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Defining Safety for Universities: The Slippery Conceptual Slope

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THE SLIPPERY SLOPE OF CAMPUS SAFETY

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WHAT IS CAMPUS SAFETY

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An atmosphere where learning and knowledge creation occur in a supportive environment .

GOALS OF CAMPUS LIFE

- ▶ Educate people of all ages
- ▶ Create new knowledge

CONTRADICTIONS IN CAMPUS LIFE

- ▶ Employer of a variety of people
- ▶ Not everyone has the same goals
- ▶ Not everyone views knowledge in the same way

CAMPUS LIFE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

▶ Diverse

- ▶ Student body
- ▶ Knowledge
- ▶ Location- not your father's Ivory tower

WHAT WE KNOW

- ▶ Strong positive correlation between academic achievement and a culture of safety
- ▶ Both just and disciplined
- ▶ Students have a commitment to school

WHAT WE KNOW

- ▶ An unsafe and unhealthy climate has a negative impact on faculty, students , and staff.
- ▶ Often, school climate is unrecognized and unmeasured

NEGATIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

- ▶ Students' grades fall
- ▶ Students drop out

- ▶ Faculty become alienated
- ▶ Faculty leave

- ▶ Staff become disengaged
- ▶ Staff leave

MENTAL HEALTH

- ▶ Most of those suffering from mental health issues do **not** commit acts of violence.
- ▶ An estimated 27 percent of young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 have a diagnosable mental illness. Consequently, every year thousands of college students struggle alone with mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and bipolar disorder.

MENTAL HEALTH

What we know about mental health

Forty-six percent of college students said they felt “things were hopeless” at least once in the previous 12 months (2009)

Few college students who commit suicide sought help.

- ▶ A majority of students seek help for normal post-adolescent trouble like romantic heartbreak and identity crises.
- ▶ 44 percent in counseling have severe psychological disorders, up from 16 percent in 2000, and 24 percent are on psychiatric medication, up from 17 percent a decade ago. (2009)

CRIME ON CAMPUS

- ▶ In 2010, 92,695 crimes were reported to police on the college and university campuses that report to the Uniform Crime Report; 97.1 percent were property crimes, and 2.9 percent violent crimes.
- ▶ Of the violent crimes reported on college campuses, 1,425 (53.2 percent) were aggravated assaults, 772 (28.8 percent) were robberies, 485 (18.1 percent) were forcible rapes, and 4 (0.15 percent) were murder or non-negligent manslaughter.
- ▶ In 2006, an estimated 673,000 (11.5 percent) of nearly 6 million women attending American colleges were raped, and 12 percent of rapes of college women were reported to law enforcement.

▶ Report Crime for Victims of Crime

STAGES OF SCHOOL MASSACRES

- ▶ Chronic strain
- ▶ Acute strain
- ▶ Planning stage
- ▶ Massacre

▶ (Adapted from Levin and Madfis,2009)

LATEST CAMPUS SHOOTINGS

▶ Recent shootings

- Lone Star College, three wounded (January 22, 2013)
Houston, Texas
- Chicago State University, one fatality, (January 16, 2013)
- Hazard Community and Technical College, three fatalities
(January 15, 2013) Kentucky
- Institute of Business and Art, two wounded (January 15,
2013) St. Louis, Missouri

ALCOHOL AND STUDENT LIFE

- ▶ **Death:** 1,400 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes* (Hingson et al., 2002).
- ▶ **Injury:** 500,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol* (Hingson et al., 2002).

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SCENARIO I

SCENARIO 2

WHEN A UNIVERSITY MULLS

- ▶ Finite interactions (semester or quarter system)
- ▶ Levels of bureaucracy
- ▶ Different settings
- ▶ Different behaviors
- ▶ Different actors

IT IS NOT JUST THE ACADEMICS

- ▶ Social life
- ▶ Emotional life
- ▶ Ethics
- ▶ Civic life

STRATEGIES FOR A SAFE CLIMATE

- ▶ Do what a campus does best – learn and create knowledge
- ▶ Assessment
- ▶ Identify the elements of campus safety
 - ▶ Safety Audit
 - ▶ Interviews, focus groups

BUILDING RESILIENCE FOR SAFETY

- ▶ A focus on stakeholders
- ▶ Learning and communication
- ▶ Shared efforts to understand diversity
- ▶ Visible leadership
- ▶ Coordination