



Keeping the Madness

By Gerry Romano

Photograph by Philip W. Keller, III

at Bay

In the wake of September 11, colleges and universities continue to work toward more secure campuses and a return to some sense of normalcy.

Stopping the madness that has been permeating our world since hijacked jets invaded the World Trade Center and the Pentagon requires extraordinary measures—which no one has yet to develop. That fact scares but does not immobilize. Colleges and universities don't have the answers, but they do have the resourcefulness and the resolve to put up the strongest resistance possible against any threat to higher education.

Some institutions feel the threat more than others on any given day, depending on whether a particular campus was a victim of a terrorist attack, or a faculty member was in flight when planes were being transformed into weapons, or an out-of-state student had a parent who waited tables that used to exist in the South Tower. As this article was going to press in mid-November, colleges and universities were facing Congressional concern about student visas, privacy, and lab security (see "Washington Watch," page 11). And every institution—every American—was in the line of anthrax fire.

Questions, confusion, fears of flying and of visiting D.C. ... warnings, closings, *instructions for opening mail* ... endless news reports and analyses about war, Hollywood writers and directors advising Defense on terrorism tactics ... plunging stocks and sky-high costs for the fight against—and cleanup after—terrorism. While we wonder how our day to day suddenly got this way, we confront the new issues through one of the traditionally best possible means: information sharing. This article starts a series in *Business Officer* that will highlight experiences, perspectives, and advice from the higher education community about the impact of terrorism on colleges and universities. We'll feature comments and suggestions about crisis management, financial and insurance implications from the war on terrorism, human resource concerns, and more, beginning with this story on security—all to offer you ideas and views from col-

leagues who are handling concerns similar to yours. Please let us know if you have experiences and perspectives to contribute.

Open for Trouble

In evaluating the security issues brought to the surface on September 11, Sandra Lier, associate vice president for business services at the University of Washington, says, "The main problem is that universities are open environments—that's a university's greatest strength and its greatest weakness." Warren Madden, vice president for business and finance at Iowa State University, concurs and points out: "We have a group starting to talk about our being a bit less open."

How much is "a bit" is to be determined, but by mid-fall some restrictions had been considered. Madden notes: "As a major research institution, we have radioactive material, biohazardous materials, chemical hazards and fuel, and we're now looking at how we would respond to an incident involving those materials. We're asking people to be more cognizant about who's coming and going and whether access should be denied to anyone, but we haven't made any decisions yet."

In Iowa State's IT area, however, decisions have been made. "We've tightened entrances at our administrative data processing center, which houses IT and business services, and locked doors that would ordinarily have been open," Madden says. "We also now have a receptionist at the main door there."

And for a block of time on football Saturdays, Iowa State, with the help of the Federal Aviation Administration, closed a section of the sky. "The Iowa-Iowa State football game was scheduled for the Saturday after September 11," Madden says, "and we were questioning: Should we have that game? ►"



Iowa State University has tightened some entrances and locked more doors—and, for a block of time on football Saturdays, has worked with the FAA to close a section of the sky.



Warren Madden

Do we try to carry out events to indicate some sense of normalcy, or do we cancel them? What do we do about security if we do have the games?" Games nationwide were cancelled for that weekend, but Iowa State did play football at home the following one. "Our campus is near the approach to a small airport; there are no commercial flights, but private aircraft fly in, and they had to be diverted. The FAA closed the airport three hours before the game, during, and three hours after." That

practice continued for follow-up games.

Entry to the University of Texas stadium was restricted after September 11. According to Jim Baker, assistant athletic director, the facility and its accompanying offices were locked down the night before the next game and were put on a 24-hour watch. He adds, "During the week before the game, we limited access to the stadium, including limited parking nearby." Officials maintained a listing of who was scheduled to make a delivery at the stadium—their names, company names, and reasons for entry.

Game-goers also faced restrictions. "We decided to limit what people could bring into the stadium—only purses, binocular cases and hip packs, all subject to search," says Baker. "In the past we'd let people bring in whatever they wanted." The same at Iowa State: "We asked people not to bring big packages to the games," Madden says, "and we asked ticket-takers to be more observant."

What price stadium sweeps? Both universities beefed up security with stadium searches and sweeps before games to look for any suspicious packages. For this effort, both enlisted the help of bomb-sniffing dogs. Iowa State has been working with state law enforcement groups to obtain grants for security equipment—and dogs. The University of Texas hasn't totaled the price yet for its increased measures, "but it proba-

bly will be six figures by the time the season is over," Baker estimates—"six figures over our regular game-day security costs. Extra police, extra ticket-takers to get people through the gates despite the searches, and the dogs—those were all extras that have to be paid for."

Special Needs in the Nation's Capital

Washington, D.C.'s Georgetown University is just about a bridge span away from the Pentagon, and for days, campus personnel and students could look across the Potomac at clouds of smoke from the smoldering building. Reagan National Airport is nearby. Georgetown's proximity to these facilities and to the federal government creates special security needs, so strong measures have always been in place. But recent events have spurred university staff to further sharpen their focus on security. Discussing large gatherings in particular, Phil Hagan, director of safety and environmental management, says, "Due to the high profile of many of our campus events, security is always a priority, and often our measures are much different than found at other campuses. Our director of protocol works on a regular basis with the Secret Service and security forces to protect dignitaries and other such visitors."

Still, September 11 created a heightened state of alert, Hagan says. "There are so many what-if scenarios that can be imagined that it is easy to identify new security concerns where suitable responses do not exist. We are working to better define our existing procedures so that in the unfortunate event of a national or campus emergency, university officials are equipped to assemble rapidly, identify the needs of our community, and respond appropriately.

"However," Hagan continues, "I believe that given the current situation, campuses are relatively safe places for students. Our campus—like most—has a comprehensive, integrated safety program." He mentions working plans for security, safety, and emergency scenarios, plus the employment of a full-time, professional security force and a safety staff. In addition, Georgetown takes many security steps that, he says, "would not occur at other types of workplaces or even at home." For example, students regularly participate in safety education and training sessions, as well as emergency evacuation drills, and residence halls limit access. To underscore his point, Hagan notes that he heard soon after September 11 that some students were asked by their parents if they were all right and if they wanted to come home. "The students indicated to their parents that they thought Georgetown University was a safe haven amidst all that was going on and they felt very comfortable staying at school." ▶

FOR EMERGENCY PLANNING, FIND THE WEAK SPOTS

Be prepared—begin emergency planning, advises Sandra Lier, associate vice president for business services, University of Washington. With a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, her institution is focusing its resources, identifying its highest-priority vulnerabilities, and systematically correcting them. Also participating in the

FEMA initiative, called Disaster Resistant University, are the University of California—Berkeley, the University of Alaska—Fairbanks, the University of Miami, Tulane University, and the University of North Carolina—Wilmington.

Lier explains more about her university's emergency preparedness efforts.

What steps has the University of Washington taken?

"We are developing a more rigorous program of emergency pre-

paredness. We have drafted a Hazard Identification/Vulnerability Assessment report to articulate areas that are susceptible to natural hazards. We'll be adding a component to target man-made hazards as well. We're publishing our emergency planning activities on our Web site: www.washington.edu/president/evp/businessservices/dru."

What else is your institution doing to prepare for the unforeseen?

"We are focusing more attention on emergency preparedness planning—planning how we will respond during an event, during its clean-up, and for full business resumption. Universities are an invaluable resource of intellectual capital and data that must be preserved during a disaster so activities can resume, and that takes planning.

"We've activated our Emergency Operations Center at least seven times in the past year. The last time was September 11. Campus representatives came to the center, allowing us to gather information, analyze the circumstance facing the university, and convey information to campus leaders. With clear communication, university leaders can make decisions about the status of classes, student safety and campus security, among many other decisions."

Any advice you'd like to pass along to your colleagues?

"Remember that an emergency management approach to large, disruptive incidents that plague campuses requires the coordination and involvement of many internal and external agencies. Only then can a single message be developed for institutional communication to faculty, staff, students, and the public.

"It's also important to keep in mind that staff must be personally prepared for crises. I recommend urging employees to follow the Red Cross guidelines and to be prepared to care for themselves for 72 hours. Employees are not able to do their jobs if they're concerned about the home front."



Sandra Lier

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Are you running into any roadblocks with your preparedness efforts?

"Financial resources. These changes have to compete with many other campus needs, so they may not be funded right away. Changes that don't need much in the way of money can be implemented as staff members have time. Right now we are able to get additional financial support through our FEMA grant and through an allocation from the executive vice president."

What are the long-term implications of your new policies and practices?

"I see our preparedness as permanent—and positive. We're preparing for all



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PROVIDING A SAFE PLACE

Editor's note: The following perspectives on strengthening institutional security are provided by Jonathan Segal, an employment attorney at Wolf, Block, in Philadelphia.

Everyone, to varying degrees, has suffered from the atrocities on September 11 and the ongoing aftermath. Feelings of depression, anxiety, and stress are common and sometimes severe. Many people need empathetic support to get through these difficult times.

What is the only thing people crave more than empathy? Security. September 11 destroyed the balm of denial that many of us had regarding our own mortality. With heightened awareness of our vulnerability, our desire for protection is greater.

Do educational institutions have a legal obligation to address our new security risks? Probably.

Although it does not include a provision specific to protecting against terrorism, the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) does contain a general duty clause. This clause, which obligates employers to provide and maintain safe workplaces, could be interpreted to require that employers take reasonable steps to protect their employees from terrorism risks.

Educational institutions owe a general duty of care to their students, staff, contractors, and visitors. It is not a far leap to imagine a jury finding that an institution violated this duty if it failed to take adequate preventive and corrective actions in response to terrorism threats.

Independent of the law, employee relations, student relations and alumni relations all demand that educational institutions focus on security. Indeed, security could become a factor parents consider when deciding where to send their children to study.

The question isn't whether to increase security—but how.

Crisis Management Plan

The first and most important step is to develop a crisis management plan. An educational institution must develop a plan before a disaster; otherwise, emotion—not reason—could dangerously dominate the organization's reaction. Subsequent steps include:

- Develop a crisis management team. Build in organizational diversity to ensure that differences within the educational community are considered. Obviously, security and safety experts are integral to the team.
- Determine potential scenarios and develop protocols for how the team will respond. For example, the crisis man-

agement plan should address, among other issues, how to respond to a bomb threat, potential anthrax exposure, a shooting incident on campus, and potential contamination of the water supply.

- Identify not only what steps will be taken but also who will implement them and following what process. For example, if it is exposed to anthrax, a university may want to follow the guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control. (See www.bt.cdc.gov.)
- Address the aftermath. Even after the physical risk is over, the emotional trauma endures. Educational institutions may need to supplement their mental health resources with crisis incident and trauma counselors.



Jonathan Segal

Increasing Ongoing Security

Educational institutions may also choose to increase regular security, perhaps by hiring additional police officers or security guards to patrol the campuses in general and special events in particular. If you outsource security, be sure to engage a reputable security firm—your institution could be open to a negligent selection claim if a security officer fails to provide adequate security or causes unreasonable harm to others. A to-do list prior to

signing a security contract might include:

- Check references.
- Make sure that the security company is bonded.
- Determine the amount of the company's insurance.
- Review the company's policy on use of force.
- Investigate whether there are any judgments against the company.

If your security personnel or police have the authority to search a person and his or her belongings, you should provide guidelines on when and how to conduct a search. In particular, security guards and police must be cautioned against profiling based on actual or perceived ethnicity or religion. Racial profiling of Arabs and Muslims is unwise because it unfairly—and perhaps illegally—subjects them to heightened scrutiny simply because of who they are, not because of anything they have done. It also provides an obvious roadmap for terrorists—utilization of the unprofiled.

September 11 changed only one thing—everything. As you work through the wide-ranging implications of the terrorist attacks, carefully consider the legal issues involved.

Plugging Gaps, Imagining the Worst

“A realization of our vulnerability and the problems of preparing for known threats while trying to anticipate those that might be on the horizon” is what keeps University of Washington

officials awake at night, according to Sandra Lier. Along with Hagan and Madden, she notes areas of heightened alert and how officials are attempting to address them.

Handling mail. “We’re concerned about mail contamination by biological agents and have taken some precautions by communicating warnings and safeguards to staff, faculty, and students through news articles, e-mail, and Web announcements,” Lier says. “We want to deal with this without creating an atmosphere of panic.”

Institutions as a rule are publicizing and following the recommendations distributed by the Centers for Disease Control and the U.S. Postal Service regarding mail handling, including reporting any mail that looks suspicious, and asking students and staff to report suspicious mail to the campus’s department of public safety. Madden mentions a particular problem with implementation: “We have a large number of international students, so we get a fair amount of international mail, and much of it comes in the kinds of envelopes that people are starting to worry about—with foreign words on the envelopes and addresses that are hard to read.”

Protecting international students. Worry about international mail is just one of the problems that students from other countries have to deal with, of course. To help protect them from being victims of hate crime, the University of Washington’s president issued statements about tolerance, and the dean for undergraduate education organized a Day of Reflection and Understanding. No classes were held on that day so that students could attend various lectures and performances held on campus that dealt with the Middle East, Islam, memorials, handling stress, and other subjects related to September 11.

One of the main issues to surface on that date at Iowa State, according to Madden, “was to make sure that our 2,600 inter-



Georgetown University’s proximity to the Pentagon, Reagan National Airport, and the federal government creates special security needs.

national students were being treated fairly, that they weren’t having problems. Our international students have always integrated well here, and to the best of my knowledge, they haven’t been harassed.”

Securing research. The University of Washington has experienced terrorism first-hand: Recently its Center for Urban Horticulture was burned down by a terrorist group against research. “We have reason to suspect that the group was against genetic research—in this case, the action was against genetic research on poplar trees,” says Lier. She notes that security measures have been increased around the research facilities. “As in any case of this nature,” she says, “the FBI and ATF are involved, and our police unit is working directly with them and other agencies. In addition, the university’s executive vice president and provost issued a letter warning researchers on campus to be vigilant about their labs and materials.”

Backing up IT. Georgetown University has backup systems both on campus and in a remote off-campus location to protect its information technology system against any threats. “University Information Services is an integral part of the development of the emergency response plan and is part of the advisory group to campus administration,” Hagan notes.

When faced with the increased likelihood of terrorist attacks, Georgetown University established a new series of meetings and work groups. According to Hagan, the president meets with an advisory group on a regular basis to address potential issues arising from September 11 and implications from possible future scenarios. As issues are identified, targeted work groups explore them and develop responses.

“One area that we have identified where improvement would bring added value to the community is better utilizing new technologies to improve emergency communications,” Hagan says. “We have a working group now examining several options for expanding our existing capabilities. So far we’ve created a University Updates section of our Web site, which the campus community can use as a source of news and other information related to the terrorist attacks and ongoing issues.”



For a listing of resources and to share perspectives online, go to the site that NACUBO staff created just after the September 11 attacks and continually update: www.nacubo.org/business_operations/emergency_preparedness.

Pranks and Paranoia

Likely to be widespread in the higher education world are the pranks and paranoia that prey during difficult times. Montclair State University was the victim of a hoax in October, when anthrax began to creep into the nation's daily conversation. Montclair closed two of its educational buildings as a precaution after discovering a suspicious white substance in the stairwells. The substance was found to be harmless, and the buildings were reopened, but the impact on the campus was enormous.

In a message distributed throughout the university, President Susan Cole stated, "In the midst of so many truly tragic events, it was gravely disappointing to be faced with what appears to be a thoughtless prank by a member of our community that caused great distress. Many students were made anxious—some even going to area hospitals for testing. Their worried parents called physicians seeking advice and prescriptions, and some parents insisted that their children leave the campus at once. Two Passaic County hazardous materials teams spent several hours investigating and removing the substance—hours that might have kept them from responding to a true emergency elsewhere. Canceled classes, lost time for teaching and learning, and money spent on expensive industrial cleanup rather than other university priorities were further results of this act."

Cole explained that the perpetrators would be pursued and subject to the fullest disciplinary actions available to the university. She urged members of the campus community to call a hotline set up to collect anonymous information.

Iowa State became involved in an anthrax scare because of the general tension that's been in the air. Madden describes what happened: "The weekend after the anthrax business began, we had a fundraising walkathon and bikeathon around the campus, and we marked the route in the street with white chalk. We had three or four calls from people wondering what the white chalk powder was. I suspect we won't use white chalk on the streets for a while."

Can We Deal With Enhanced Security?

No more coolers at games, and lines to get in are slower. Mail still comes, but who wants to open it? Passionate about research, but worried about who might enter the lab. The new thoughts that are likely to weigh on the minds of students, faculty, and staff are disturbing. Strengthened security measures are, at the same time, reassuring and unnerving. But anecdotal information from the University of Texas and Iowa State indicates that campus communities

are leaning more toward the positive.

"Before our first football game after September 11," relays Baker, of Texas, "we promoted what you could and couldn't bring. Local TV stations did a good job of getting the message across for us: Come early to the game and be ready for searches. Local newspapers also carried our message, and we had this information up on our Web site. People came prepared. They wanted to be safe."

By mid-fall Baker could report, "We've had two games so far of the final three, with 80,000 at each game—sold out. Attendance has not been affected by our new security measures. The pros have always been more security conscious. Most of us at colleges, we're learning as we're going through it. It's taking away some of the liberties people have had, but those things are changing, and we're all going to have to get used to it."

Also in mid-fall, Madden relayed that Iowa State had larger than normal attendance at its football games. "We're now winning and the weather has been good, so that factors in. However, on September 29, our foundation had a fundraiser that brings in alumni, and we had more people than normal come to that event, too. The Broadway show "Rent" did a three-night stand here, and we sold out with that.

"It seems that, overall, people are ready for an entertainment break," Madden observes. "People are reaching capacity and thinking: How much CNN can you watch? And how much news can you read?"

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