violence and

administrative response and discretion on campus to determine how these factors may possibly influence safety considerations.

D. Design

The study will be conducted using a descriptive, qualitative approach, primarily working with narrative inquiry procedures. Narrative inquiry is useful for this research because it allows greater understanding of discretion used by administrators who address crisis on campus. It will be important to investigate beyond the initial survey into the motives and assumptions of decision makers. It is imperative to determine the specific strategies used by administrators to determine if strategies are in line with existing crisis management practices of those campuses. Information that leads to greater understanding will be revealed through further inquiry in the form of interviews.

Ospina and Dodge (2005) indicated that narrative inquiry "helps to explore specific phenomena such as leadership and organizational change and how they are experienced by social actors" (p. 143). According to Byrne-Armstrong (1999), "the aim of narrative inquiry is not to find one generalizable truth but to sing up many truths/narratives" (p. 126). Rice and Essy (1999) further indicated that the "theoretical underpinning of narrative inquiry is the belief that telling a story about oneself involves choice and action which both have an integrally moral and ethical components" (p. 112). Additionally, Merriam (2002) indicated that to understand qualitative research, one must realize that meaning for people is socially constructed and that their ideas are subject to change based on interactions with the community around them and how surroundings are perceived.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggested that narrative inquiry can be a powerful tool for social change as one individual voicing their experience through narrative could empower others

to reveal the details of their existence, leading to mobilization" (p. 642). This may be important because qualitative inquiry utilized appropriately may result in needed mobilization to force action. Ospina and Dodge indicated, "over the past decades, scholars have increasingly used narratives to enhance their understanding of diverse experiences and their meanings" (p. 143). Ospina and Dodge indicated that there has been a narrative turn in public administration that has contributed to the theoretical and methodological development of the field by encouraging scholars to explore and highlight the multidimensional aspects of public institutions and their administrative and policy problems" (p. 144). In the case of the higher education administrator, it will be instructive to determine how individual discretion influences the policies and processes that are in place for reacting to threats and critical incidents on college campuses. It is important to determine if discretion enhances or detracts from institutional processes.

Narrative inquiry is used in the social sciences and in fields such as anthropology, sociology, feminist research, education, teacher education, etc. Fields such as education find narrative inquiry useful in assessing charter schools and issues such as school choice as well as teacher satisfaction and experiences. Ospina and Dodge (2005) wrote that public administration and public policy have embraced narrative inquiry as a way to better understand complex social phenomena. Britton (1970) used narrative inquiry to research development and teaching methods while Lightfoot and Martin (1988) used narrative inquiry to shed light on the context of schooling.

Although there are varying uses for narrative inquiry, it is assumed that the use of this form of inquiry to flesh out how and when discretion is used for the protection and safety of college campuses may be instructive to higher education administrators when crafting processes and protocols.

E.   Sample

The survey sample will be comprised of land-grant institutions that are included on the

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) membership list with the exception of

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and private institutions. Private colleges

and HBCUs are being excluded from this study because their missions may be different and

private institutions have more control over how their discipline process is used and are not bound

by the same federal regulations as public institutions. A wide grouping of institutions will allow

the results to be applied to many institutions and may allow individuals to gain insight from the

study that may support modification, alteration or enhancement of policy.

The survey will be distributed electronically to the senior student affairs officer at each

institution identified.

F.   Instrument

To collect data, a 23-item survey instrument was constructed based on the key elements

of crisis management design identified in the literature. The force-response survey items were

scripted and shared with practicing student affairs professionals and others working in crisis

management at the campus level. The questions, following multiple revisions, were ultimately

determined to be reliable and valid for the purpose of the study (see Appendix A). The

instrument was then submitted for IRB approval through the University of Arkansas (see

Appendix B for approval) and formatted for electronic distribution using Qualtrics.

H.   Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

The methodology used in this study was descriptive in nature and identified factors that

affect how crisis management is addressed on college campuses. In addition, the methodology

examined how individuals viewed their role in the crisis management process. The results

allowed the identification of critical components of crisis management on college campuses.

Land-grant institution's website were identified utilizing the APLU website. Next, each individual institution's website was identified and examined to identify the appropriate administrative official to receive the survey along with detailed instructions for completion and return. Email addresses were collected utilizing the institution's website and checked for accuracy.

G.   Response Rate

The audience size was ninety-one potential participants. Eighteen surveys were started, eighteen surveys received some responses and 15 surveys were completed. These answers resulted in a response rate of 67%.   Qualtrics was the tool used to analyze the data that was gathered from the surveys that were submitted. Qualtrics is a research platform used by education, business and industry to gather information regarding critical issues. Survey responses were analyzed in terms of frequency and variance. Narrative responses will also be analyzed for worth and research contribution. Each survey participant was informed of the details of the survey and ensured responses would be anonymous. Respondents were further ensured that the survey would be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and university policy. The survey was designed to be exploratory in nature. The focus was on gaining insight for potential later investigation to discover important themes to advance the crisis management field of research and to be able to provide information about discretion and how it may enhance or alter policy.

H.   Chapter Summary

The methods chapter included information about the researcher's background, an explanation of research participants and why they were appropriate for the study, information

about the research design and the details of why the design was selected and is most applicable to the study, and information regarding the collection and analysis of the data. A discussion of all results including text-based responses results will be outlined in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER IV

Results of the Study

A. Introduction

American college campuses are facing record levels of violence and disruption due to mental health issues. These crises impact everyone on campus from staff members, to faculty and students, and the result is the need for clear, coherent responses and preparation for dealing with crises. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to determine how administrative discretion intersects with crisis management policy on college campuses. A key element in this is the administrative leader's interpretations of institutional crisis response protocols and a determination regarding institutional policy is critical to the way institutional leaders organize to protect college campuses. This chapter is organized by the research questions that were formulated to fulfill the purpose of the study, and the chapter concludes with a summary.

B. Summary of the Study

There has been an increase in violence and behavioral issues on American college campuses. Some of these incidents have resulted in mass murder; others have resulted in suicide, threats of violence to other students and faculty members. These incidents have negative effects on those on those campuses when looking at the aftermath of critical incidents such as anxiety but could also translate into retention and persistence problems for students. College campus leaders have taken the issue of crisis management seriously and sought to develop institutional policies and procedures for managing difficult situations. The literature related to crisis management highlights the growing number of mental health problems identified on college campuses, but also the lack of uniform responses to the management of these difficult situations.

The current study was developed, then, to determine how administrative discretion intersects with crisis management policy on college campuses.

The descriptive study was structured around a researcher-developed, literature-based survey instrument that was administered to a sample of 91 senior student affairs administrators. The instrument was pilot tested and revised to assure reliability and validity. The survey, delivered electronically, was administered in the summer of 2017 on the following dates; June 2, June 9, and June 16, 2017. A total of 28 participants opened the survey (31% response rate), although not all respondents completed every question on the survey; the frequency of responses was therefore noted in the tabular presentation of data. Ninety-one surveys were sent to administrators who were members of the Association for Public Land-grant Universities. The administrators contacted were either Deans, Associate Deans, Vice or Assistant Vice Chancellors, Vice Presidents or Assistant Vice Presidents of student affairs, and/or Directors of Student Conduct or other similar positions who held student conduct responsibility. The response rate was deemed to be acceptable due to the descriptive nature of the study, and its relative high percentage of responses compared to similar online survey distributions. To encourage participation potential survey participants were invited to complete the survey and to email the researcher if they were interested in being entered into a drawing for a $100 gift card.

C.   Data Analysis and Results

Research Question 1: What has been the context of crisis management on a contemporary higher education college campus?

Discussion

To answer this question, data were drawn from the survey instrument and descriptive data were calculated with frequencies and percentages. The majority of responding institutions

reported that they did indeed have a crisis management plan (87%; $n=21$) and that the many of these were created in the decade of 1996-2006 (47%; $n=10$), but nearly as many had been created in the past decade (33%; $n=8$). These crisis management plans were developed with input from a number of offices, but as shown in Table 1, the most frequent offices to assist in their creation were Student Affairs ($n=19$), the Campus Police Department ($n=18$), and the offices of Student Conduct ($n=17$). University Counseling Centers ($n=14$) appeared to be an important component of those represented in the creation of the plans. Although there is broad institutional involvement in crisis management and threat assessment committees and processes, the critical area in these plans is the public safety or police department. Administrators also appeared to view the role of Legal Counsel, Student Affairs and Student Conduct as important in the review and creation of crisis management plans. Crisis management committee involvement seems to involve more departments across the campus such as Greek Life and Athletics. The assumption is that those areas such as Athletics and Greek Life are invited to meetings when a member of that population is or could be affected by a situation that may have occurred either on or off campus.

It should be noted that all survey respondent indicated that a crisis management team was a part of the structure on their campus (100%; $n=20$). It was also indicated that they most commonly met once per month (45%; $n=9$). There were also eight respondents who indicated that a different office was also represented on the crisis management committee, and those responses included: President's Office, Residence Life, Title IX officer, Emergency Management, College Deans, Facilities Management, Risk Management (hazards officer), and Student Organizations.

Overall, the context for crisis management is that most institutions have plans that are fairly mature, with two-thirds being over a decade old, that they are coordinated by a variety of offices on campus, work by committee, most of these committees have broad institutional representation, and 100% of the respondents perceived the crisis management plan to be very to extremely important. Additionally, all respondents who answered the question about threat assessment teams indicated that their campuses do have a threat assessment team that meets frequently or as needed to respond to various issues.

Table 1.
General Crisis Management Plan Self-Reported Information

Plan element	Frequency	Percentage of Respondents
Is there a Crisis Management Plan		
Yes	21	87%
No	3	12%
When was the crisis management plan created?		
2006-2016	8	33%
1996-2006	10	47%
1986-1996	3	12%
Offices who participated in creating the plan		
Student Affairs	19	95%*
Police Department	18	90%
Student Conduct	17	85%
Counseling Center	14	70%
Academic Affairs	14	66%
Legal Counsel	14	66%
Other	5	25%
Not sure	1	5%
Crisis Management committee		
Yes	20	100%
No	0	0

Table 1. {Cont.}

General Crisis Management Plan Self-Reported Information

Plan element	Frequency	Percentage of Respondents
Which offices are represented on the crisis management committee?*		
University Police	19	95%
Student Affairs	19	95%
Student conduct	17	85%
Academic Affairs	16	80%
Counseling Center	16	80%
Campus Safety	15	75%
Off campus representative	9	45%
Other	8	40%
Athletics	4	20%
Greek Life	2	10%
Frequency of crisis management committee meetings		
Once per month	9	45%
Once per week	4	20%
As necessary	2	10%
Every other week	0	0
Who updates crisis management plan?		
Public safety	10	37.93%
Student affairs	4	31%
Other	4	7%
Academic affairs	3	7%
Legal Counsel	2	3.45%
Dean of students	1	10.34%
Counseling center	0	3.45%
Perceived importance of plan to campus safety		
Extremely important	13	68%
Very important	6	31%
Moderately important	0	0
Slightly important	0	0
Not important	0	0
Threat assessment team on campus		
Yes	19	100%
No	0	0

Table 1. {Cont.}

General Crisis Management Plan Self-Reported Information

Plan element	Frequency	Percentage of Respondents
Frequency of threat assessment team meetings		
As necessary	12	63%
Once per week	7	37%
Every other week	3	16%
Once per month	0	0

*Percentage based on responses to clarifying question and not overall number of respondents.

Research Question 2: What processes did college administrators use to address violence or threat of violence on a contemporary higher education college campus?

Discussion

The crisis management plans that were utilized by the colleges in the study primarily included threatening behavior, physical assault, physical abuse, harassment, sexual misconduct (see Table 2) and others were behaviors that were identified as discussion worthy for a crisis management or threat assessment team. It should be noted that these terms do not represent all forms of threatening or disruptive behavior that could occur on a college campus. When responding to these behaviors, six actions were identified as responses/consequences: removal from campus, conduct processes, interim actions, suspension, expulsion, and referral to police. Respondents indicated that most often the type of action was dependent upon the type of behavior and allegations.

Multiple individuals and groups were identified as being allowed to report issues or crises. Although the groups students, faculty, staff, parents, police, and community members all were identified by two respondents, all individuals completing the question (*n*=19) identified that

all groups could report a crisis. The two responses were most likely determined to be an error in the design of the survey. Similarly, also shown in Table 2, there were multiple methods for the process of reporting incidents or crisis, with all 18 of the respondents to that question identifying that any of the methods listed could be used to report (including in person, via website, anonymous identification, and two respondents listed the telephone as another option). A confirming question was also included, and 17 respondents (89%) indicated that their institutions had a dedicated website to report an incident.

Responding administrators identified a wide-range of processes used to address crises or threats of violence on campuses. These strategies, particularly relying on a determination of the allegation prior to an assigned, automatic response, was consistent with the assumption of the study that discretion plays a key role in institutional response strategies. Most respondents indicated that there were various measures utilized to address serious issues on campus. Many indicated that conduct processes, counseling referrals, removal from campus, probation, suspension and expulsion could result from an administrative action in response to critical incidents occurring on campus. The majority of campuses utilize a number of measures to address difficult issues. Respondents were provided a listing of potential outcomes based on past student conduct professional experience and most respondents reported using many of these options to address specific incidents on campuses. These tools were inclusive of suspension, expulsion, probation, removal from campus, referral to police department and other sanctions or consequences. It was assumed that these processes would be similar across campuses and utilized at the discretion of the administrator managing the process or requested by the student involve in the process.

Table 2.
Crisis Management Processes

Plan element	Responses	Percentage of Respondents
Main elements of crisis management plan		
Threatening behavior	18	100%
Physical assault	14	77.7%
Physical abuse	13	72.22%
Harassment	12	66.66%
Sexual misconduct	11	61.11%
Other	5	27.77%
Actions used to address issue		
Removal from campus	17	100%
Depends on allegation	16	94.11%
Conduct process	15	88.24%
Interim action	15	88.24%
Suspension	15	88.24%
Expulsion	15	88.24%
Referral: Police	15	88.24%
Counseling	14	82.35
Probation	13	76.47%
Referral: Campus Safety	12	70.58%
How are reports received?		
In person	1	4%
Website	2	8%
Anonymous reports	2	8%
Other	2	8%
All of the above	18	72%
Is there a Website for reporting?		
Yes	17	89%
No	2	10.53%

Research Question 3. How were best practices used to develop institutional campus threat response policy?

Discussion

To understand how plans were developed, survey participants were asked to identify which professional organization's best practices and guidance was consulted in the development of crisis management processes and threat assessment measures. As shown in Table 3, a third of the respondents indicated that they had consulted the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) guidelines for crisis management plans. An equal number of respondents indicated that they had consulted other professional associations, such as the National College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) and the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS). A fifth of the respondents indicated that they consulted the National Center for Education Risk Assessment (NCHERM), and nearly a fifth consulted the Association for Student Conduct Administrators (ASCA).

It was determined based on responses that many administrators relied on professional organizations to provide guidance for the development and update of plans as well as information on training components that may beneficial to campuses. Practitioners normally utilize professional organizations in an attempt to stay current and to ensure that practices and methods applied on campuses are relevant and timely.

Table 3.
Organizations Consulted to Create/Update Crisis Management Plan

Organizations	Responses
NASPA	7
Other	7
NCHERM	5
ASCA	4

Research Question 4: How are faculty, staff, and students trained to implement crisis management policy and respond to threats of violence on campus?

Discussion

To address the question involving training measures it was important to understand how faculty, staff and students are trained, the nature of the training and how important administrators indicate training appears to the individuals that are on and involved in the campus activities. These factors can lead to robust training measures and can affect the level of readiness that individuals feel they have when confronted with difficult, violent or threatening situation on campus.

The individuals surveyed indicated a wide variety of methods used for training students, faculty, staff and constituents regarding management of campus-based incidents. Almost 29% of administrators surveyed indicated that they worked with campus safety or police departments to train individuals on campus about different safety measures. Several indicated that they used electronic and/or video training modules. Institutional websites in many states have linked safety videos to the institutional website that were either made by their internal campus safety departments or utilize training videos for active shooters situations such as the one made by the FBI or the video developed by the Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Evacuate (ALICE) training center at Texas A&M. Campuses also utilize a video entitled "Avoid Deny Defend" developed by Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training organization while other institutions practice the "Run Hide Fight" tactic with training prepared by Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Various police departments and other incident management companies also demonstrate these resources to members of campus communities.

Twenty-one percent of administrators indicated that they utilized in-class discussions to

deliver information while other individuals commented that orientation and residential education

offices have included a level of disaster preparedness in its welcome weeks. It was also

indicated that Greek Life Offices provide risk management training, which may be inclusive of

bystander intervention and reporting information.   Various administrators' utilized activity-

based exercises and many indicated that the methods used for the training of off-campus students

mirrored on-campus student training. It was further indicated that the majority of campuses

made an effort to educate campus constituents, parents, community members, alumni, etc. about

emergency response plans through meetings, trainings, website information, written

communication and videos. Thirty-three percent used the institutional website, 23% utilized

written communication and 12.82% used a video to inform and train constituents.

Respondents reported students were required to undertake "some" mandatory training for

crisis response measures. Faculty and staff were requested to take advantage of the crisis

response measures on the campus. Ultimately, it appears that although crisis management is

agreed to be very important for all sections of a college campus, it is more difficult to ensure that

individuals complete training, especially faculty and staff.

Table 4.
Training of Faculty, Staff and Students

Type of training	Frequency	Percentage of respondents

Mandatory training		
Faculty		
Yes	3	16%
No	12	63%
Maybe	4	21%
Staff		
Yes	4	21%

Table 4. {Cont.}
Training of Faculty, Staff and Students

Type of training	Frequency	Percentage of respondents
No	10	53%
Maybe	5	26%
Students		
Yes	6	31%

Training of Faculty, Staff and Students

Type of training	Frequency	Percentage of respondents
No	11	58%
Maybe	2	10%
Types of training used for on-campus students		
Campus safety/police	12	63%
In-class discussions	9	47%
Electronic modules	8	42%
Video	7	37%
Tabletop	3	16%
Other	3	16%
Types of training used for off-campus students		
Campus safety/police	10	53%
In-class discussions	9	47%
Video	9	47%
Electronic modules	8	42%
Other	4	21%
Tabletop	1	5%

Campus Constituent Training

Types	Percentage	Count
Meetings	7.8%	3
Trainings	5.1%	2
Website Information	33.3%	13

Table 4. {Cont.}
Training of Faculty, Staff and Students

Type of training	Frequency	Percentage of respondents
Written communication	23.9%	9
Video	12.8%	5
All of the above	18%	7

Research Question 5: What level of discretion was afforded to and used by college campus administrators in the planning and implementation of institutional crisis management policies?

Discussion

The survey included four items inquiring if student affairs officers perceived themselves as having discretion over the institutional responses to different types of offenses such as physical violence, threats, threats of violence, and suicidal statements or ideations. Over two-thirds of the respondents to each question indicated that they did indeed have discretion over how they could respond to the situation, with the highest percentage of respondents (70%; see Table 8) reporting discretion in situations involving threats to self (meaning, suicide). A quarter of the respondents reported not having discretion in handling physical violence (26% of the respondents to that question), and 11% of the respondents also reported not having an ability to use discretion for crisis situations. Presumably this level of restriction was established to minimize perceived risk in certain types of events.

Also as shown in Table 3, over a fifth of the respondents indicated that they may have discretion over a given situation, and several respondents did offer an explanation for this response. For crisis situations, one respondent wrote "depending on the crisis and when and

where it occurs, we just want the campus safe, first and foremost" and another wrote

"adjustments can be made related to timing, speed of response, availability of resources, etc."

For the question on suicidal statements, one respondent wrote "call 9-1-1 and depending on the

method [of attempted suicide] this method could change how much they get involved." When

addressing "threats of violence", one respondent wrote that responses are, "led by law

enforcement," and another wrote that the focus was to "keep campus safe, but use the

guidelines." The data indicates senior student affairs officers, as the campus representative to

crisis and violence situations, believe they have a level of discretion when responding to crises

and acts of violence. One respondent indicated that there was no discretion when responding to

threats of violence and suicide while five respondents indicated that there was no discretion

when responding to physical violence and two indicated no discretion when making

determinations regarding the response to crisis situations. Five administrators indicated that they

"possibly" had discretion when responding to threats of violence and threats to self. These

findings suggest that student affairs administrators, and those administrators involved in crisis

management have an understanding of the available options and resources that can be used to

address difficult situations occurring on campus where threats, violence and suicidal statements

are involved. It was further indicated that all actions are initiated to protect the individuals who

are on campus and that all safety measures are followed to attempt to ensure that the

environment is safe and that students are secure.

Table 5.

Do campus administrators have discretion when responding to crisis on campus?

Area of discretion	Responses	Percentage of respondents
Crisis situations		
Yes	12	66%
No	2	11%
Possibly	4	22%

Do campus administrators have discretion when responding to crisis on campus?

Area of discretion	Responses	Percentage of respondents
Physical violence		
Yes	13	68%
No	5	26%
Possibly	1	5%
Threats of violence		
Yes	13	68%
No	1	5%
Possibly	5	26%

Table 5. {Cont.}

Threats to self (suicide)		
Yes	12	70%
No	1	6%
Possibly	4	23%

D. Chapter Summary

In summary, the survey responses indicated that administrators viewed crisis

management and threat assessment as important components of campus safety.   It is evident that

administrators consider it essential to train students, faculty and staff to adequately respond in

the event of a crisis. It was further determined that the development of campus crisis strategies,

procedures and protocols appears to be a very collaborative process involving many areas across

college campuses. Additionally, most campuses reported that many areas participate in updating and modifying response strategy. It is further evident that administrators consider crisis management and threat assessment extremely important for the overall safety of a campus. There appears to be a level of consensus on the processes that are used to address incidents such as suspension, removal from campus, and referrals to campus safety/conduct process and/or counseling when appropriate.   Administrators appear to subscribe to the belief that complaints or concern reports should be considered from a wide array of individuals both on and off campus. Finally, administrators believe that crisis management plans are important to the safety of the campus and that the training of both off and on campus students, faculty, and staff is vitally important.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

A.   Introduction

The study emphasized the importance of Crisis Management and Threat Assessment on college campuses. Administrators are in agreement on the importance of having polices and conducting training although there is no standardized training protocol that must be followed. Campuses depend on professional associations and local law enforcement agencies to develop processes used to help ensure campuses are prepared for critical events concerning students and visitors to the campus.   Though there appears to be consensus regarding the importance of crisis management and threat assessment, most college campuses do not mandate training for members of campus despite the fact that a great variety of training measures are offered. Many campuses offer options from online training modules, to in-class discussions and video training, which should encourage participation. Despite multiple options; there is very little consistency in the processes and tools for constructing these measures. Finally, while discretion appears to be a seminal component of crisis management, on the other hand, it is very important that individuals distinguish discretion that is utilized in positive ways to benefit both students and the broader campus environment from discretion that results in inconsistent and unfair treatment.

B.   Public Policy Implications

Discretion

There are public policy implications for university administrators when utilizing administrative discretion in matters involving student conduct, violence and threats in relation to crisis management and threat assessment on college campuses. Thomas Dye indicates that public policy can be defined in terms of what a government either "decides to do or what not to do",

therefore while a government will detail policies for individuals to implement, it is essential that the policy and its intended outcomes be clear and concise. The difficulty of student conduct, threat assessment and crisis management is that the policy outcomes and implementation details may be unclear or open to interpretation, resulting in unfair or inconsistent policy use.

An example can be understood in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) courses that are offered to enhance the responses to disaster and emergency preparedness. The University of Arkansas has participated in training courses for several years as senior administrators have considered the training instructive for adequate institutional response to emergency and disaster situations. These training measures are completed despite there being no federal mandate requiring institutions to participate in these courses. It should be noted that these courses are available for concerned citizens to complete, including those administrators at institutions of higher education.

Another example can be seen in the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) guidance for Title IX legislation. The function of OCR is to "investigate civil rights, health information privacy rights, and patient privacy right complaints to identify violations of the law and take corrective action". As a function of this mandate, OCR addresses Title IX complaints on college campuses. The OCR endeavors to ensure that colleges are in compliance with federal law. There have been multiple Dear Colleague Letters that address the process of adjudicating sexual misconduct and assault on college campuses. Dear Colleague letters were released in 2014, 2015, and 2017. These letters were intended to provide guidance, clarity and parameters for the processes that colleges use to address sexual assault and discrimination on college campuses. Many conduct officers have concerns with the guidance that they believe has not been clarified. Many institutions are beginning to hire or appoint individuals precisely for the purpose of addressing

Title IX issues and constructing Title IX offices. OCR's Dear Colleague letter's strongly suggest processes and practices for colleges and universities specifically with regard to their response protocol for handling alleged survivors and accused students. In 2014 there were over 70 complaints filed against various universities for alleged mismanagement of these sensitive issues. It appears that the Dear Colleague Letters did not accomplish their intended purpose, which calls into question the administration of the policy. Many of these complaints addressed alleged administrative mismanagement of sexual misconduct policies at various institutions.

Lipsky (1980) indicated that there is a difference between the "exercise of professional judgment and blind commitment to regulations where the end result is to the detriment of the individuals involved in the system" (p.54). Students involved in conduct processes involving an alleged violation that includes potential violence, suicidal statements or ideations, allegations of threats of violence and/or violent acts combined with issues that may involve ADA, FERPA or HIPPA, may have the potential to affect a student's continued enrollment on a college campus. These allegations should be treated fairly and with deference to mitigating factors. Institutional disciplinary processes often allow administrative discretion on matters such as the type of charges assessed; type of hearing or hearing body utilized, and the resulting decision and sanction(s). Although the model code was developed by an attorney, it was created in collaboration with a higher education professional; therefore there are strong educational components present in the document and the recommendations pay deference to both sides. The judicial branch of the federal government has authorized higher education institutions, through their conduct offices, to address student behavioral issues on college campuses and although lawsuits have been brought that challenge these processes, "double jeopardy" has not been judged to apply even when a student is also subject to a criminal charges and processes. These

lawsuits been unsuccessful and courts have determined that conduct processes on a college campus are in the interest of the campus. This approach allows may allow administrators to make unfair determinations that have the potential to affect a student's educational future with little to no intervention barring a lawsuit or a complaint to the Office for Civil Rights.

Discretion is important in student conduct because the way in which processes are administered may contribute to the educational mission of the student conduct office at an institution. Scott (1997) suggested street level bureaucracies are unique in that they place high levels of reliance on individual service providers to serve as brokers between the organization and its clientele" (p.16). In a university setting, the conduct office or officer represents the organization "bureaucracy" and the student is the client. The conduct officer exercises discretion in the charges and sanctions that are assessed as they are guiding a student through the conduct process all the while trying to ensure that the mission of the institution is accomplished. Administrative discretion may allow varying levels of outcomes in the conduct process. Scott discussed, "individual decision maker characteristics, organizational characteristics and client attributes as factors that may contribute to service provision, flexibility in decisions, benefits withheld" etc. (p. 42). In student conduct, a disparity in sanctions can be seen when like students are not treated alike. The ability to issue sanctions that allow a student to remain at or return to an institution or sanctions students that treat like students in a disparate manner bring discretion in student conduct under considerable scrutiny.

Hill and Hupe indicated that in the world of implementation, there is often a "line between policy intentions and policy outputs" (p. 161). It is further indicated that often bureaucrats have to exercise creative decision making and interpret policy in a creative and justifiable way" (164). It was stated that rules and polices are not always exercised in the way in

which the policy was intended and in most cases the implementers are seen as blameworthy although policies are viewed as ambiguous. On college campuses safety is paramount and when and if a student engages in behavior that is contrary to institutional behavioral standards, it is up to administrators to implement policy in a way that protects both the student and the campus but is fair. This can be problematic when policies and processes have not prepared administrators to adequately implement policy in a way justifiable, fair, and consistent and stakeholder satisfactory manner.

There are other concerns when considering the intersection between public policy and higher education. There are common problems that occur where there is a difference in self-interest and public interest. The public interest can be considered as institutional constituent concerns and self-interests as the student-based interest. These two entities would appear to have similar interest but in terms of incident management, it is the interest of the wider institution that guides the discussion institutional safety and security is paramount. This is the reason why the discussion of gun rights is often a point of concern because there is a discrepancy between an individual's rights to bear arms and right to self-protection and the right of an institution to be free from individuals on the campus with concealed weapons. This conflict has been seen at the University of Arkansas and many other institutions where there is disagreement regarding an individual's right to carry weapons on campus.

Public policy is an important consideration where discretion, student conduct and higher education institutions intersect. HIPAA, ADA and FERPA all have serious implications for how critical incident management is managed on college campuses.   The ADA has very specific protocols for the rights of individuals with disabilities but there has been very little guidance on these laws in relations to the intersection of violence, mental health and college campuses.

Police Departments, student affairs professionals and office directors are provided small amounts of guidance and left to develop their own practices for implementation. It is important that these practices are fair and consistent for the students that attend institutions of higher education.

Policy implementation involves translating the goals and objectives of a policy into a functional, on-going program. Policy implementation is a much bigger process that involves determining what the outcomes are for management protocols that have been implemented by an institution's campuses. Implementation also involves setting goals and developing outcomes to ensure that the programmatic objectives are being met for those that are in the university community and those who have a connection with a specific institution. Policy implementation is a hurdle that campus administrators must navigate in order for effective crisis and emergency management to be realized.

This study demonstrates the importance of administrative discretion on college campuses for the administration of student conduct in issues that involve threat assessment and crisis management. It is anticipated that as situations arise on college campuses not easily defined and addressed in incident management protocols that concern crisis response ADA, FERPA, HIPPA and other legal factors that require an adept administrative response, it is assumed and anticipated that administrators will have the training and professional aptitude to act in a manner that protects the institution and the rights of the students involved in campus conduct processes. It is clear that the administrators that responded to this survey consider that discretion is an important component in student conduct.

C.   Recommendations for Future Study and Practice

1.   Future studies should determine the level of crisis management readiness that is experienced at other types of institutions including Historically Blacks Colleges and Universities, tribal institutions, predominantly Hispanic serving institutions, community colleges, and career colleges paying special attention to residential colleges. Because educational institutions are viewed as "soft targets", in other words, relatively unprotected and vulnerable, ensuring that all educational facilities are well informed and prepared should be of importance.

2.   Future studies should address administrative discretion from the perspective of individuals having endured a major crisis situation while either a student at an institution or in some way connected to an institution that was subjected to a crisis. This research should focus on determining if these survivors participated in training procedures while on or connected to the campus and if they believe the training they received was beneficial in allowing them to be better prepared. These studies could also focus on the methods used to enforce or encourage participation.

3.   Studies that focus on the efficacy of crisis response training would be beneficial to practitioners. It would be helpful to determine what types of methods individuals considered better prepare them for confronting a crisis situation on college campuses. This would allow campuses to better adapt their training measures to ensure full participation and maximum effectiveness.

4.   Discretion is a very important component of student conduct and the majority of the respondents did perceived themselves to have discretion in the administration of crisis management processes on campus, it is important to discern if students perceive themselves to have been treated fairly when navigating a conduct process.

5.	Due to the fact that gun rights are such a volatile political and moral issue in the United States right now, it will be important to research the effect that gun laws are having on institutions of higher education and the ability to maintain a level of safety. In addition, it will become increasingly important to pay attention to institutions that embrace an individual's right to carry a concealed weapon on campus as opposed to those that have varying levels of gun control on campus. It is important to determine the perception of institutional safety that stakeholders feel is provided by the types of gun control at different institutions. Future studies and research should consider the changes in gun legislation over the past years. Recent court cases have overturned older laws that banned guns on campus despite concealed carry permits. Although all fifty states allow concealed carry permits only twenty-three allow individual institutions to make the determination of whether or not to allow concealed permit holders to carry on campus. Ten states have recently allowed the carrying of concealed weapons on college campuses, including Arkansas. It would be useful to determine how the landscape of higher education has changed and what effects these laws have had on the students, faculty and staff on campus.

D.	**Discussion of Findings**

This study was intended to provide administrators information regarding crisis management measures and threat assessment on college campuses. The results of this study can be used to guide protocols that are used to develop, update, modify and potentially improve crisis management policy on campus. The information can also be used to determine those individuals and offices that administrators believe should be primarily responsible for making changes to policy and involved in the determinations that are made with reference to critical incidents occurring on college campuses. The information can be utilized to determine if campuses are

ensuring that the correct decision makers are at the table when making critical decisions about campus safety.

It should be noted that while almost all respondents believed that discretion was a part of the determinations that are made with regards to crisis situations, no determination was forthcoming about the advantages and disadvantages of discretion. It would be useful to delve into administrative discretion to gain a better idea of how administrators view the necessity of discretion or the use of more prescriptive ways of addressing certain types of behaviors with relation to disruptive behavior, violent incidents, threats and violence on campus.

The study utilized information from senior level administrators and conduct officers who are involved with their campuses crisis response polices and therefore have vital insight about how these policies are administered and the most ideal way to implement policy.

E.   Chapter Summary

This study demonstrated that crisis management plans are relatively new and evolving and should be reviewed and updated on a consistent basis by those intimately involved in crisis management processes. The study further demonstrated that administrators on campuses believe in the importance of crisis management plans and the significance of educating to increase the likelihood that students, faculty and staff can remain as safe and secure as possible when on campus and confronted with an emergency situation. The study underscored administrator's belief that there is a responsibility to off-campus students and constituents where safety is concerned.

It is clear that administrators perceive broad campus involvement in crisis management and threat assessment protocol creation and review to be effective. It is apparent that administrators have confidence in campus safety and police departments and view them as the

managers of crisis protocol and procedures with input from other major departments on college campuses.   The study underscores the need for further research into student conduct processes where it intersects with crisis management, student mental health, incident management. Threat assessment and discretion. New gun laws, advances in mental health treatment and diagnosis, increase in counseling center treatment of new college students who are entering institutions of higher education encourage administrators and educational leaders to take a more proactive approach to the efficacy of critical incident management on college campuses are all facets that provide substantial opportunities for continued research.

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Appendix A

Data Collection Survey Questions

1. Does your campus have a crisis management plan?

   Yes

   No

2. How long ago was your crisis management plan developed/approved?
3. Is there a crisis response team on your campus?
4. How often does this group meet?
5. Who are the members of the committee, group, and team? Check all that apply (to your best knowledge)

   Department Chair

   Student Conduct

   University Police Dept.

   Campus Safety

   Academic Affairs

   Counseling Center

   Greek Life

   Athletics

   Student Affairs

   Other

6. Is there a threat assessment team/group?
7. Who are the members of the committee, group, and team? Check all that apply (to your best knowledge)

   Department Chair

   Student Conduct

   University Police Dept.

Campus Safety

Academic Affairs

Counseling Center

Greek Life

Athletics

Student Affairs

Other

8.   How often does the group meet?
9.   What are the main elements covered in your crisis management plan?

Physical Abuse

Physical Assault

Sexual Misconduct

Threatening

Harassment

10.   Which office has primary oversight for updating your institutions Crisis
      Management/Response plan?

Student Affairs

Academic Affairs

Campus Safety

Counseling Services

Dean of Students

11.   How important do you view this plan to your institutions overall safety?
12.   How important do you consider this plan is to the following
13.   What processes are used to address violence or threat of violence at a
      contemporary higher education institution? (mark all that apply)
      Conduct Process

Interim Action

Counseling

Suspension

Expulsion

Probation

Removal from Campus

14.   Describe the type of incident that is considered a crisis?

Threats

Fighting

Sexual Assault

15.   What processes do college administrators on your campus use to address violence, or the threat of violence, on a contemporary college campus?

16.   How are incidents reported?

Dean of Students

Academic Affairs

Campus Safety

Police

Community Member

Student

17.   What best practices were utilized when developing institutional campus threat response strategies

18.   How are faculty and staff trained to implement crisis management policy and respond to threats of violence and violence on campus?

19.   How are on campus students educated on campus crisis response protocols?

20.   How are off campus students educated on campus crisis response protocols?

21.   What level of discretion is afforded to and used by college campus administrators in the planning and implementation of institutional crisis management?
22.   How do your campus leadership educate campus constituents about the crisis management plan?
23.   Who are the members of the teams? (areas represented/position titles)?

Appendix B

UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

May 16, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Aisha Kenner
                Michael Miller

FROM: Ro Windwalker
                IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #:   17-04-651

Protocol Title: *Crisis Management and Student Conduct on College Campuses:
                    The Role of Administrative Discretion*

Review Type: ☒ EXEMPT   ☐ EXPEDITED   ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 05/16/2017 Expiration Date: 05/15/2018

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (https://vpred.uark.edu/units/rscp/index.php). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 122 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

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