



Leadership in Times of Crisis: *“Cool Head, Warm Heart”*

by

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With generous support from the
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American Council on Education
One Dupont Circle NW
Washington, DC 20036

September 2012

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Preface

“These are lonely jobs. We have staff to help us manage crises, but I would have benefitted from having an experienced president giving me advice.”

— Roundtable participant

This comment, made by a participant in ACE’s June 2012 Presidential Roundtable, underscores the need for campus leadership to be ready for any situation that might arise, as well as the need to have a cadre of internal and external advisors who can help guide campus decisions when a crisis occurs.

This roundtable brought together a distinguished group of leaders from higher education and the media and legal communities to examine the best practices campuses should follow when confronted with an extraordinary event that threatens to affect all members of an institutional community. Chief

among the issues discussed was the critical role of the president in these situations. The conversation yielded important insights about the essential qualities needed for effective presidential leadership during a time of crisis.

ACE is grateful for the ongoing support of the TIAA-CREF Institute, especially the personal commitments of TIAA-CREF CEO and President Roger W. Ferguson, Jr. and Institute Managing Director Stephanie Bell-Rose. We value their support of these important discussions, which frame the issues confronting presidents in the 21st century.

Introduction

ACE conducted a market study in 2010 that revealed presidents and other administrators have a need for more information about a myriad of topics they believe will assist them in doing their jobs. When asked how presidents spend their time, most respondents indicated an increased emphasis on external affairs such as fundraising or working with various constituents. Surprisingly, crisis management was not high on the list of either the information needed or current activities, but the repercussions from a crisis on campus—whether generated internally or forced on a campus from the outside—can be great and, indeed, even can become a career-ending event.

In the spring of 2012, ACE released *The American College President 2012* report. This study indicated that presidents as a group are aging and that there has been little progress in diversifying the

“Don’t ever forget that even in the darkest days of the crisis, we will get through this. Our institutions are remarkably strong and resilient.”

presidential ranks. The data show that 58 percent of the nation’s college and university presidents are over the age of 61. The expectation is that, in the next five years, many presidents will retire, and new presidents will join the ranks; they will need guidance.

In June of 2012, ACE convened 16 presidents, along with media experts and attorneys, for the Presidential Roundtable “Leadership in Times of Crisis.” This publication highlights the major themes that emerged from this conversation and provides academic leaders with sound advice from their peers about how to approach a crisis on campus—recognizing, of course, that differences in campus culture and history will affect the responses and may call for different approaches than those outlined here.

Comments appearing in text boxes throughout this publication are quotes from roundtable participants. They reflect the serious tone of the conversation and often provide additional advice.

The Campus Context

Campus events require that presidential leadership is strong and unwavering in the best of times, but the qualities of leadership are sorely tested during a crisis. Presidents and chancellors have responded

to natural disasters such as floods and tornadoes as well as human-made crises such as riots, accidents, challenges to academic freedom, data security breaches, and illegal activities. Unfortunately, mass shootings, dormitory fires that have claimed lives, and athletic scandals also have challenged leaders in higher education. In recent years, higher education has been rocked by the accusations related to athletics department staff at The Pennsylvania State University, the

“People want to see, touch, and communicate with the president. Leaders underestimate that connection during a time of crisis. You are like a small town mayor.”

University of Arkansas, and Syracuse University (NY). The death of a band member at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University has prompted every campus to review potential hazing incidents and ensure their policies address the situation and promise serious consequences. The use of pepper spray on students at the University of California, Davis compelled the chancellor to speak

out publicly about the situation and caused staffing changes in the police department. Student deaths, rapes on campus, cheating scandals, and natural disasters all focus attention on a campus—in some cases only for a short time and in others for months or even years. In certain instances, unorthodox decisions can be positive, such as St. Mary’s College of Maryland’s ingenious use of a cruise ship as a residence hall to address mold issues in its traditional residence halls.

All of these events require leaders to be savvy in their relationships with the media and to work effectively with their own public affairs staff. The campus is a microcosm of a small town, with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the surrounding community all potentially affected by the actions—or inactions—of the campus leader. Colleges and universities have experienced a significant number of what pundits call “career-ending events.” While not all presidents and chancellors leave their posts, many find themselves questioning their own responses or being questioned by boards, legislators, and the public.

The challenges presidents and chancellors must confront increase as new technologies dominate campus communications and federal and state regulations call for increased and more complex

reporting. There is often little time to thoughtfully plan a course of action; instead, presidents are called upon to make rapid decisions—whether to use the campus alert system, contact the media, schedule a press conference, or simply retreat behind closed doors. Each action has a reaction, and campus leaders need to anticipate the results of their decisions.

Understanding the Landscape

It is unlikely that the trend toward more rapid communication of campus events or a tighter regulatory environment will diminish, so new college and university presidents need to be aware of how these trends affect their leadership and ultimately the safety, security, and learning environments of their students. This publication does not focus on past events except as brief examples of the crises presidents have confronted, but it provides guidance and practical advice to new campus leaders about creating crisis teams, analyzing the effectiveness of public relations offices, and maximizing relationships with the media.

There are frameworks for crisis management that are well-documented, and campus leaders should know about state and federal regulations and frameworks such

as the Incident Command System, the National Interagency Incident Management System, and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1990 (commonly known as the Clery Act). Similarly, in many crises, relationships with certain agencies are critical. For example, the leadership team must be aware of the American Red Cross in a hurricane, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention during an epidemic, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency for terrorist activity, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for questionable student credentials, the Federal Emergency Management Agency for earthquakes and floods, and local or state police for investigations beyond the campus.

“How one handles the crisis often gets you into more trouble than the crisis itself.”

The presidential roundtable began with a simple question to participants: “What is your worst nightmare?” For some, the nightmare had already become a reality. We discussed how the crisis was handled and how participants might deal with it differently with

the benefit of hindsight. Participants acknowledged that leaders are always better prepared for the last crisis than the new one, but that it is imperative to learn from experience (both one's own and that of others) before confronting the next campus disaster.

What is always important is who and what is guiding leadership decisions. Many colleges and universities have well-established crisis communication or risk management teams. Some presidents assume that the vice president for administration or the public affairs office knows how to manage a crisis, but it has become clear that this should be a team sport. Only institutions with well-defined policies and processes can begin to address the newest crisis, and even then there will be new variables or twists that change everyone's perception. Considering what expertise is needed on the team is critical, and sometimes the team members need to be interchangeable. For example, a situation that affects facilities needs more participation from that side of campus, while a cheating scandal needs full participation from the academic team.

Making Choices

Even in a crisis, the day-to-day work continues. But some incidents change the campus routine. Do you

have graduation ceremonies when there has been a human tragedy on campus? Are finals canceled when storms impede travel and knock out power? Who decides when and how to alter the usual patterns? How does the campus deal with a racial incident that occurred off campus? Should it be clear that the president has made the tough decisions or is it better to say the crisis team has made this recommendation? Does the answer depend on the circumstances?

“Race can create a lot of emotion.”

In the end, presidents may build a reputation—good or bad—or they may leave a legacy that marks their tenure forever. Often during the crisis, the long-term outcomes or ramifications of decisions will not be immediately clear. Sometimes an excellent leader can make one mistake and wipe out years of successful leadership. One event can change the course of a campus, alter the reputation of a leader, and forever change the public's perception of the institution.

Leaders also need to be mindful of the stress brought about by incidents on the campus, both for themselves and their team. If a leader can't get to campus because of bad weather, what provisions have been made for contact? If the information

technology network is affected by a power outage, what is the backup plan? If the campus is on lockdown, where is the alternative meeting place for the crisis team? If all of these questions are answered ahead of time, there is less stress on the team. Every team should engage the services of the employee assistance program when needed—for the administrators as well as the faculty, staff, and students.

Communications Strategies

Most campuses have well-established plans for dealing with the media, but those regular practices can change in a crisis situation. Day-to-day relationships are usually with the education reporter for the local paper or key contacts at national sites, but when a particular crisis hits, new players in the media—local, national, and even international—often enter the picture. These reporters may not know the campus leadership and may seek stories from the least likely sources, making it imperative that the whole campus is aware of the protocols for dealing with media. And what about rumor control? In a time of accelerating technological advancement, Twitter, Facebook, texting, and blogging are all replacing email—and no one waits to read about an incident in the morning paper anymore. Can the institution get the news out faster? Should it? These are decisions that must often be made very quickly and without much consultation.

One certainty campus leaders can expect during a time of crisis is that the media—local, national, international, and social—will broadcast a narrative about the campus that will remain in the public domain long after the tenure of a campus leader. Sometimes

the media will not be fair and will deliver messages that are untrue or ill-conceived; other times, campus-based legal counsel may present apparent barriers to the campus leader's ability to communicate effectively. Regardless, there are multiple constituencies (e.g., students, faculty, community members, and the media) that require different information. Communication to each group must not involve changing facts, but must reflect an understanding of what each wants and needs to know.

“Every member of my team is Incident Command System certified.”

Given these complexities, participants offered a number of practical suggestions for dealing with media outlets before, during, and after a campus is faced with a crisis.

An Ounce of Prevention

Roundtable participants emphasized that colleges and universities must develop and test a protocol before a crisis ever happens. The most important element is

planning—tabletop exercises, mock disasters, and continuous or nearly continuous policy revisions. This may lead to the prevention of the worst consequences of a disaster, but nothing can be done to avoid disasters altogether. And once the crisis is past, the recovery period is a critical element in the chain of events. The repercussions will likely endure. Even when a large number of students, faculty, administrators, and staff seem to have weathered the crisis, some may still be in pain or suffering emotionally. In fact, full recovery may take years. Some say the Kent State University (OH) community didn't recover from the deaths of their students during the Vietnam War protests until many years later, when President Carol A. Cartwright decided to draw attention to the history with alternative programming. Finally, what do we learn from going through a crisis, and what can we pass on to a new generation of higher education leaders?

A crisis can take many forms—natural disasters, student unrest, athletics department or athlete scandals, staff mismanagement, or faculty misbehavior—and make it difficult to imagine a time when an issue was not pressing or did not demand the president's immediate attention. For these very reasons, the time to consider media relations

training for the leadership team and to begin nurturing relationships with media outlets (in particular with local education reporters and other stakeholders) is before a crisis occurs. Media training information is available from many external sources, including United Educators.

“At times, especially for smaller campuses, the national media will contact the local media for information, further highlighting the need to make connections with the media in your area before the need arises.”

For many of the roundtable participants, an annual “media tour” or “media day” proved useful for establishing and building relationships with local outlets. One president used her annual media day to meet and greet education reporters while openly answering questions about various events at the college. Establishing these relationships paid off when her campus faced a situation that could have spiraled out of control quickly. Fortunately, due to the rapport built between the president and the local education reporter, the news outlet

held the story until the college president contacted the outlet to provide further information about the incident. Another roundtable participant, representing the media, endorsed holding media days and advised presidents to use both off-the-record and on-the-record meetings to ensure that when the need arises, the president and reporter are known to each other and understand each other's perspectives.

“If the media know you and know you will tell the truth, that will go a long way when a reporter is getting information from other sources.”

The role of legal counsel presented a major obstacle for many presidents interested in interacting effectively with the media. It is, of course, the responsibility of counsel to safeguard the institution from a legal standpoint, but roundtable participants stressed the importance of striking a balance between the need to protect the university and the need to inform the public. To facilitate this balance, participants recommended holding meetings with legal counsel before an issue arises so all parties can express

perspectives on the release of information in the event of a crisis. Above all, the presidents emphasized that the story will often be written with or without a statement from the institution, and that it is a president's responsibility to determine who will write the story and what story is told. Some suggested it is as important to know what the president can say as to know what the president *cannot* say.

In addition to the roundtable participants' recommendations on establishing a foundation for communicating with media outlets, the presidents discussed other pivotal decisions that improved their preparedness for dealing with media relations before a crisis. The first, hiring a social media specialist, provided one president with the necessary staff to monitor and, when necessary, respond to inaccurate information. Another president described a situation in which posts on Twitter, Facebook, and other social media outlets drifted too far from the truth. Because social media posts were being monitored, the university was able to respond with factual information using those same outlets, as well as the university website. One of the roundtable participants encouraged smaller or less well-known campuses to have a “cheat sheet” with facts about the institution available

online. Basic information about campus enrollment statistics, funding sources, salaries of administrators, and the history of the institution can provide useful information to the media. Increasingly, campuses publish a “dashboard” that shows goals and assesses success. Equipped with this information, a reporter who is unfamiliar with the institution will have the basic facts before writing any story.

During the Crisis

Thanks to thorough preparation and conscientious relationship-building, campus leaders are able to prevent crises from becoming unmanageable (or, in some cases, from happening in the first place). However, more often than not, crises strike without warning and, as such, demand a swift response or explanation. It is

“When the national media come, it is important not to forget the local media. One strategy is to hold a press conference only for the local media, which forces the national press to go through the local outlets.”

crucial that presidents understand the core set of facts about the situation and communicate effectively with not only the media, but also various groups with a stake in the institution. Despite a natural sense of urgency to respond, most roundtable participants emphasized the need to “take a step back” in order to assess the situation and consider the various approaches to engaging or reengaging the media.

Because credibility as an institutional leader depends in large part on the ability to get out in front of the story, participants discussed the need to engage campus-based legal counsel, media contacts, and social media staff members or communications teams prior to making a statement. As outlined in the previous section, establishing relationships with legal counsel and the local media as soon as possible in the event of a crisis is critical. Forging relationships proactively may buy more time during a crisis if reporters view the president as someone who is truthful and honest. Whether or not the president has developed these relationships in the past, it is important to contact media members as soon as it is feasible to do so in order to determine what facts can and should be communicated and offer assurances that information will be available as soon as possible. Several

participants found that establishing a central web location (e.g., university site, Twitter, or Facebook) with relevant information is an efficient method to inform media outlets and the campus community about what happened or is still unfolding.

“Information is power, and sharing information is even more power. Secrecy causes more problems than sunlight.”

At some point, the leadership team will decide that it is time to make a statement. Whenever that time comes, participants emphasized the importance of the president being the person out in front, rather than another senior administrator or the chair of the institution’s board of trustees (or some equivalent). Time and time again, roundtable participants underscored that the president must have something to say and must tell the truth. Several participants shared accounts of situations in which they or their colleagues spoke prematurely with the media or made a statement that was partially unsubstantiated. Others shared experiences about media and campus community members who became frustrated

following a press conference that was deemed to be a waste of time because of a lack of information. When the decision is made to respond to the media, it is important to think about what they need with respect to their profession, and articulate an understanding of their desire to understand the facts. When the president is unable to respond to a particular question, one participant suggested an affirmation followed by a brief explanation. For example, a seasoned participant offered the following as a reasonable response: “It’s responsible for you to want to understand [the incident], but I cannot answer that at this time because. . . .”

After the Crisis

Given the nature of the presidency, a considerable amount of time is spent putting out many fires, some larger than others. However, it is important not to assume that others have moved on from an issue just because the leadership team has moved on.

One roundtable participant noted that after a crisis, many presidents agree to interviews only if a particular issue (e.g., the recent crisis) is avoided. However, several other participants said they found taking the interview offered a chance to highlight several issues, including positive aspects of a recovery, and was a better approach, as the issue may still be alive for many

community members and ignoring it may do more harm than good. Other participants echoed these statements and said that presidents should expect that the media will cover the aftermath and recovery

“My ability to lead has been greatly improved as a result of this roundtable.”

process, especially in the wake of a major crisis.

On campus, an assessment of new needs after the crisis is necessary. It may be necessary to hire more admissions counselors if enrollment will be affected in future years. Similarly, new protocols are sometimes warranted, such as instituting new policies to update contact information for students as well as their families.

Resources

Leveraging resources during campus crises will help make chaotic situations more manageable. Many essential resources are found internally, and include the knowledge and expertise of the staff, tightly crafted crisis and communication plans, general counsel, and the availability of emergency accounts to help fund campus activities during the crisis.

“I returned to campus and found ways to redirect non-state revenues to a crisis preparedness fund.”

However, external resources are equally important in handling a crisis, and can include specialized crisis management firms, communication consultants, networks of local and national college presidents, and external legal counsel. Many participants stressed the importance of seeking out resources for different types of crises and that college presidents need to have these resources in place before a crisis occurs if they are to successfully manage these events.

Internal Resources

During a crisis, presidents rely heavily on the internal resources

of the campus. Most of these resources are created or formed during the preparation phase of crisis management. Therefore, it is important for campuses to allot a significant amount of time to planning and preparing for potential crises. The roundtable participants listed several internal resources they said were critical to managing their own campus crises.

Several presidents stressed the importance of utilizing the knowledge and expertise of staff. These individuals know the campus the best and have successful relationships with various internal units. They also bring expertise that may be essential during a crisis. One college president said that a seasoned public relations staff member was crucial during one of their campus crises. This professional ensured that the university did not respond too quickly, but rather waited and crafted a more measured response.

The creation of a statement of principles helped one president preemptively respond to several campus events before they escalated into major crises. In advance of a controversial protest against same-sex marriage, this president reiterated to the campus that the behavior of campus

members needed to align with the statement of principles. He stressed that if campus members chose to participate in the counter-protest, they should not engage in physical confrontations and needed to obey the instructions of law enforcement and university officials. The campus took the president's message to heart, and the counter-protest was peaceful. The president remarked that it was one of his proudest moments.

“As a result of the session, we have reorganized our media unit and are moving forward with a crisis management plan.”

Emergency funds are essential during a crisis. These funds may be used to hire professional help; clean up damages to facilities or grounds; rent alternate spaces during recovery; or pay legal settlements, fines, sanctions, or other miscellaneous costs that can arise during a crisis. Multiple presidents remarked on how these emergency funds allowed them to have the necessary financial resources to implement their crisis plans. It would have impeded their progress and split their focus to seek out additional funding during this

period. Therefore, every campus should create and maintain a reserve fund for campus emergencies, even in tough economic times.

As the main decision-making entity, campus crisis teams are on the front lines during a crisis. They are essential resources because they allow institutions to respond immediately and effectively to a crisis and encompass diverse perspectives and expertise from the campus community. Because crises can hit while the president and other members of the administration are away from campus, it is critical to have backups for each member of the crisis team. This allows for coverage of all critical roles and more flexibility within the team. Some presidents also suggested that campuses have multiple crisis teams depending on the type of crisis. For example, the staff members who are on the crisis team for a natural disaster may not be the same staff members who are on the crisis team for an incident such as an active shooter on campus.

As crises arrive in different forms, campuses need to create crisis and communication plans for a variety of situations. However, it is not enough to create these plans and only refer to them during a crisis. These documents need to be tested at least once a year (if not more frequently) to find and address any pitfalls in an institution's current

strategies and procedures. Several presidents recommended that the campus crisis team and the team members' backups participate in tabletop exercises, which allow crisis team members to become familiar with one another and anticipate how they will respond during a crisis. Some presidents advised that crises on other campuses are teachable moments and can be used as case studies for the leadership team. One roundtable participant used cabinet meetings to discuss recent crises and incidents at other institutions and reflect on how they would handle the situation.

Though often overlooked, trustees or board members of colleges and universities can play an important role during a crisis. First and foremost, presidents need to inform the board of the situation and remain in contact with the chair. Although trustees will not directly manage the crisis, they may be contacted by local and national media. Therefore, they should be aware of the crisis and communication plan. It is important that board members present a united front and do not offer personal commentary, as such comments may contradict the expressed views of campus leadership. In addition, one president recommended that if board members need to become more involved in crisis management,

they should remain accessible and transparent. After the board on his campus made some courageous and difficult decisions, its members went into hiding. Their lack of accessibility created problems, as they did not explain their decisions to internal and external audiences. Media members were left to speculate about why the board made these decisions. It is always important to maintain open lines of communication with the media and inform the narrative about the crisis in order to have successful outcomes.

External Resources

When a crisis hits, some presidents may feel the need to manage the situation with only the resources available to them on campus. However, many crises are extremely complex, and it can be unrealistic to expect internal staff to have the expertise needed for all types of crises. It is important to reach beyond the institution for specialized expertise. When doing this, participants suggested seeking out consultants who have experience working with higher education institutions and who can complement the existing knowledge base on the campus. If presidents choose to go this route, they need to be proactive during the planning stages of crisis management and establish relationships with

individuals or organizations that can be of assistance during a crisis. Roundtable participants suggested a number of external services that presidents should utilize during a crisis: crisis management, crisis communications, public relations, and legal counsel.

One president recommended inviting firms in these fields to campus before a crisis occurs to establish relationships and select the firms that will best meet institutional needs. When a crisis occurs, the firm can be contacted immediately for assistance. One participant said that her institution was not as prepared as it should have been, and as a result had to seek out a crisis management firm during the initial stages of a crisis. Unfortunately, the firm that was selected was not ideally suited to working with colleges and universities. Furthermore, the initial team that was assigned to the campus was not deeply experienced and thus did not always offer sound or actionable advice. This resulted in the campus losing valuable time developing an effective response. When the institution finally received an effective team, they were able to move forward and start tackling the difficult decisions that had to be made to resolve the crisis.

Presidents can also reach out to a network of their peers from like-minded institutions or from local

colleges and universities. Because being a college president can be an isolating and challenging job, it is important for presidents to be able to call upon their peers and ask for advice and support during a crisis. After he was hired as president, one roundtable participant reached out to local presidents within his state to establish relationships and ask for advice. He said he found this experience extremely rewarding, and that it provided invaluable insight into his role as a college president. Another president who was in the middle of a crisis called one of his colleagues because this individual was familiar with the situation and the campus culture. This presidential mentor provided extremely useful advice on how to proceed.

“Sometimes you can’t tell the whole truth, but make sure what you do say is the truth.”

The importance of maintaining strong relationships with leaders in the community is often overlooked. These individuals may represent the local media, police, local or state governmental officials, or ethnic or religious leaders. It is critical to have relationships with individuals who are highly regarded in the community, because they can speak

out in favor of the campus and offer an important external voice. In addition, they can provide a new perspective as well as information on how the campus is perceived locally.

ACE serves as a key external resource for presidents who are experiencing a crisis on their campus. College presidents can reach out to ACE for advice and suggestions for sources of information on external firms to hire. ACE offers several publications that may be important resources for presidents, including *A President's Guide to the Clery Act* and the fall 2012 issue of *The Presidency*. Understanding relevant federal legislation such as the Clery Act

and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is essential for presidents. Failure to comply with these legislative mandates can be costly both financially and in terms of reputation. Each year, ACE hosts the ACE Institute for New Presidents. This nine-month program is designed specifically for presidents within their first two years of service and provides them with resources and training to respond to leadership challenges on their campuses. In the most recent summer meeting, there was a session on crisis management. During this session, two case studies were presented, and the presidents offered the lessons that they learned from managing these events.

Conclusion

One president remarked, “If you are going to have a crisis, do it when you are young.” Unfortunately, hurricanes, floods, student tragedies, and employee misbehavior come at times when leaders may not be ready for them and can take a serious emotional and physical toll. The president must draw on all available resources—internal and external—to manage the crisis and move the campus forward.

The roundtable conversation made clear that preparation is essential, as are developing relationships with the media outlets and using every available form of communication to keep in touch with all constituents. One participant commented that no president was born knowing how to talk to Anderson Cooper,

but that quality is increasingly a requirement for the job. In the end, it is the president’s face and voice that must be available, but the president needs to be careful not to grandstand or lay blame as a crisis unfolds, and must always ensure that his or her public statements reflect individual values as well as the values of the institution. Janice M. Abraham of United Educators reminded presidents that they must “be human,” and their actions must, in the end, represent their ability to have a “cool head and a warm heart.”

“I am sorry’ does not mean that you are guilty. Find ways to express your heartfelt grief.”

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Browning, A., Kubicek, K., Rigsby, S., & Roberts, J. (2010). *Crisis management: How to stay out of court. Parameters of Law in Student Affairs and Higher Education (CNS 670)*, Paper 7.

This article discusses five types of crises (disruptive behavior, campus security, fraud, natural disasters, and rape) and offers tips on how to manage these situations. The authors explain how to handle the media during crises and stress how important effective training and preparation is to successfully manage campus crises.

Carlson, S. (2010, February 16). *For a campus in crisis, the president's voice is key. The Chronicle of Higher Education.*

The shooting rampage at Northern Illinois University is used as an example of the role of a president during a crisis.

Council for Advancement and Support of Education. (2012). *Using social media in a crisis: Higher education results.*

The majority of educational institutions are utilizing social media to broadcast news, increase awareness about their school, and strengthen their brand. This study provides evidence that colleges and universities are also utilizing social media to distribute information to faculty, students, staff, and the public during campus crises. The report discusses findings from the study and suggests five best practices to better prepare these institutions to use social media to manage campus crises.

Hemphill, B. O. & LaBanc, B. H. (Eds.). (2010). *Enough is enough: A student affairs perspective on preparedness and response to a campus shooting.* Sterling, VA: Stylus.

This is a practical guide as well as a collection of first-hand accounts and advice from professionals who have lived through a violent incident and continue to deal with its aftermath. The book addresses violence, suicide prevention, and mental health promotion and offers a comprehensive plan to create a campus-wide system for collecting information about students at-risk for self-harm or violence toward others.

Jablonski, M., McClellan, G., & Zdziarski, G. (Eds.). (2008). In search of safer communities: Emerging practices for student affairs in addressing campus violence. *NASPA: New Directions for Student Services*, 1-38.

In this report, the authors discuss a framework of planning for and responding to emergencies such as incidents of violence through the crisis management model. Through specific cases, the report highlights the key issues for these crises, some of the lessons learned, and emerging trends for practice in student affairs. Additional topics within the report include communications, mental health issues, training and awareness, roles of various campus members including presidents, and policy changes. The authors also provide several recommendations and suggestions for recovery and debriefing after the crisis passes.

Mann, T. (2007). Strategic and collaborative crisis management: A partnership approach to large-scale crisis. *Planning for Higher Education*, 36(1), 54-64.

In light of recent events on college campuses, higher education institutions need to develop more strategic approaches to emergency management and planning efforts. This article suggests a consortium-style approach to large-scale crises, which include terrorist attacks, natural disasters, nuclear explosions/reactor meltdowns, and accidents and incidents. The consortium model is recommended because it leverages the strength of one common and collective set of resources instead of relying on individual campuses with limited capacities to manage serious and pervasive emergency situations.

Myer, R. A., James, R. K., & Moulton, P. (2010). *This is not a fire drill: Crisis intervention and prevention on college campuses*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

This book is a practical guide to developing comprehensive crisis management plans for colleges and universities. The authors provide hands-on examples and strategies to help university administrators with the planning, implementation, and post-crisis procedures.

Schwartz, M. P. (January/February 2012). The big risk in not assessing risk. *Trusteeship*, 40-41.

Schwartz reviews surveys by the Association of Governing Boards about board involvement in risk assessment and provides advice to institutional boards to guide the partnership with the campus regarding risk management.

Schneider, T. (2010). *Mass notification for higher education.* Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities.

Emergency notification systems are extremely important during campus crises to ensure that people are informed. This article discusses essential considerations of these systems, such as making the systems user friendly, planning for power outages, creating boilerplate messages or templates of messages ahead of time, and using multiple methods to communicate the necessary information. The article compares the pros and cons of different notification systems and explains the importance of testing and effective registration strategies.

Society for College and University Planning. (2007). *The presidential role in disaster planning and response: lessons from the front.*

This report is based on the experiences of several college presidents who led their campuses through natural disasters. They recommend eight action items that presidents need to do either during the natural disaster or to plan for a natural disaster.

Sokolow, B. A., Lewis, W.S., Wolf, C. R., Van Brunt, B., & Byrnes, J. D. (2009). *Threat assessment in the campus setting.* National Behavioral Intervention Team Association. Retrieved from <http://nabita.org/docs/2009NABITAWHITEPAPER.pdf>.

Recognizing the limits of current threat assessment capacities, the authors developed a multidisciplinary threat assessment tool that holistically synthesizes three essential areas into one model. The tool includes measures for generalized risk (harm to facilities, reputation, finances, etc.), mental and behavioral health-related risk (harm to self) and aggression (harm to others). Based on the results from the threat assessment tool, the authors recommend several campus intervention strategies corresponding to the level of risk that is identified.

United Educators. (2012). *You asked UE: Risk management questions and answers: apologies and expressions of empathy.*

The article discusses the difference between apologies and expressions of empathy and how and when it is appropriate for colleges and universities to issue them. The authors recommend that university administrators communicate directly with the affected individuals before issuing public statements and for a member of upper-level administration to be the sole spokesperson when the campus is in crisis.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

(2010). *Action guide for emergency management at institutions of higher education.*

This guide is intended for all types of higher education institutions. Primarily, the authors suggest using this resource to develop and implement a campus emergency management plan and/or to strengthen the existing emergency management plan by identifying potential areas for improvement.

White, L. (January/February 2012). Governing during an institutional crisis: 10 fundamental principles. *Trusteeship*, 34-37.

Beginning with one of the earliest athletic scandals, the death of basketball star Len Bias, White tracks the changes up to recent events at Penn State and provides advice to board members about their role in a campus crisis.

Zdziarski, E. L., Dunkel, N.W., & Rollo, J. M. (2007). *Campus crisis management: A comprehensive guide to planning, prevention, response, and recovery.* Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass.

In this thorough review of crises on college campuses, the authors address specific cases and provide sound advice about how campuses handled issues from hurricanes to the Texas A&M bonfire.

APPENDIX I

Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, has established a “Statement of Principles” to address campus responses to issues that might in some circumstances lead to unrest at best or serious consequences at worst. President David Maxwell participated in the presidential roundtable and offered this document as a model other institutions may wish to emulate.

Drake University **STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

Drake University’s purpose is to transmit knowledge, pursue truth, and encourage the intellectual and moral development of its students through the activities central to academic life: teaching, research, rigorous analysis, debate, study, and service. In the pursuit of these goals, Drake encourages and protects diverse perspectives and the free flow of ideas and discussion among its members. Such diversity and differences of opinion generate debate that produces knowledge and a greater understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Drake values the fact that it is a community consisting of men and women of different races, nationalities, religions, physical abilities, sexual orientation, ages, political perspectives, and other diverse characteristics. While acknowledging our differences we affirm the dignity and freedom of every individual. We abhor acts of

oppression, be they denial of freedom of expression, discrimination in its various forms of sexism or racism, or intolerance of religion, age, sexual orientation, or political beliefs; or harassment of any member of the university community.

Drake’s students, faculty, and staff share the responsibility of respect for each other and for new and opposing ideas. We seek affirmatively to cherish and celebrate difference. We intend that our purpose and commitment to community pervade our campus—our classrooms, libraries, offices, social and academic organizations, studios, recreational facilities, living units—buoyed by freedom, responsibility, and respect for all people. It is education in the most humane and liberating sense to which Drake is dedicated.

Drake University upholds freedom of thought and freedom of expression as central to its educational mission. Drake therefore carefully refrains from restricting the

exchange of ideas or regulating the content of speech. We realize that freedom of thought and freedom of expression produce conflict and challenge. We encourage civil debate and discussion of divergent perspectives and opinions in a manner that affirms our community. We seek to create a community in which shared purpose transcends difference and respect for human dignity transcends conflict.

The encouragement of civility does not, however, mean that Drake seeks to avoid public debate or suppress open and candid discussion of troubling and controversial issues. Nor do we seek to discourage or chill the expression of unpopular opinions or challenging perspectives. To preserve the university's central role as a public forum of ideas, Drake upholds the right to express unpopular and provocative viewpoints, including expression that may be dramatic, emotive, or imperfectly articulated.

We affirm the principle that thoughts and opinions should be subject to the crucible of debate and be judged only in the free marketplace of ideas. Ideas will not be suppressed because they are presently viewed as unpopular or inappropriate by current authorities, nor will expression of those ideas be infringed because it may be perceived as harmful to a particular group or organization. Although

the frank and open discussion of social, cultural, artistic, religious, moral, scientific, and political issues may be disturbing and even hurtful for some individuals, the principle of free exchange and inquiry takes precedence as it is so fundamental to the educational enterprise.

While cherishing and defending freedom of speech to the full extent protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, Drake University declares its abhorrence of statements that demean, denigrate, humiliate, or express hatred toward members of the university community. Words do indeed have consequences. Words may be hurtful. Speech should be a thoughtful process. Speaking irresponsibly can negatively affect morale, motivation, and community. Responsibility calls us to be sensitive to the harmful effects of hostile speech and to refrain from speaking in demeaning and discriminatory ways.

Any individual who uses bigoted or vicious speech and thereby betrays the ideal of mutual respect and goodwill toward all members of the university community may expect strong and public censure by the administration, faculty, and students. Even if expression that is hostile in nature does not rise to the level of harassment which is subject to disciplinary sanction, no person is ever exempt from being reproved by the administration or being chastised

by fellow students, faculty, or staff. To rebuke a speaker for the error of his or her ideas or for the odious nature of their expression is part of the robust and vigorous public debate that is the central purpose of the university. Indeed, every member of the Drake University community has a responsibility to promote civility and mutual respect for every other individual and to thoughtfully challenge those who undermine our community.

Moreover, while the university defends freedom of expression, it will not tolerate acts of harassment. When an individual engages in harmful conduct or threatens a member of or a visitor to the university community, Drake University will take such disciplinary action and respond with such sanctions as are deemed appropriate.

Adopted by the 1991-92 Drake University Faculty Senate.

APPENDIX II

Presidential Roundtable Participants

Participants in the June 22, 2012, roundtable discussion are listed with their titles and affiliations at the time of the event. The roundtable took place at the National Center for Higher Education building in Washington, DC.

Janice M. Abraham

President and CEO, United Educators

Gretchen M. Bataille

Senior Vice President, Leadership and Lifelong Learning, American Council on Education

Selma Botman

President, University of Southern Maine

Molly Corbett Broad

President, American Council on Education

M. Christopher Brown, II

President, Alcorn State University (MS)

John F. Burness

Visiting Professor of Public Policy, Duke University (NC)

F. Javier Cevallos

President, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

Charlene M. Dukes

President, Prince George's Community College (MD)

Rodney A. Erickson

President, The Pennsylvania State University

Marie Foster Gnage

President, West Virginia University at Parkersburg

Scott Jaschik

Editor and Co-Founder, *Inside Higher Ed*

Susan W. Martin

President, Eastern Michigan University

David Maxwell

President, Drake University (IA)

Patricia McGuire

President, Trinity Washington University (DC)

James H. Mullen Jr.

President, Allegheny College (PA)

Anne Ollen

Director, Communications and Operations, TIAA-CREF Institute

Kenneth E. Peacock

Chancellor, Appalachian State University (NC)

Félix V. Matos Rodríguez

President, Eugenio María de Hostos Community College of The City University of New York

Lisa A. Rossbacher

President, Southern Polytechnic State University (GA)

Isa Sarac

Founder and President, Virginia International University

Allen L. Sessoms

President, University of the District of Columbia

Harry L. Williams

President, Delaware State University

Observers and ACE Staff

Meredith S. Billings

Research Fellow

Jessie Brown

Associate General Counsel

Diana Córdova

Assistant Vice President, Leadership Programs

Terry W. Hartle

Senior Vice President, Division of Government and Public Affairs

Timothy J. McDonough

Vice President, Communications and Marketing

Christopher J. Nellum

Research Fellow

Sharone Pasternak

Legal Intern

Becky H. Timmons

Assistant Vice President, Government Relations



TIAA-CREF institute