

FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

THREAT ASSESSMENT

Authority:	Issued by the Chancellor. Changes or exceptions to administrative policies issued by the Chancellor may only be made by the Chancellor.
Category:	General University Policies
Applies to:	●Administrators ●Faculty ●Staff ●Students
History:	Approved – September 1, 2008 First Issued – September 22, 2008
Related Policies:	<i>Involuntary Protective Withdrawal</i> <i>Code of Student Conduct</i>
Contact for Info:	Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (910) 672-1201 General Counsel (910) 672-1145

I. PURPOSE

In the publication entitled, *Threat Assessment In Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*, the United States Secret Service and the United States Department of Education encourage schools to implement a threat assessment program. Additionally, the University of North Carolina's Campus Safety Task Force recommends that each campus have in place a trained threat assessment team. In adhering to the advice to the Secret Service, the Department of Education and the University of North Carolina, Fayetteville State University has established a threat assessment program whose purpose is to establish a framework for responding to situations involving serious threats and acts of violence against employees and students. This is undertaken in an effort to increase employee and student protection and minimize the probability of workplace and/or school violence.

II. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

As part of its *Threat Assessment Program*, a Threat Assessment Team (TAT) shall be established. The main objective of the TAT is to evaluate and respond to threatening situations which occur on the university's main campuses or on property leased by the university ("university property").

A. Membership

At a minimum, the TAT shall include the following individuals:

- Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
- General Counsel
- Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Police and Public Safety
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
- Director of the Center for Personal Development
- University Psychologist
- Dean of Students

At his or her discretion, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs may add members to the team.

B. Responsibilities

1. The responsibilities of the TAT include reviewing and evaluating incidents of threats, threatening behavior and/or acts of violence on university property. Such situations may include, but not be limited to the following: threats made directly against students, faculty, staff, or other university officials; threats made indirectly by telephone, in writing, over the internet or through interpersonal contacts; and/or communications or behaviors suggesting an individual's intent to commit suicide or a potential violent act.
2. The TAT shall also be responsible for the following:
 - a. Advising the campus community on the type of information that should be brought to TAT concerning a threatening situation;
 - b. Participating in developing a comprehensive program to educate faculty, staff and students about how best to recognize signs and known indicators of violence, suicide, and mental illness.
 - c. Participating in educating faculty and staff on issues related to the privacy of educational and medical/psychological records, including clarification of policies related to FERPA, HIPAA and state laws.
 - d. Participating in developing tabletop exercise to be conducted at least twice per year.
3. Coordinate with other university committees on issues involving emergency preparedness.

III. REPORTING INFORMATION REGARDING A POTENTIALLY THREATENING SITUATION

Members of the university community are encouraged to bring forward information about any activity that evokes concern about a potentially threatening situation. Information of interest would include, but not be limited to the following:

- threatening and/or violent statements, drawings or writings;
- incidents of aberrant, dangerous or threatening behavior;
- anger problems wherein the individual has difficulty controlling anger and often loses his or her temper;
- behavior relating to stalking of a particular individual or individuals;
- behavior related to violence and cruelty;
- behavior that indicates that an attack is being planned; or
- fascination with, attempts to acquire, or possession of firearms

Such information should be reported to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, who shall be the central point of contact for TAT. The information may be reported anonymously.

The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs shall screen any information received and determine whether to initiate a threat assessment inquiry by consulting with other members of the team.

IV. THREAT ASSESSMENT INQUIRY

When information is received from the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs concerning a potentially threatening situation, the Vice Chancellor shall access the information and determine whether to convene the TAT in order to conduct a threat assessment inquiry. An inquiry should be initiated immediately (within hours of notification) in any situation of concern. The threat assessment inquiry should seek information in five areas:

- the facts that drew attention to the individual(s) and the situation
- information about the individual(s)
- information about "attack-related" behaviors
- motive(s)
- the targets(s)

The TAT should also seek to interview the person of interest, individuals who know the person of interest and individuals who may be the targets.

Evaluation of information gathered from research and interviews conducted during a threat assessment inquiry should assist the TAT in determining whether the individual poses a threat. If the weight of the information is convincing that the individual ***does not*** pose a threat, then consideration should be given to closing the inquiry. If the TAT determines that closure of the inquiry is warranted, but concludes that the individual(s),

or target(s), need assistance coping with the behavior or problems that initially brought the threatening situation to the attention of the TAT, then the TAT should ensure that the individual(s) receives appropriate medical and counseling services.

If the TAT concludes that the individual does pose a threat, the team shall refer the matter to the university's police department for a threat assessment investigation.

Regardless of the outcome of the threat assessment inquiry, the TAT should document the inquiry and any actions taken. This documentation should include the following:

- the facts that provided the basis for the findings in the threat assessment inquiry;
- a record of the sources of, and content for, all key information considered in the threat assessment;
- the date that the information was acquired; and,
- the reasoning that led the team to its decision.

IV. THREAT ASSESSMENT INVESTIGATION

Threat assessment investigations are to be initiated, conducted and controlled by the university's police department. As a result of an inquiry, the TAT should immediately refer the following cases to the university's police department:

- when an individual has or is about to carry out an attack on university property; or
- a violation of the law has occurred.

As with a threat assessment inquiry, investigators shall document and keep a record of the information gathered and such information shall be evaluated in carrying out a threat assessment investigation.