

2014-01-01

Cause For Concern: A Mixed-Methods Study Of Campus Safety And Security Practices In United States-Mexico Border Institutions Of Higher Education

Ryan Clevis Holmes

University of Texas at El Paso, rholmes@utep.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.utep.edu/open_etd



Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Holmes, Ryan Clevis, "Cause For Concern: A Mixed-Methods Study Of Campus Safety And Security Practices In United States-Mexico Border Institutions Of Higher Education" (2014). *Open Access Theses & Dissertations*. 1648.

https://digitalcommons.utep.edu/open_etd/1648

CAUSE FOR CONCERN: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY OF CAMPUS SAFETY
AND SECURITY PRACTICES IN UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RYAN CLEVIS HOLMES

Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations

APPROVED:

Eduardo C. Arellano, Ph.D., Chair

Penelope P. Espinoza, Ph.D.

David W. Parrott, Ph.D.

Rodolfo Rincones, Ph.D.

Bess Sirmon-Taylor, Ph.D.
Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Copyright © Ryan Clevis Holmes 2014

DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my daughter, Remaliah Celeste Holmes. May you always know that you are a special, intelligent, and strong person who just happens to be beautiful as well. Always remember that God defines and refines those whom he loves and that greatness is a process, not a destination. My wife, Maria Martenstyn-Holmes, has loved me unconditionally and challenged me to new levels. May we figure out the next steps together.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my in-laws, Keith Martenstyn and Viji Martenstyn, who have been one of the loudest cheering sections I have ever had. Also, to my parents, Rafe W. Holmes, Sr., and Mae F. Holmes, thanks for giving me a work ethic that has proven to be one of my defining traits.

To Derrick Smith, Jaceque Powell, Jamelle Williams, Padrick Hall, Michael Robinson, Dr. Kevin Simmons, Wayne Emilien, Marquis Hamilton, James Johnson, Hugo Najera, Chad Ellsworth, Drayton Gilyard, Boissey Johnson III, and Matt Williams for being friends, in the truest sense of the word, seeing the real me and offering undying support and brotherhood.

To some of the best mentors one could ask for, Dr. Eduardo Arellano, Dr. Larry Bolles, Dr. David Parrott, Dr. Larry Roper, Dr. William Sedlacek, Dr. Keith Anderson, Dr. Adam Goldstein, Dr. Dwayne Scott, Howard Bailey, Daniel Cummins, J. Malcolm Smith, Eric Braham, Brandon Dula, and Chris Dukes, for being living examples of good men, fathers, and educators who offer constant reminders that quitting is not an option. I also dedicate this work to Dr. Susan Komives, Dr. Susan Longerbeam, Dr. Marylu McEwen, Dr. Marsha Guenzler-Stevens, Dr. Rashida Govan, Dr. Nancy Geist-Giacomini, Tamara King, J.D., Jennifer Schrage, J.D., Mark Badstubner, Alan Wendell, Jay Wilgus, Tisha McCoy-Ntiamoah, and Suzanne Ashour-Bailey for seeing potential where I did not know it existed.

To Johnnie and Tanya Mitchell, James R. Smith, Brenda Smith, Jameshia Smith, Anthony Hamilton, and Ruby Hamilton for being family in more ways than one. Many others have assisted, even in the smallest ways, and this work is dedicated to them as well.

Finally, to every young person who does not know how things will work out in the future, who does not believe that you have what is needed to succeed: whatever you have is enough, and this work is dedicated to you.

CAUSE FOR CONCERN: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY OF CAMPUS SAFETY
AND SECURITY PRACTICES IN UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

By

RYAN CLEVIS HOLMES, M.A., M.A., B.M.E.

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at El Paso

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

May 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is more than information on paper; it is journey that goes beyond these pages. I first thank God for teaching me more about myself in this process while giving me what I needed, on His time, for me to arrive at this new beginning.

I offer a special thank you to my advisor and dissertation chair, Dr. Eduardo Arellano, for pushing me harder than I wanted to be pushed. Thanks for reminding me that my standards can always be higher and that faith always has a place wherever there are believers.

To the members of the dissertation committee, Dr. Penelope Espinoza, Dr. David Parrott, and Dr. Rodolfo Rincones, many thanks. Each of you is accomplished and highly sought after. Thanks for finding time to work with me and offering of yourselves to see me through.

To Dr. Sandra Braham, thanks for helping me to understand the doctoral process and for challenging me to put things in perspective, even when the situation may not have been the most comfortable.

Dr. Gary Edens held me to task until the doctoral process was completed and gave me increased opportunities to develop professionally while being a part of such a great institution.

Mr. Rich Dugan helped me to understand the Qualtrics program and made the survey process easier than it could have been.

Ms. Michelle Ontiveros walked me through the process to keep my timeline intact.

Ms. Athena Fester aided me in the Institutional Review Board process.

Last but not least, the professional staff of the UTEP Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution—Julie Cooper, Arely Hernandez, and Jovita Simon—gave constant encouragement and enthusiasm along this journey.

ABSTRACT

Campus safety has been a source of concern since the 1990s. However, in 2007, the tragedy at the Virginia Polytechnic and State University sent a sense of alarm through many institutions of higher education. Immediately following this tragedy, institutions across the country began to evaluate and question their safety and security practices. While many recommendations and mandates have been created by public and private agencies to offer guidance to institutions of higher education, none of the recommendations or mandates offered has been specific to the United States-Mexico Border region.

This mixed-methods study gathered perceptions of permanent threat assessment team members at border institutions of higher education to discover what safety and security practices exist, to discover what mainstream recommendations are followed, to understand what types of aggressors cause concern, and to determine whether students with mental disabilities contribute to safety and security concerns. Further, this study was an attempt to understand considerations that should be made specific to the United States-Mexico border institution community. Findings reported in this dissertation identify specific needs of border institutions and offer safety and security practice recommendations, as well as recommendations for future research that could be implemented in border institutions and adapted for a larger audience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
ABSTRACT.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Background.....	2
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Significance of the Problem.....	4
Delimitations of the Study	6
Researcher’s Bias.....	7
Chapter Summary	7
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	9
The Functions and Organization of Physical Facilities of Institutions of Higher Education.....	10
Parent and Student Concerns Regarding Campus Safety	11
Reporting Methods and Responsibilities of Institutions of Higher Education	13
Threat Assessment Teams.....	15
The Assessment-Intervention of Student Problems (AISP) Model	16
Current TAT Constructs	18
Aggression on the Higher Education Campus	23

Assessing Threat on the College Campus.....	24
True Threat.....	25
Criminal Threat.....	26
Tarasoff-Level Threat.....	26
FERPA and Clery Threats.....	27
Direct Threat.....	27
Disability and Direct Threat.....	29
Responding to Threats and Violence.....	36
Considering the U.S.-Mexico Border Region.....	37
Stressors and the Border Region.....	40
Students in the Border Region.....	42
Gaps in the Literature.....	44
Chapter Summary.....	47
3. METHODOLOGY.....	49
Research Design.....	49
Sample.....	50
Research Questions.....	51
Research Hypotheses.....	53
Instrumentation.....	59
Data Collection.....	60
Statistical Treatment.....	62
Chapter Summary.....	64

4. RESULTS	65
Demographic Characteristics of Participants.....	66
Research Questions, Research Hypotheses, and Results	66
Research Question 1	68
Research Question 2	70
Research Question 3	71
Research Question 4	71
Research Question 5	73
Research Question 6	76
Research Question 7	76
Research Question 8	76
Research Question 9	77
Research Question 10	78
Research Question 11	78
Research Question 12	78
Research Question 13	79
Research Question 14	79
Research Question 15	80
Research Question 16	80
Research Question 17	82
Research Question 18	83
Research Question 19	83
Qualitative Findings.....	84

Further Considerations in Campus Safety	85
Border stigma.....	51
Law enforcement training.....	86
Student background	87
Law and policy implications.....	87
Campus connectivity.....	87
Selection to the TAT.....	88
Positional team need	88
Expertise and/or experience.....	88
Institutional appointment	89
Agreement to Serve on the TAT.....	89
Personal perspective.....	89
Institutional need.....	90
Student need.....	90
Organizational role.....	90
Appointment to the role and curiosity	91
TAT Function.....	92
Threat reduction and prevention	92
Identification of mental health concerns.....	92
Interdepartmental information sharing	93
Intervention plan creation	94
Student resources and informing the community about the team.....	94
Approach to Campus Safety	95

Educational approach.....	95
Community approach.....	96
Inadequate approach or unknown approach	96
Border violence.....	97
Intercountry access.....	99
Further marginalization of students	99
Limitations of the Study.....	100
Chapter Summary	100
5. DISCUSSION.....	104
Summary of the Study	105
Conclusions.....	106
Discussion of Quantitative Findings.....	106
Discussion of Qualitative Findings.....	125
Recommendations for Practice	133
Recommendations for Future Research.....	138
Chapter Summary	141
REFERENCES	143
APPENDICES	
A. U.S. -Mexico Border Region Campus Safety Questionnaire	151
B. Questions Presented to the Validation Panel	157
C. Proposed Statistics Matrix	158
D. Summary of Research Hypotheses	169
CURRICULUM VITA	171

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants.....	67
2. Composition of Threat Assessment Teams.....	69
3. Reported Following of Safety and Security Recommendations.....	72
4. Participants' Definition of Response Time to Constitute Timely Warning.....	74
5. Methods of Warning Reported by Participants as Used on the Campus.....	75
6. Reported Communication Between U.S. and Mexican Law Enforcement Agencies.....	77
7. Types of Threat Reported by Participants.....	80
8. Types of Aggressor Reported by Participants.....	81
9. Reported Frequencies of Direct Threats Involving Students With Mental Disabilities.....	81
10. Reported Frequencies of Sharing of Information With Other U.S. Institutions.....	82
11. Reported Frequencies of Sharing of Information With Mexican Institutions.....	83
12. Reported Frequencies of Monthly Meetings of Threat Assessment Teams.....	84

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Every year, new students attend institutions of higher education. Some students choose to continue studies at postsecondary institutions, with hopes of further matriculation. For many, higher education focuses primarily on academics, both inside and outside classrooms. Faculty, staff, students, and visitors interact with and within the campus environment daily as the physical setting functions as a community. As with any community, elements of safety, security, and crisis response are recognized as important aspects. The general question examined in the current study was, *What is the nature of campus safety and security at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education?* This general question prompted five main questions of interest:

1. To what extent do practices at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education mirror mainstream recommendations?
2. To what extent are practices implemented to ensure safe and secure campuses used by border institutions created with their geographical locations in mind?
3. To what extent is there communication between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agencies?
4. What is the major type of threat present on U.S.-Mexico border institution campuses?
5. To what extent do students with disabilities play a role in direct threat situations at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education?

As there is no current literature that specifically addresses these questions with regard to U.S.-Mexico border institutions, the current study was an effort to gain insight into the practices used at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education to respond to campus threats and safety concerns.

Background

Campus safety has been a concern since at least the mid-1990s (Market Intelligence for Higher Education, 1997). After the incident at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in 2007, more importance was placed on campus safety (Davies, 2008; Dunkle, Silverstein, & Warner, 2008). Specifically, with reported situations of campus shootings and stabbings, many parents and students enter institutions of higher education with concerns. Annually, as students and parents begin to interact with college campus officials, many questions are asked. Among the many questions that surface yearly are the following: Who can my student report issues to? How safe is the campus? In view of the campus violence since the tragedy at Virginia Tech in 2007, what does your institution have in place to prevent and/or address similar types of concerns? As a result of these concerns, and even before the events at Virginia Tech, government agencies have passed laws to support institutions of higher education to become more transparent about issues of safety and security. One such law, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, mandated that institutions of higher education publish crime statistics of incidents on or adjacent to the physical campus (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, while most notably being connected to gender equity in collegiate sports, also has a provision to aid in ending gender-based violence and forms of harassment. Although this law was originally passed in the 1970s, there has been a resurgence of importance with the release of the “Dear Colleague Letter” data April 4, 2011, from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). The letter stated that institutions of higher education that were in receipt of any federal funds had the obligation to confront, investigate, and procedurally address any and all complaints of gender-based harassment or violence.

Further, since 2007, institutions of higher education have been charged not only to react to issues of concerns and/or threats but to also proactively provide resources to students of concern while ensuring institutional safety. To move beyond the reporting of incidents and situations and toward proactive aspects of institutional security, many campuses have created teams of professionals to offer resources to students of concern and to protect the campus community if potential dangers and/or threats are identified. As the researcher is employed at an institution of higher education in the border region and has experience in working with and leading threat assessment teams, he concluded that a study of this type could assess whether border institutions of higher education use mainstream practices of threat assessment and crisis response and, if so, determine whether there are other aspects to consider regarding threat assessment and crisis response specific to border institutions.

Statement of the Problem

The reason that threats exist on campuses of institutions of higher education in the U.S.-Mexico border region was beyond the scope of this study. While certain threat types are addressed in this study, they are discussed to highlight their impact on the institution of higher education campus rather than how they present themselves. Likewise, the situations that prompt student behaviors perceived as dangers or threats was too broad to be examined, as the current study was structured to examine the practices that are in place to respond to crisis situations, not to examine the actors. The study was an attempt to understand the practices of threat assessment and intervention adopted by institutions of higher education in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

Although models of intervention for situations of student threats and crisis response have been offered, there has not yet been a study to examine how such methods are applicable to the needs of higher education institutions in the U.S.-Mexico border region. For the purpose of this

current study, the U.S.-Mexico border region is defined as the 100 kilometers north of the U.S.-Mexico border line, including both land and maritime boundaries according to the La Paz Agreement of 1983 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2012).

This study, which tests hypotheses about the current situation to understand the safety and security practices of border institutions, could aid practitioners and researchers to identify and implement methods to address student threats to institutions and provide resources to practitioners and researchers to minimize the occurrence of threats.

Significance of the Problem

Since the shootings at Virginia Tech, many scholars and professionals have noted the importance of campus safety response and prevention (e.g., Achampong, 2010; Dunkle et al., 2008; Lewis, Schuster, & Sokolow, 2012; Thrower et al., 2008). Associations that have suggested methods of threat and behavioral intervention and crisis response include the Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA), the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA), and the National Center for Higher Education Risk Management (NCHERM). Campus threat intervention and prevention is an important topic to those who interact with institutions of higher education.

While the same can be stated for the United States as a whole, literature suggests that the U.S.-Mexico border region presents specific challenges (Brilliant, 2000; Crockett et al., 2007; Smart, & Smart, 1995), most notably issues of low socioeconomic status (SES), limited resources, and elevated stress (Arbona et al., 2010; Dettlaff & Rycraft, 2006; Monarrez-Fragoso, 2010; Monarrez-Fragoso & Bejarano, 2010). However, certain characteristics are specific to the border region, including the existence of violence, the climate regarding immigration reform, racial profiling and, lack of access to education (Brilliant, 2000; Crockett et al., 2007; Smart &

Smart, 1995). These aspects set the tone of increased distress and suggest a need for resources, coping strategies, and/or psychological assistance. They may also suggest that individual behaviors may be affected by such stimuli.

The current study can be valuable to professionals at institutions of higher education in the U.S.-Mexico border region by providing information regarding needs that are specific to border institutions in the areas of threat assessment and intervention. Although models have been proposed for handling situations of concern, most are not specific to the border region nor include the border region as a focus. Border-specific models could give insight for border populations and address specific concerns. Institutions have the responsibility to educate students while making sure that they are learning in a safe environment.

Based on the specific selection of border institutions for this study, some might conclude that the researcher has made the assumption that there may be issues with border institutions with regard to danger, threats, and/or threat response. The researcher made no such assumptions. In fact, there was no information available to support any such assumption. Comparisons of crime data between border institutions and nonborder institutions were not made the current study because such comparisons were outside the scope of the study. The study was designed to examine border institutions' practices of threat assessment and campus interventions but not the level of crime, threats, or dangers on border campuses.

The review of the literature highlights certain aspects that distinguish the institution of higher education campus from elementary and secondary school settings. Parental and student concerns about the campus safety environment at institutions of higher education are discussed, along with responsibilities given to institutions of higher education regarding campus safety and

reporting. The concept, structures, and operations of threat assessment teams are addressed covered because they have a major role in campus threat and crisis prevention.

The literature suggests that individuals or groups of aggressors can affect a campus in a variety of ways, so the types of aggressors and their characteristics are addressed. The elements and types of campus threats are examined, as well as how threats and violence are responded to for the benefit of the campus, even in cases where the external community may be called on to assist. Moreover, as the current study concentrated on the U.S.-Mexico border region, an overview of the region is presented, including social climate, stressors that affect residents in the region, and how students in the region may be affected by their surroundings. Finally, gaps in the current literature are highlighted.

Following the review of the literature, the methods used in the study are described. The design of the study is articulated and the sample is described. The general research question and main questions of interest are presented, along with general and specific hypotheses. The survey instrument is described, including how its validity was determined. The process of data collection and statistical treatment of the data are described. Both qualitative findings and quantitative results are reported and discussed, and recommendations for future practices and future research are offered.

Delimitations of the Study

The current study was designed to examine the practices of threat assessment and intervention adopted by institutions of higher education in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The institutions that were invited to participate were within the U.S.-Mexico border region. Although the United States shares its northern border with Canada, the populations and interactions in the northern border region and southern border regions differ. Therefore, it may be problematic to

suggest that the findings apply to any other border region, although some aspects of border life may be the same. While all U.S.-Mexico border institutions were invited to participate in the study, it was deemed inadvisable to attempt to use such information to suggest the needs of a specific state regarding threat assessment and/or intervention. The current study was not designed to measure the effectiveness of an individual institution's system or to make recommendations for improvement to individual institutions. Further, because the study included institutions across states, it should not be assumed that the cultural dynamics are the same or similar in various sections of the border region.

Researcher's Bias

The researcher works as an associate dean of students and director for student conduct and conflict resolution at a U.S.-Mexico border institution of higher education. The researcher also functions as chair of the threat assessment team at the institution. In these roles, the researcher has worked with law enforcement personnel, mental health professionals, emergency management personnel, faculty, staff, and students. The researcher has also worked in various situations involving student conduct and behaviors of concern, including threatening behaviors. The researcher has long been interested in campus safety and security practices; when it was discovered that no literature existed with regard to safety and security practices specific to U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education, the researcher decided to conduct the current study.

Chapter Summary

While the in-class environment is important to an institution of higher education, the complete campus is important to academic achievement. Safety and security are important to academic success and student participation. Practices and organizations to address safety and

security concerns have been created since the mid-1990s. The general research question that guided the study was presented. The review of the literature and research methodology sections were outlined. Delimitations of the study were identified and researcher bias was addressed.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study examined practices in the areas of campus safety and organized response to security issues. At the core of the increased need for this attention was the shooting at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, that left 32 students and faculty members dead on April 16, 2007. While this may have been the most reported shooting of its type, other shootings since then have added to concerns about campus safety and incident response. For example, on September 21, 2007, a student at Delaware State University in Dover shot two other students on campus. On February 8, 2008, a nursing student at Louisiana Technical College in Baton Rouge killed two others before turning the gun on herself in an on-campus classroom. Five students were killed and 17 were wounded when a man committed a shooting spree in a classroom on the campus of Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois, before killing himself on February 14, 2008. On February 12, 2010, a biology professor shot and killed three other professors and wounded others at the University of Alabama-Huntsville. Two employees were killed at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, on March 9, 2010, when a fellow employee opened fire on the campus. On May 10, 2011, three people were shot to death in a parking garage at San Jose State University in California; one of the deceased was suspected of being the shooter. Seven people were killed on the campus of Oikos University on April 2, 2012, when a former student engaged in a shooting. Four students were injured when a gunman opened fire on the North Harris Campus of Lone Star College campus located in Houston, Texas, on January 22, 2013. In the same community college system on April 9, 2013, a student stabbed 14 others on campus.

It is important to note that these incidents include only those that took place on campuses of institutions of higher education. Others occurred on K–12 campuses during the same span of

time. Therefore, it can be stated that campus safety has a high level of importance to higher education leaders.

As the United States has institutions of higher education on the U.S.-Mexico border, the effect of the changing safety climate is important to examine with regard to border institutions. Over the past few years, there has been an increase in violence in cities on the Mexican side of the border, as well as increased drug trafficking originating on the Mexican side of the border. As many students who live on the Mexican side of the border are enrolled at institutions of higher education on the U.S. side of the border, the safety of these institutions is a concern for higher education leadership.

This review of the literature reports what is currently known about the impact of safety and security concerns at institutions of higher education campuses, outlines and assesses variations in threats to campus safety and security and responses and structures in place to address threatening situations, and reviews how the aforementioned affect institutions in the border region. Furthermore, the review identifies current gaps in the literature regarding application of these measures to institutions of higher education on the U.S.-Mexico border.

The Functions and Organization of Physical Facilities of Institutions of Higher Education

Understanding the needs of higher education institutions requires understanding of the construct of physical campuses. The physical campuses of many institutions of higher education are unlike those of other education entities. Compared to primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities generally have more buildings and are generally more spread out (Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010). Drysdale et al. (2010) posited that the nature of interpersonal connectivity is different at institutions of higher education than at primary and

secondary schools. While high school students, for example, may have similar schedules and classes through their years of instruction and more opportunities to be in contact with each other on a regular basis, this is not necessarily the case for college and university students. In fact, the increase in schedule variability, the size of the campus in some cases, the fact that many classes can be offered in the evening rather than morning and afternoon only, and the decrease in forced collaboration may result in less frequent contact among students. With this decreased level of contact, there is a possibility for students to notice fewer changes in classmates that might otherwise cause them to identify potential problems or threats. Therefore, the likelihood of more threatening situations remaining undetected in such environments is heightened. Drysdale et al. (2010) suggested that actual contact with the campus can increase when students reside on the physical campus. These aspects are of even more importance in understanding the general nature of campuses and what is required increase the level of safety on them.

Parent and Student Concerns Regarding Campus Safety

Students and parents are aware of safety concerns when choosing an institution of higher education. In fact, in a 1997 poll in which telephone interviews were conducted with 400 high school seniors and 400 parents of high school seniors preparing to enroll in a 4-year institution, safety was one of the most important factors in persuading or dissuading students to attend the institution (Market Intelligence for Higher Education, 1997). The same report offered that, while a safe environment was of concern to both male and female students, female students tended to be more concerned about sexual abuse, exploitation, and physical violence. Both parents and students did not trust that institutions were reporting incidents of crime and/or safety concerns appropriately to alert prospective students regarding the actual level of danger on the campus.

A more recent study by the Kelton Research firm in 2010 found similar results. The study involved 2,573 respondents, including 2,060 parents and 513 students (Protect Our Kids, 2013). The respondents were parents who had students on a college campus (1,032) or were parents of high school juniors or seniors classified as prospective students (1,028). Safety was a prominent concern among parents, with many expressing concern about their student's well-being on campus and others about their student not knowing what to do in a threatening situation. Parents of female students were more concerned with safety, especially regarding topics such as rape, sexual assault, and kidnapping. Overall, only 30% of the parents surveyed stated that the campus in which their student was either currently enrolled or planned to enroll was adequately prepared to handle an emergency situation (Protect Our Kids, 2013).

Drysdale et al. (2010) reported concern expressed by students and parents either preparing for contact with an institution of higher education or already in contact with a campus. The study focused specifically on directed assaults and showed trends in activity and areas where there seemed to be no explanation for the behaviors. Direct assaults included occurrences in which a specific person (by name) or group was the target prior to the beginning of the assault. Nearly 85% of the incidents took place at 4-year institutions; as enrollment increased, so did the number of incidents of violence. Location on the campus was not associated with the likelihood of violence; residential locations, campus grounds, parking lots, and academic and administrative buildings were equally involved in violent incidents. Nearly 75% of incidents featured the use of some sort of weapon and nearly three quarters of victims of fatal incidents were students.

With the recent occurrences of shootings on or around college campuses, violence and/or the threat of violence remains the chief concern of institutions of higher education. Of additional concern are the ways in which an institution may or may not be suited to manage the behaviors

of disruptive students that may stem from mental health issues (Dunkle et al., 2008).

Recognizing and understanding safety concerns, violence, and threats of violence is integral to keeping campuses safe. It is also important for institutions of higher education to understand the importance of reporting and addressing incidents, or potential occurrences, in a manner that makes violent incidents less likely. Such methods and responsibilities are addressed in the next section.

Reporting Methods and Responsibilities of Institutions of Higher Education

Reporting incidents of violence on campus is important for colleges and universities. The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, better known as the Clery Act, has been instrumental in creating a standard by which all institutions of higher education that receive funds through Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 must govern themselves. Under the Clery Act, institutions are required to furnish reports and crime statistics not only for the physical campus but also for areas adjacent to the physical campus (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Crime statistics are required by legislation to be identified by type: aggravated assault, arson, burglary, criminal homicide, drug abuse violations/arrests, hate crimes (by disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion and/or sexual orientation), manslaughter by negligence, liquor violations/arrests, robbery, sex offenses (forcible and nonforcible), and weapon law violations/arrests. Also, it is imperative that timely alerts be issued to members of the campus community if a situation arises so each person can make the best choices possible with regard to personal safety. Security reports are to be made available on an annual basis and employees, current and future, are to be made aware of the report's existence (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). If housing is a part of the physical

campus, information about missing students is to be made available, as well as information on fire safety.

Colleges and universities have safety and security entities, including public safety and police departments, to aid in creating safe campus environments. One of the most well-known college tragedies in U.S. history happened on the campus of Virginia Tech. During the events that occurred on April 16, 2007, 33 people were killed and 17 were wounded before the gunman, Seung-Hui Cho, took his own life (Davies, 2008). However, following the events of April 16th, it was discovered that many had doubts about Cho's behavior and mental stability, including the Cook Counseling Center, personnel in the residence hall where Cho lived, and personnel in the English Department (Davies, 2008). It was also discovered that campus entities responsible for sharing pertinent information may not have done so due to lack of knowledge of what was allowed to be shared under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), fearing that, if information was given to others who could have helped, penalties could have been levied on them (Davies, 2008).

As a result of this tragedy, colleges and universities are expected to have systems suitable for their institution type in place so that information can be shared both within the confines of the institution and with external entities, such as law enforcement agencies and emergency medical personnel, that can aid in safety of the campus population and surrounding community (Davies, 2008). While it used to be thought that many students associated with school violence emerged with no warning, it has been determined that these students showed signs and caused alarm before violence occurred. Regarding Virginia Tech as an institution, while it can be understood that institutions cannot foresee everything, it was determined by the court that the university

could have delivered information in a more timely fashion and not be slowed by bureaucratic systems (Lipka, 2012).

This type of decision has been handed down in civil suits that resulted in multiple financial losses for institutions of higher education. It is not enough for safety and security mechanisms to be in place; they must be practiced by the appropriate entities. A growing number of institutions have been encouraged to increase information sharing across departmental lines (Dunkle et al., 2008). A growing number of institutions have sought methods to centralize information through teams comprised of various campus officials (Dunkle et al., 2008; Sokolow & Lewis, 2009). The subsequent section provides information regarding such teams and their functions. The researchers Dunkle, Lewis, Schuster, Silverstein, Sokolow, and Warner will be cited numerous times in this writing because they have contributed extensively to the literature regarding campus safety, threat assessments teams, and best practices for institutions of higher education in creation of campus safety programs through institutional practices and personal experience. It should be understood that campus threat response is a recent phenomenon. Therefore, best practices are becoming plentiful while empirical studies are not.

Threat Assessment Teams

As a way to equip institutions to prepare for identifying various threats to the campus, its members, and visitors, many colleges and universities have created assessment and/or intervention teams. While there are many names for such teams, including but not limited to behavioral assessment teams, behavioral intervention teams, and threat assessment teams, for the purposes of this study, these teams are referred to herein as *threat assessment teams* (TAT). TATs are a major portion of university safety and threat reduction operations. Among the purposes of TATs is to ensure that important information is gathered, shared, and documented in

a centralized and accessible location. It is also the purview of the team to ensure that information is timely and to intervene in worrisome situations as needed.

TATs have changed over time. For example, when such teams were originally created, it may have been enough to show proof that the team existed on the institution of higher education campus and to ensure that standard campus functions would proceed as planned. However, as understandings of TATs have grown, it is now expected that goals, procedures, interventions, and documentation methods of such teams be readily available so that the manner of support to students and the institution can be understood (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009). The following two sections present a comparison of two philosophies regarding TATs (a) the Assessment-Intervention of Student Problems (AISP) model and the model proposed by Dunkle et al. (2008).

The Assessment-Intervention of Student Problems (AISP) Model

One of the more foundational models is the AISP model offered by Dr. Ursula Delworth. Delworth (2009) presented useful information in her model of assessing and intervening on behalf of a potentially troubled student. The model places the student in one of three categories: disturbing student, disturbed student, or disturbed/disturbing student. According to the Delworth model, the disturbing student can be seen as self-absorbed and lacking in close relationship skills while desiring close relationships. The disturbed student can be seen as a dualistic thinker, distant and/or confrontational, with one goal in mind. The disturbing/disturbed student can have any combination of the behaviors or characteristics of the first two types. The AISP model suggests that the institution form an assessment team so the student can be receive an assessment so proper authorities can become active. Through the assessment, the student can be placed in one of the aforementioned three categories. Further, the proper intervention can be implemented, perhaps including removal from the institution for a determined period of time or permission to

remain in the institution and progress toward the ultimate goal of graduation. Students do not necessarily remain in the original assessment categories. As many situations involving the student are to be taken into consideration to aid in the student's categorization, some student behaviors may cause the student be situated in one category for a specified time. The Delworth model is not linear in its approach and could change according to the student's behavior.

Although other models have emerged to add to, and in some cases challenge, the Delworth model, the AISP was one of the earlier recognized models to aid students to have access to needed resources to ensure academic success while also allowing the institution to observe the actions of the student who might cause harm to the community. Placing students in categories could increase professionals' understandings of the student(s) to be brought into conversation.

The AISP model lacks certain aspects for determining the type of threat potentially presented by the student of concern. For example, there seems to be no place in the model that directly includes a disability specialist. While there is mention that a student services specialist should be included, the designation of specified personnel is vague and allows for myriad professionals to be involved when a disability specialist might be better able to determine a root cause of behaviors. Another aspect of the model is that it lacks an evaluation of a chosen intervention by the entire team as a follow-up. As such, the effectiveness of the original intervention may not be fully vetted before another intervention attempt is offered. Further, the use of a psychiatric withdrawal is offered as the preferred option for students who might cause harm to themselves or others, but there is no mention of using the direct threat test suggested by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights based on the *Spring Arbor* decision, which was given after the AISP model was created. Removal of the concerning student is

suggested to prevent further disruption to the campus environment, apparently with no regard for the student's due process rights. Unless the direct threat test is clearly used, a student is not to be removed from the campus unless due process has been exercised. Therefore, a student should be able to know what he/she has been charged of doing, be able to have a review of the pertinent evidence against her/him, and be able to question the evidence and/or the accuser (Kaplin & Lee, 2007).

Despite these concerns, the one item that has been accepted by an increasing number of institutions is the thought that there should be some type of assessment team (Drysdale et al., 2010; Dunkle et al., 2008; Sokolow & Lewis, 2009). Yet, there seems to be no empirical evidence of evaluation of the effectiveness of TATs.

Current TAT Constructs

When TATs were introduced, it was enough to have an intervention team in place and featured as a component of the institution's structure to proceed with official institution business. However, structured interventions and protocols must now be maintained as a permanent part of the institution, ready for activation to address threats and constantly evaluated for effectiveness (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009).

Although TATs are central groups, they must address a wide range of considerations for their work to be effective. At a fundamental level, all institutions, regardless of how many similarities may exist, are different. Therefore, when developing policies, procedures, overall team operations, and frequency of meetings, and determining team membership, it is important that the specific organization of resources and characteristics of the institution be taken into consideration from the beginning (Dunkle et al., 2008). It may be sufficient for on-campus stakeholders to determine what is sufficient, but it also may be helpful to have persons who are

not as familiar with the institution but familiar with threat assessment to be involved in team construction. For example, off-campus stakeholders may be local law enforcement and external consultants with expertise in threat assessment.

It is also the expectation of the team to consult with campus partners, that is, faculty, staff, and students. These persons will most likely have first-hand knowledge of an occurrence when students exhibit behaviors of concern through person-to-person interactions and/or reports (Dunkle et al., 2008). It cannot be assumed that campus partners know how to handle disturbing situations or know how to engage students of concern. Thus, team members may need to aid in situations to deescalate concerns. It is also the responsibility of the team to provide information about its existence to students, faculty, and staff throughout the university.

Dunkle et al. (2008) expressed the purpose, scope, and role of the team in the campus community and the situations and concerns that the team is designed to handle to avoid confusion of abilities and responsibilities. By informing campus partners of specific abilities, precious time can be saved and systems designed for response and intervention can operate more efficiently.

It is also up to the team to address best practices and systems for effective operations on and off campus in determining the level of concern regarding a student (Dunkle et al., 2008). When a concern that can affect the campus community, its members, and/or its visitors surfaces, it is important for the team to determine the best course of action at the time and to be able to amend said action and offer critiques for better performance. Therefore TATs should be visible to members and visitors of the institution, should know their role within the confines of the institution, should continue to train and be trained for better performance, and should understand the trends of national threat assessment practices and behaviors. Further, TATs should

understand local trends pertinent to the institution, which may consist of decrease or increase in psychological concerns, students who may be returning from military service and may present involvement in combat situations, and students who may be affected by situations in the community. TATs should ensure that students do not remain unnoticed as they display behaviors of concern or are in need of resources.

It is important to carefully consider the composition of TATs. At the core of the team is the goal of being as inclusive in assessing and intervening when a potential threat occurs. Therefore, all institutions, if possible, should include the Chief Student Affairs Officer or designee, a mental health professional employed by the institution, a campus law enforcement representative, a legal counsel representative, and a disability specialist (Dunkle et al., 2008).

The Chief Student Affairs Officer is important for many reasons. This professional will have authority for use of many university resources, will serve as the central point of contact for members of the student affairs division, and will have access to person sin upper-level administration so that information can be shared in a swift and efficient fashion.

Mental health professionals can offer an interpretation of the student's symptoms and actions that have been reported by members of the community or by those who have witnessed the behavior. Mental health professionals may be called to conduct an assessment of the student or the student may be directed to off-campus resources. Yet, if the student can be served by on-campus resources, this determination can also be made by this person. Also, if the student has signed appropriate forms, information gathered from the counseling center can be given to the assessment team. The mental health professional should be conscious of cultural issues, psychopathy, depression, eating disorders, and alcohol/drug issues (Dunkle et al., 2008).

It is important that the TAT include a professional who is versed in working with students with disabilities (Dunkle et al., 2008). The disability specialist may not only have knowledge of accommodations that the student may be receiving and an understanding of the student's disability but may also have a positive rapport with the student that can allow the specialist to take the lead in an intervention if appropriate. Further, the disability specialist is charged with understanding laws that govern working with students with disabilities.

The TAT should include a law enforcement representative, who is charged with understanding situations of imminent danger and how to respond if the campus population is in danger (Dunkle et al., 2008). In the event of an actual threat, the law enforcement representative is charged with knowing how to respond to the threat in a way that the campus is affected to the least degree possible while ending the threat for the immediate benefit of the community.

Legal counsel is also important to the core of the TAT, with the intent to limit university liability (Dunkle et al., 2008). While there are likely to be many laws in play that pertain to the happenings of the TAT, the team is charged with understanding the reasons for operations and possible interventions. Legal counsel can aid in understanding what can happen under the law.

While these representatives make up the core of many TATs, other campus or noncampus members may be called on to be participants in the operations of the team for better understanding or effectiveness. Also, behaviors on the college campus are not limited to students. Faculty, staff, and visitors to campuses may also pose threats to the campus; thus, it is important to develop a mechanism to identify and assess these risks (Sokolow & Lewis, 2009).

The TAT should not be a mystery to members of the campus community. Likewise, its operations should not be amorphous. It cannot be assumed that members of the TAT will automatically understand the workings of a well-functioning TAT. Therefore, training is an

important aspect. Within the training, members should understand that the TAT should not be an arm of the conduct system or have the processes of the team resemble those of the conduct system (Lewis et al., 2012). The aims of the conduct system and the TAT are inherently different. The conduct system is designed to help students to learn the rules and policies of the university. While the TAT may indirectly offer this type of education to students, the purposes of the TAT are to offer students resources to help them in their time of need and to protect the institution from threats and dangerous situations that can be avoided.

Directly stated, the TAT is never to be seen as a punitive arm of an institution of higher education. Connecting the TAT to the conduct system may indirectly lead to the perception that the TAT is working in conjunction with the conduct system. It is the purpose of the TAT to ensure that students can withdraw from the university if they feel that they are not fit to continue based on their thoughts and behaviors (Lewis et al., 2012). The withdrawal process through the TAT is voluntary, as the team facilitates the process for the benefit of the student. Training should also help TAT members to understand the operation of both the conduct system and the TAT and how they operate so students can understand the advantages afforded to them while ensuring that the institution and its mission are protected (Lewis et al., 2012).

Team members are to also be trained regarding benefits and various aspects of having conversations with students of concern after the students have gone through the proper assessments as outlined by the institution (Lewis et al., 2012). These assessments may include a review of the student by university mental health professionals, working with law enforcement and other personnel to ensure that there is no imminent threat to the institution, and working with the conduct system to ensure that no violations have occurred that would require the student to enter the disciplinary process. In these discussions, the student is intended to develop an

understanding, with the help of the professionals, of the risks involved with choosing to withdraw from the institution or to remain in the institution in the current state (Lewis et al., 2012).

Regarding risks, it is important not only to examine the disciplinary risks but also to examine the financial implications of the decision, the ways in which the decision could affect academic progress, the impacts on the student's reputation, and the impact on the interactions between the student and others in the campus community.

Aggression on the Higher Education Campus

As indicated in the case of Cho, many students may show some signs of concern but still may not act in a way that causes higher education officials to believe that there is imminent danger in the student's behavior pattern. For the purpose of this study, *imminent danger* is defined as the possibility of impending death or serious physical injury due to another's behavior. According to the Center for Aggression Management (2012), certain types of behavior are more identifiable than others, although both can create issues for those present. According to the Center, there are two main types of aggressors: the primal aggressor and the cognitive aggressor.

It is important to discuss aggressors in this section because threats to campuses and threat responses have an aggressor, or aggressors, at the core of the situation. Not only can it be important to know that aggressors exist on institution of higher education campuses; it may also be important to understand the characteristics of various types of aggressors so they can be identified. It can be assumed that identification and classification of the aggressor may put institutions in a better position to protect their campus population.

Under the theories of the Center for Aggression Management (2012), the *primal aggressor* is the type of person one would be most likely to recognize easily. This person's level of aggravation can be seen in disposition, most likely coming across as anger, high levels of frustration, and overall behavior that seems to be driven by increased levels of adrenaline. Especially on the campus of an institution of higher education, behaviors exhibited by this person would most likely be reported immediately to a law enforcement agency, or at least to a person in authority, as the behaviors would be seen as being outside of the norm.

The *cognitive aggressor* would be different in approach and external view. According to the Center for Aggression Management (2012), the cognitive aggressor may seem very calm in mannerisms and approach. This person can be considered to be intent driven, may be planning actions long before behaviors surface, and may very well be the more dangerous of the two types.

While both types of aggressors can be extremely dangerous to targeted persons or groups and must be managed appropriately, the processes used at institutions of higher education are geared more toward the primal aggressor than to the cognitive aggressor, even though the cognitive aggressor is more likely to come in contact with college or university campuses. Hinshaw (1992) suggested that, with age behaviors become more grounded and more difficult to correct. Since these behaviors seem to be occurring in youth and subsequent stages of adolescence, by the time a student reaches the college campus, said behaviors may be deeply engrained in the personality and may be more difficult to correct.

Assessing Threat on the College Campus

Addressing the concept of threat on campuses of institutions of higher education begins with understanding the types of threats that may present. For the purposes of this study, the most

likely threats to occur on a college campus are (a) the true threat, (b) the criminal threat, (b) the Tarasoff threat, and (d) the direct threat. These threats cover situations that originate from both the cognitive aggressor and the primal aggressor, describe above. While a degree of overlap may exist in the description of these types of threats, each should be reviewed because they may be used specific to one situation but not another.

True Threat

In the true threat, if a person could reasonably interpret the statement of another to be an expression of impending physical harm to specific persons, the true threat test has been met (Crane, 2006). A seminal case to examine the true threat test is *Watts v. United States* (1969). In this case, during a political debate, Robert Watts, when referring to his draft classification, stated, “I am not going. If they ever make me carry a rifle, the first man I want to get in my sights is L.B.J.” (as cited in Crane, 2006, p. 1232). Although Watts was convicted by a lower court, the conviction was overturned after failing the higher court’s test of true threat. The elements used to determine a true threat in the *Watts* case were that it happened as part of a political debate, there were conditions attached, and the threat caused laughter among those in the audience (Crane, 2006). These three aspects have been used in many cases to determine the existence of a true threat. However, the courts also provided a definition of true threat in *Virginia v. Black* (2003). In this case, the court determined that true threats encompass those statements in which the speaker means to communicate a serious expression of intent to commit an act of unlawful violence against a particular individual or group; the speaker need not actually intend to carry out the threat.

Criminal Threat

Another type of threat that can also be found on the campuses of colleges and universities is the criminal threat. The criminal threat is one that could result in arrest or conviction in a criminal court. This type of threat can include threats of death, serious injury to one's body, attacks, criminal assaults, or battery (Sokolow, Lewis, & Schuster, 2011). While freedom of speech is often a topic of concern in higher education communities, this type of threat (as well as others) is not protected under Constitutional law. The finding of a criminal threat can have a variety of factors to consider, including but not be limited to assessing how vulnerable the target of the threat is, the status of the target, and the likelihood that the actions could produce criminal-level harm.

Tarasoff-Level Threat

One of the more controversial threat types for institutions of higher education is the Tarasoff-level threat. This type of threat was given its name as a result of *Tarasoff v. Regents of the University of California* (1974). It has long been mandated that mental health professionals have a duty of confidentiality in protecting information offered by their clients. The confidentiality standards are seen as both legal and ethical obligations in the field. The *Tarasoff* established a "duty to warn" held by the mental health professionals and a 1976 rehearing of the case determined that, if there is an immediate danger to others that has been expressed to the mental health professional, the said professional has the "duty to protect" appropriate entities so the action can be prevented (Barbee, Combs, Ekleberry, & Villalobos, 2007). These types of threats can occur if a client willingly volunteers information to the professional, if any statement can be considered to be meant as a threat regardless of whether or not a specific plan is in place, and if the threatening statement caused fear in the target (Sokolow et al., 2011). While *Tarasoff*

is specific to California because it was decided at the state court level and while the standards presented in the case are generally acceptable standards, standards of a Tarasoff-level threat can vary from state to state because there is no federal court decision on the matter (Barbee et al., 2007). Plainly stated, if the mental health professional sees that the client represents a threat to others in a direct fashion, the professional is not in violation of any ethical or legal standards because disclosure of the information falls under the duty to protect. Not all states have statutes dealing with a Tarasoff-level threat, so the professional could be subject to a decision that is specific to that district's court.

FERPA and Clery Threats

FERPA and Clery threats should be clearly understood by institutions of higher education. In the event that a student or group of students is determined to be a threat to others on the campus, records and information that would normally be impermissible to share publicly can be shared on an as-needed basis to offer fair warning and/or reduce/stop the threat (Sokolow et al., 2011). This is supported by the Clery Act, amendments of which in 2008 stated that, if an emergency or otherwise dangerous situation is confirmed, the campus community is to be notified immediately. The level of danger or threat is not specified under either FERPA or Clery and is at the discretion of the institution of higher education.

Direct Threat

Under the direct threat standard, verbal expressions and/or actions that are not protected by law, to include disability law, can result in an institution of higher education taking action against the agitator that could include separation from the institution as a result of the threat (Sokolow et al., 2011). The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2011), on its American Disabilities Act Home Page, offers a definition of direct threat as a “significant risk to the health

or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services, as provided in § 36.208 [Part 36 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities].” Individuals are allowed to receive public accommodations and participate in the offerings of colleges and universities, barring threats made against others or themselves. If a direct threat is thought to be present, public accommodations are forfeited and a separation is permissible, at least until such time as the individual is not considered to pose a threat (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2011).

With direct threats, medical recommendations, individualized assessments, and/or credible information can create a basis for making the determination (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights [OCR], 2005). Aspects to consider in determining a direct threat are probability of future injury, likelihood of other risks, and the overall impact on resources and accommodations of lessening the likelihood of a dangerous situation (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2011).

Speaking directly to an institution’s decisions to use interventions such as interim suspensions or involuntary withdrawals, institutions may want to enact such options with care if the student conduct process is involved (Lewis et al., 2012). The rationale is that an institution may be called on to display employment of the direct threat test to support such decisions. Further, the institution’s TAT, or equivalent, may be a better option to move forward with such decisions, especially if a disability may be an underlying cause. In cases where community harm is certain, the aforementioned thoughts are clearer and use of the student conduct system may be supported. However, in cases in which there is only a “threat to self” possibility and not necessarily a threat to the larger community, the certainty of use of the student conduct system is

not as clear as it once was, since the danger-to-self language is no longer a part of the Department of Justice Title II Regulations (Lewis et al., 2012).

The OCR has indicated that, if a school takes action on the student concerned to be a threat to self while determining that the student was not fit to participate in school programs in a safe fashion and the institution does not use an individualized assessment from an objective source as the basis, the institution would be in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Lannon & Sanghavi, 2011). An example of this type of determination can be seen in the OCR Letter to Guilford College (U.S. Department of Education, OCR, 2003) in which it was determined that the college did not consider less-devastating measures than withdrawal for the student. Although the student had been involved in cutting episodes, the university had not adequately sought medical input regarding the student prior to making the determination (Lannon & Sanghavi, 2011). An individualized assessment could come from the best objective evidence available at the time or a medical opinion using the most current medical information, and the assessment must address risk probability, duration, risk severity, and whether policy, practice, or procedural modifications could address the threat (Lannon & Sanghavi, 2011).

It is clear that there is much to take into consideration when determining the types of threat that can affect campus life. However, this study focuses on direct threat. The reason for this choice is that the OCR specifically names direct threat as the standard to be used and tested when making determination of a student's ability to interact with an institution of higher education (U.S. Department of Education, OCR, 2010).

Disability and Direct Threat

In considering ways to deal with direct threat situations, the response by an institution of higher education should be not only to protect the institution but also to protect students from

dangers and from themselves (Lundquist & Shackelford, 2011). Whereas the tenets that govern direct threat can be outlined in a few sentences, when other aspects are added, the clarity of the direct threat standard is compromised. One such instance can be encountered when a student with a disability is involved. Regardless of the positive desires for activating and maintaining an assessment team or developing campus safety measures, concerns related to students with disabilities and confidentiality/privacy concerns with all students are often prevalent (Dunkle et al., 2008).

Although it can be considered to be common sense, for the purpose of this study, a documented disability does not automatically put a student in a position to be a threat to self or others, and behaviors of a student that result in harm do not necessarily mean that the student has a disability. While a student may have a disability, it is the conduct of the student that is to be considered, not the disability. Colleges and universities can be held responsible for taking too severe an action or not enough action regarding the handling of a student's conduct. Each case is to be evaluated individually within the confines of law and policy (Lundquist & Shackelford, 2011).

Two statutes primarily govern the boundaries of disability law: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA; with Amendments Act of 2008; Warner & Schutjer, 2009). These laws are designed to protect persons with disabilities from discrimination, with their disabilities being the source of the discrimination, to include various forms of disabilities (e.g., physical and mental). Under such statutes, those who can demonstrate a history of a disability or who have otherwise been regarded as having a disability through treatment or accommodation by the institution can be considered disabled (Warner & Schutjer, 2009).

An example of this principle in action is the OCR decision regarding Spring Arbor University (U.S. Department of Education, OCR, 2010). Upon admission to Spring Arbor, a student stated to university admissions official that he had a disability. The student neither sought aid from the institution nor identified himself to the university office that specializes in working with students with disabilities. Further, the admissions official or others in administration did not direct the student to resources for students with disabilities. The student attended classes and progressed through courses. Later, as the student was advancing through the curriculum, the student began to have increasing difficulties, was later diagnosed as having bipolar disorder, and displayed episodes of cutting and uncontrollable crying. The student was called to a meeting by upper administration and was told that, because of numerous complaints, in order to continue to be enrolled, he must sign a contract with the university stating that he would report to identified individuals in times of crisis, would be on medication to aid with his behaviors, and would be involved in counseling. The student was angered by this request and withdrew from the institution, citing medical reasons. Because the institution would not let him return to resume his studies until he had met a six-part readmission process that included release of medical records and medical clearance, the student filed a grievance through OCR. It was later noted that the institution did not require other students to do the same, did not have the process published so that others could access the information, and did not produce the policy from legal counsel. OCR decided that the institution had created the disability status for the student based on the way the student was treated in the process. Considering the previously mentioned points, OCR found that the institution had discriminated against the student based on his disability under Section 504. This was substantiated because the student was not in poor academic standing with the institution (Lewis et al., 2012). Further, the institution did not apply a direct threat test, as

outlined earlier, to determine whether the student should be denied readmission (Lewis et al., 2012; U.S. Department of Education, OCR, 2005).

As can be seen in the example, situations can alter interpretations of the laws. Yet, even disability laws do not require institutions to alter the core of academic and other educational programs and/or lower the standards of the institution or its programs to accommodate a person's disability (Dunkle et al., 2008; Warner & Schutjer, 2009). Likewise, the institution is protected if there seems to be an unreasonable burden acquired by accommodating the student.

For the most part, it has been accepted that a student's behavior should be the focal point rather than the student's disability (Lannon & Sanghavi, 2011). Therefore, in cases in which a student's behavior may have been caused by a disability, the institution is typically still at liberty to activate its conduct process and disciplinary policies, regardless of the cause of the conduct (McKendall, 2009; Warner & Schutjer, 2009). Warner and Schutjer (2009) maintained that the university must ensure that application of codes of conduct and policies is used consistently with those with and without disabilities in an equal fashion. Failure to do so could be seen as a discriminatory practice.

The OCR has been instrumental in outlining these important issues for institutions of higher education. One such instance is OCR's guidelines for what should be done if a student with a mental disability engages in policy violation. OCR has taken the stance that, even if a student with a mental disability violates a policy and has received adequate notice of university expectations, the student is still to receive a reasonable opportunity to change the behavior to reenters into compliance with university standards, with or without the help of counseling (Lundquist & Shackelford, 2011; Warner & Schutjer, 2009).

Regarding students who may be a danger to self, it is important to allow an assessment team to make the determination of the student's ability to work with the institution to obtain counseling or other interventions so that matriculation to graduation is possible (Warner & Schutjer, 2009). The rationale is that many students who are at risk choose to work with the institution, sign waivers allowing information to be communicated between institutional entities and caregivers, and accept temporary recommendations until they are able to reenter the academic environment (Lundquist & Shackelford, 2011; Warner & Schutjer, 2009).

There may be situations in which the college or university chooses to remove a student from enrollment and, in certain circumstances, may do so without executing full due process (Warner & Schutjer, 2009). Generally speaking, due process is given to a student when all policies and procedures offered by the institution are followed to reach a determination of the student's status with the institution. Therefore, involuntary withdrawal of a student is possible so long as the institution intends to apply, and reasonably does apply, the full due process that it would normally apply when the student is no longer a threat. Actions such as these are allowable under the direct threat standard, as outlined earlier. Likewise, unless this standard is used in the removal of students with disabilities, responses by institutions of higher education may be regarded as a type of discrimination (Warner & Schutjer, 2009).

An example of this type of situation can be seen in *Amir v. St. Louis University* (1999), in which Guy Amir alleged that St. Louis University had violated Title III of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Amir, a medical school student, had experienced difficulties prior to medical school; however, as a third-year student, he experienced extreme difficulties, was told that he needed to be hospitalized, and signed a voluntary consent form to be admitted. Amir maintained that he signed the form only under threat of being involuntarily

committed. While under hospital care, he was diagnosed with severe obsessive compulsive disorder, treated, and released. When his release was processed, he attempted to be re-admitted to the university but was not allowed to do so as it was determined that he had been away from rotations for too long. Amir filed a grievance citing that Dr. Park, a physician with supervisory oversight of the psychiatry clinic where Amir was doing rotations, forced Amir into hospitalization and would not allow him to return as a result of a disability. Although Amir was insufficient in some areas of his education, he performed well enough in others to continue in the program. Later, he was allowed to resume his work at the psychiatry clinic under the direction of the same physician with whom he had difficulty before, and he passed the course. Although Amir passed other sections of his requirements, under a new policy that had been adopted, Dr. Park issued Amir a failing grade and the medical school took the necessary steps to dismiss Amir. After having failed appeals, Amir took the university to district court and beyond. Although claims of retaliation and discrimination based on disability were offered by Amir, in the portion of the case dealing with disability discrimination, the courts did not find in his favor, citing that he could not substantiate the claim that the university had used his disability as a deciding factor and that it may well could have been his lack of performance that ultimately sealed his fate with the university.

If Amir could have made a stronger case that his disability had been used by the university as a deciding factor rather than using the direct threat standard, the university could have been in position to lose the case (Warner & Schutjer, 2009). Where institutions have requested that students (a) provide information outlining that methods to reduce threat to the campus have been used, (2) ensure a treatment plan of some sort be put in place, and (3) grant permission to speak to the caregiver or physician, OCR has been supportive of the institution's

right to take reasonable action with the protection of the educational environment being the focus of the request, so long as such a standard is applied to all students of similar circumstances regardless of the presence or absence of a disability. Universities cannot ask that a student's behaviors, related to the disability, cease to occur as a condition of readmission (Warner & Schutjer, 2009).

Despite the previous information, disability law can often involve case-by-case interpretations of fact. As such, the very nature of said interpretations may not work to the advantage of TATs in which decisions may need to be made quickly. Thus, the addition of a mental health professional, a professional who works with students with disabilities, and/or someone involved with legal counsel is an important consideration for the TAT (Dunkle et al., 2008). The issues that TATs may evaluate and for which they may offer a solution are not to be taken lightly and can include but may not be limited to persons with mental health disabilities who violate codes of conduct, commit acts of violence, pose a threat to those who interact with the campus, and need immediate withdrawal from the campus and/or readmission to the institution (Dunkle et al., 2008).

It has been determined that OCR and the courts are generally concerned that the dissemination and use of published processes, as outlined by the institution's policies and procedures, feature those that are current with legal expectations and mandates (Dunkle et al., 2008). While the institution and community must be protected and services must be offered as needed, there are obligations to inform the community of potential dangers and of plans to act, should dangers surface. The following section addresses such needs.

Responding to Threats and Violence

As a result of the Virginia Tech tragedy and other situations involving campus responses to threats, many institutions and private organizations have begun to work toward better ways to address threatening situations. One such group is the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA). In 2008, IACLEA created a Special Review Task Force and developed what would become known as the IACLEA Blueprint for Safer Campuses. The Blueprint presented what the organization suggested that all institutions of higher education should have in place to prevent or to respond effectively to campus concerns. According to IACLEA, the entire institution's community has a role in campus safety (Achampong, 2010; Thrower et al., 2008). The document states that institutions should not only assess possible threat situations but also evaluate points of structural and/or functional vulnerability so that the institution's plans for response are adequate (Thrower et al., 2008). The report also stated that, in conjunction with Clery Act requirements, the institution should be able to inform the campus, in its entirety, both in timely fashion and with accurate information. Further, the document recommended that the institution use the National Incident Management System (NIMS; a system designed for various levels of government to work together to reduce harm to the environment and loss of property and life), have viable response plans for an emergency, train first responders to deal with public safety matters, and maintain proper working relationships with local agencies that could be called on to respond in times of need (Thrower et al., 2008). The report suggested that the institution's Chief of Police report directly to a person with key decision-making authority and have the ability to ensure that law enforcement agencies have and understand a full range of response options in times of emergency, as well as have working relationships with victim advocacy agencies. IACLEA's report also asked for a TAT to be in

place, that programs designed to inform the campus of and prevent violence against women be made available, and that proper faculty and staff training be made available regarding response options and systems.

Achampong (2010) went beyond simple risk management and included strategic planning as a necessary component if responses and institutional strength are to be reflected in the institution's overall vision. Therefore, while various portions of the institution may have a direct hand in achieving certain institutional goals, Achampong maintained that advances in these areas should come from the top level of university administration. Campus safety can be seen not only as the responsibility of the institution and its members but also as the responsibility of various agencies external to the campus such as external law enforcement, mental health agencies, and emergency response teams.

Considering the U.S.-Mexico Border Region

In reviewing the literature on campus safety and addressing threat, it can be seen that there is access to a variety of theories and opinions of best practices. However, when one considers how laws, theories, assessment, and response strategies affect institutions on the U.S.-Mexico border, there is a scarcity of resources. This could be because a majority of the institutions in the United States are not considered border institutions. As many students in the border region may live in Mexico while attending U.S. institutions, the level of importance in understanding the nature of the region increases with regard to campus safety concerns. Therefore, the living environment and societal concerns of Mexican students become higher education concerns at the time these students enroll in U.S. institutions of higher education. Not only does the border region have many cultures and subcultures, reflecting familial expectations, different ways to view the relationship between the two countries, difference in understanding of

SES and human rights, and overall access to education; recently, there have also been differences in violence thresholds, perceived student stress, and ways of coping specific to students in the border region (Brilliant, 2000; Crockett et al., 2007; Smart & Smart, 1995). A review of border history will contribute to understanding these aspects of border life.

Much of the land that is considered to be part of the modern-day United States used to be Mexico. Although many of the people living in these areas were not forcibly removed at the time of the change of demarcation, moving the border to its current location as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo made many people “residents” of another country in a short period of time (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010). The areas affected by this treaty were those in the current Southwest of the United States, specifically Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas.

Tolerance of transience during the early years was different from what happens today, as is evident by the increase in border security in recent years. For example, according to Chen (2013), there was a 64% increase in funding for Customs and Border Protection between 2006 and 2013; a 2007 bill proposed an additional 20,000 border agents, even though there has actually been a 40% decrease in violent crimes in Southwest border states in the past two decades. The primary rationale for the proposed additions was to provide better response to concerns about illegal immigration into the United States, not necessarily to deal with border violence.

Originally, the ability to move freely between countries was standard so trade, labor, and the ability to improve one’s family situation were attainable (Romo, 2005). Evidence of this type of climate can be seen in the establishment of the Bracero Program in 1942, allowing Mexican nationals to work in the United States without problems (Martinez & Hardwick, 2009). Although many consider this to be happening currently, arguing that many Latinos from Mexico are

allowed to perform many operations declined by U.S. citizens, there are many deterrents in place to keep Mexican citizens from accessing opportunities (Furman et al., 2009). These deterrents, in the form of increased border fencing, increased staffing by border patrol officers and finances added for border operations, political agendas and speeches ultimately pushing to close the border, and increased immigration checkpoints in the border region, only strengthen the divide between the two countries that share a common border and people with a common regional history.

Although border issues are generally understood better by those who reside in the border region, no matter what side, those who reside on in Mexico have more perspective on the oppressive nature of the border situation. Their understanding can come from being considered targets of the current immigration climate (Martinez, 1994), having to deal with and being associated with the border violence that has spiked in recent years (Monarrez-Fragoso, 2010; Monarrez-Fragoso & Bejarano, 2010), and having trouble with the English language. Certain aspects of the border situation exist primarily due to race or other aspects of perceived surface diversity (Staudt & Spener, 1998). U. S. citizens (as well as noncitizens) have been known to be asked frequently for proof of identity because of the way they look (Sáenz, 1992).

After the terroristic attack in mainland United States on September 11, 2001, negative sentiments toward immigrants increased. As a result, hate crimes against Latinos also increased. Such incidents create a feeling of antagonism that affects the country in general but has specific impact in the border region (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010). These stressors have been known to have negative psychological impacts on the targets, as discussed in the next section.

Stressors and the Border Region

Also important to safety concerns of U.S. institutions of higher education are personal stressors in the border region. As the general border population is affected by external stimuli, students can also be affected. At the point that students are involved and there is a possibility for dangerous behavior to occur, U.S. institutions of higher education must see potential situations as a concern. There are increased pressures and obstacles to cope with or overcome for children of immigrants or immigrants themselves. These increased pressures can be caused by a variety of stimuli. Examples include lack of familiarity with new surroundings, familial losses during the migration process (regardless of whether such losses are due to physical familial separation between countries), inability to contact family members or close friends, death, or uncertainty that may take the individual beyond the standard comfort of their adaptation skills (Smart & Smart, 1995).

The lack of connectivity to one's country of origin could be a source of pressure (Cervantes, Mejía, & Mena, 2010; Crockett et al., 2007; Smart & Smart, 1995). The psychological impacts of even the threat of such separation or change in reality can be as damaging to the person as if the situation had actually occurred (Smart & Smart, 1995). Many researchers attribute this type of psychological stress to the Hispanic family structure, where not only is there a sense of support within the unit but also a sense of protection from the world external to the family unit (Brilliant, 2000; Crockett et al., 2007; Smart, & Smart, 1995). These thoughts and responses to external stimuli can ultimately have an impact on acculturative stress levels in recognized correlations between stress and self-development and the ability to seek and acquire necessary resources to overcome obstacles or to circumvent troubling situations (Smart & Smart, 1995).

Specific to those of Mexican origin who are residing in the United States, while some immigrants voluntarily migrate to the United States, historically, many did not migrate voluntarily but did so as a result of a border change or were brought to the United States as minors by their parents (Smart & and Smart, 1995). The possible adversarial nature of the change can be a unique source of stress, especially in Mexican immigrants who are foreign born (Finch, Kolody, & Vega, 2000; Smart & Smart, 1995). Further, the social stigma of arriving in another country with minority status amid sentiments stemming from anti-Hispanic climates can lead to a need for increased resources and support services. The ability to maintain healthy self-esteem may lie in the balance (Dettlaff & Rycraft, 2006).

It has been reported that there is a difference in the effects of stressors on documented persons and undocumented persons. Specifically, when aspects of English language proficiency, pressure from traditional influences in the country of origin, deportation, or increased negative external stimuli surface, the degree of stress in undocumented persons increased exponentially more than in documented persons (Arbona et al., 2010). There is also a growing belief that undocumented persons are a source of criminal threat, even though no empirical evidence is available to support such claims (Wang, 2012). However, the level of stress of undocumented persons can also be connected to the region of the United States in which the person resides. There is documentation that, while uncomfortable still, it may be easier for an undocumented person to navigate in Texas with less interference than would face another undocumented immigrant to reside in Arizona, based on differences in immigration climates between the two states (Martinez & Hardwick, 2009).

Based on the stressors identified with immigration and life in the border region, the need for support services is clear. Another aspect to consider in examining the border region is a lack

of financial resources for Mexicans and Mexican Americans (United States-Mexico Border Health Commission, 2013; Russell & Madrigal, 1998). Examination of the distribution of wealth in the border region shows that the largest sector can be identified as lower class, followed by the middle class and the wealthy class (Russell & Madrigal, 1998). When a lack of financial resources is combined with a rise in violence, drug use, and trafficking, lack of affordable recreational outlets, and alcohol use and abuse, the benefits of counseling and support become evident (Russell & Madrigal, 1998).

Specific to violence, a study by Scarpa, Haden, and Hurley (2006) suggested witnesses or victims of community violence were prone to have psychological issues. This could be integral in understanding the stressors of those familiar with border violence. Even so, with regard to counseling, many in the region may not understand the intricacies of counseling. Without a counselor who is versed in working in the border region and with the Hispanic/Latino population, many who need counseling may not see the benefits and may choose to avoid it, even if it is accessible (Russell & Madrigal, 1998). While it is understood that there are various races and cultures residing in the border region, the Hispanic/Latino/a population is highlighted in the review of the literature to add specificity for the scope of the study.

Students in the Border Region

At a national level, the increase in stressors on students is evident in the increased severity of cases seen by university counseling centers (Cornish, Riva, Henderson, Kominars, & McIntosh, 2000). In a study of a variety of counseling centers by Benton, Robertson, Tseng, Newton, and Benton (2003), three quarters of the centers reported increased severity in the cases that they saw (i.e., cases that went beyond simple counseling and involved psychotherapy). This increase in severity included a dramatic increase in suicide intent or ideation.

These trends echoed results reported by O'Malley, Wheeler, Murphey, O'Connell, and Waldo (1990) 13 years earlier. Many of the stressors that affect the general population of the border region also affect students, whether they are citizens, documented residents, or undocumented residents. The issues identified earlier for the overall Hispanic border population, such as racial profiling, financial struggles, violence, alcohol and drug use and abuse, lack of resources, acculturative stress, and political climate, can also be concerns for students. However, students may also have other facets to consider that the general population may not have to think about, such as academic success, fitting into the institutional culture, and/or lack of ability to navigate the institution's resources.

According to a 2008 survey by the La Fe Policy Research and Education Center, the border region houses more than 50% of the total U.S. Hispanic population. This includes a significant percentage of the 2.1 million students in the United States who identified as Hispanic/Latino (either immigrants, descendants of immigrants, or Mexican nationals attending institutions of higher education) in 2011 (Fry & Lopez, 2012).

Although undocumented students face financial struggles, may have college preparation concerns, and lack of resources like those of other students; they also have other stressors that documented students do not experience (Gildersleeve, 2010). A few of the most stressful aspects are deportation, the will to attend college not necessarily being supported by their families due to fear of the unknown, and a lack of legal protection for undocumented students (Cervantes et al., 2010; Gildersleeve, 2010). Additional stressors face undocumented students when they become aware that they are ineligible for things such as health insurance and other forms of assistance that are available to their peers (Brabeck & Xu, 2010).

Another stressor to consider is the undocumented student's choice of institution. Many undocumented students choose to attend community colleges because of higher costs of 4-year institutions (Pérez, 2010). Students' aspirations can be dulled due to their perceptions of 2-year degrees being worth less, which leads to attainment stress (Pérez, 2010). Further, as many undocumented students may not have access to personal transportation, they may be in fear of raids by law enforcement agencies, are not treated favorably as a topic of public opinion, and constantly deal with disadvantages while trying to achieve; all of this can cause stress levels to climb even more (Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna-Duarte, & Meiners, 2010; Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010).

Mexican students who are enrolled in a U.S. institution may be concerned for their U.S.-side family members regarding possible deportation while they are away (Brabeck & Xu, 2010). Likewise, there is also the uncertainty of whom undocumented students can trust in an environment that is not easily navigated; there may be the feeling that being *hidden* is the best option (Pérez et al., 2010). There is also the possibility that students may fear additional trouble for seeking help from untrustworthy sources that may cause them to be deported.

Gaps in the Literature

While there seems to be substantial literature regarding crisis response, campus safety, and TATs, aspects of the topic seem to remain unexplored. Most notably, while there is literature that recommends how a TAT is to be composed (i.e., campus law enforcement representative, campus mental health professional, disability professional, legal representative, and chief student affairs officer or designee), there is also the thought that the TAT should use external medical opinions and local law enforcement information if available. As border institutions have communities on both sides of the border, it would seem that information from entities across the

border (if the student resides there) would be helpful. Yet, there is a lack of information regarding how institutions can access such information due to the international divide. Also, there is a lack of information as to how cross-border law enforcement could intervene if a student is in distress.

Institutions of higher education have the obligation not only to ensure campus safety but also to provide students with resources to be successful. The current literature seems sufficient in the area of institutional protection and response as outlined by federal mandates and policies but is lacking with regard to resources for students who may be considered to be a potential threat. Currently, there are options for on-campus counseling or referral to external entities (e.g., mental health centers). However, literature on what institutions are doing to have the student remain engaged on campus while being educated and actively working through potential threat concerns does not exist. As institutions offer education both inside and outside the formal classroom environment, this type of education should be considered.

Student communities are affected by happenings in their environment. The Blacksburg, Virginia, community and similar communities throughout the country still discuss the tragedy at Virginia Tech. Tragic happenings affect more than those who are directly involved; such happenings also affect others on the fringes of the events. There seems to be a lack of information on how students on the Mexican side of the border region cope with Mexican national concerns of drug trafficking, the increase in violence targeting women in Mexico (*feminicidias*), and the increase in homicides in recent years. These concerns are important as students encounter these situations at home and then attend classes on a campus in the United States. Likewise, while U.S. news covers tragic happenings in the country, since the obligation to cover such news on the Mexican side of the border is not the same, it can be assumed that more

is happening on the Mexican side of the border to affect border institution students than is being reported.

It has been posited in the literature that both internal and external communities have a role in campus safety; however, there is a lack of literature to offer guidance to institutions whose communities are divided by an international border. Just because the border is there does not mean that friendships, relationships, cultural understandings, and potential dangers do not continue beyond the structural border demarcation. Just because information may not be publicly disseminated based on jurisdiction does not necessarily mean that events do not affect both the community and the members of the community, as defined physically and otherwise.

While there is a growing body of literature to discuss the makeup and functioning of TATs, there does not seem to be any literature to suggest how such methods are sufficient for border institutions. Such a gap in the literature leaves a void in understanding how students on the Mexican side of the border are getting assistance to help them to be successful while at an institution of higher education. Similar to the U.S. side of the border, it can be assumed that these students need access to mental health professionals and law enforcement and victim advocacy centers, for example. Yet, regarding possible partnerships established to aid and, in some cases, share information about a student, there seems to be no literature suggesting that cross-border partnerships exist to aid TATs. There is no literature to suggest how persons who provide information about a troubled peer can be protected on the Mexican side of the border if they choose to disclose information to aid the institutional community. This would suggest that, while the student is encouraged to aid the U.S. institution, if identified by others who reside on the Mexican side of the border, the student could be left unprotected if in need for safety/security aid from the institution or resources on the U.S. side of the border.

While literature exists that discusses the challenges of undocumented students (e.g., stress of trying to remain undetected and lack of access to resources), there seems to be a lack of information about how undocumented students can be offered assistance for behavioral concerns without perceived penalty from the institution. The climate of tolerance of undocumented students is determined by the state (Martinez & Hardwick, 2009). Yet, as suggested earlier, the stressors on undocumented students are increased by a perceived lack of assistance for them. While methods may exist to give assistance to undocumented students, the literature to support such existence is not prevalent, to say the least.

While institutions have been given models for TATs and campus safety and security responses, at this point suggested methods can be considered best practices but they are not empirically or research based. Moreover, while methods exist to evaluate a student of concern, there exists no method to evaluate the effectiveness of TATs and campus responses as programs. Therefore, empirical data to validate effective threat assessment programs do not exist.

Chapter Summary

Colleges and universities are dynamic institutions with a variety of needs. Students, parents, and other stakeholders look to institutions of higher education to meet their educational needs. Safety of the institution and of those who come in contact with the institution is paramount. Many laws, policies, and statutes have been enacted to ensure that campuses are protected while individual rights and freedoms are protected as well. As the U.S.-Mexico border region has many intricacies, some of the challenges to safety can be similar to those seen in other parts of the country; however, they may be different at some levels. The types of stressors that students faces and the responses to those stressors in the border region may be similar to those seen in nonstudents in the region. Yet, because students have additional responsibilities, many of

the stressors that students face may not be encountered by those who are not pursuing education. This study examined the effectiveness of safety and response policies and procedures of institutions in the border region and suggests changes that may be pertinent to institutions on the border.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current study was designed to examine campus safety practices in the U.S.-Mexico border region, specifically, policies and procedures used by institutions in the U.S.-Mexico border region that mirror mainstream recommendations for addressing threatening behaviors exhibited by students and providing campus safety response. The study was a mixed-methods design to gather information from a large number of participants across various institution types through both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Specifically, a convergent parallel mixed-methods design was used (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In this design, both quantitative and qualitative portions of the study are implemented concurrently. Data are collected, results are analyzed, and both methods are used in interpretation of the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

A questionnaire was created to assist in gathering data. The questionnaire is described in detail in the instrumentation section of this chapter and is contained in Appendix A. The participants were members of their institution's TAT. The target institutions were within 100 kilometers north of the U.S.-Mexico border (per the La Paz Agreement of 1983) that defined the border region for this study. The Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA), or equivalent, was asked for names and email information of those who were permanent members of their TAT; these prospective participants were contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. The VPSA or equivalent was the point of contact for this request because literature suggests that the individual in this position would be familiar with the appropriate personnel.

Delworth (2009) stated that a student services professional should be a part of the team and the Dunkle et al. (2008) model specifically suggested that the Chief Student Affairs Officer or designee be a part of the team. The VPSA is most likely to know who the permanent TAT representatives are because many counseling centers and student conduct offices are under the aegis of student affairs. Therefore, if the VPSA was not on the actual team, he/she was expected to know who was and to provide such information.

While some TATs may contain peripheral and/or temporary members who can be included depending on the situation, permanent members of TATs are always present during discussions, regardless of the situation. Therefore, the researcher concluded that these members would have the most pertinent information regarding the team's operation. The VPSA was originally contacted via email to acquire the information. If a response did not come within 7 days, a follow-up attempt was generated via telephone.

Sample

The current study was designed to solicit the perceptions of higher education professionals during the fall 2013 academic session. The professionals surveyed were members of their institution's TAT. The institutions in the study were all considered to meet the definition per La Paz Agreement of 1983, which states that the border region is comprised of land 100 kilometers either side of the U.S.-Mexico border, including both land-based and maritime boundaries (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2012). For the purpose of this study, the institutions were within the northern 100 kilometers and were considered border institutions of higher education. Further, the institutions consisted of postsecondary institutions that had a TAT.

Once the institution was identified, the VPSA (or equivalent) was contacted and asked for names and email addresses of those involved in the institution's TAT. The sampling method was

thus purposive sampling, used to ensure that participants would have knowledge of the subject matter and provide informed responses. To increase the response rate, all participants were informed that a completed questionnaire would ensure entry into a drawing for an iPad® Mini™. The iPad Mini was purchased with the researcher's personal funds. The winner was selected randomly by using Research Randomizer® (www.randomizer.org). The prize was sent to the winner, using the mailing information provided and requiring a signature upon receipt.

Research Questions

The study addressed five major questions of interest:

1. To what extent do practices at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education mirror mainstream recommendations?
2. To what extent are practices implemented to ensure safe and secure campuses used by border institutions created with their geographical locations in mind?
3. To what extent is there communication between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agencies?
4. What is the major type of threat present on U.S.-Mexico border institution campuses?
5. To what extent do students with disabilities play a role in direct threat situations at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education?

While these five questions of interest were the focus, 23 research questions were formulated to understand the perceptions that informed the original questions.

1. What type of personnel make up the TATs at border institutions of higher education?
2. Do participants agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses?

3. Do participants agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses?

4. Do participants report that their campuses follow mainstream safety and security recommendations?

5. How do participants define *timely warning*?

6. Do participants report that their campuses use the following kinds of warning?

7. To what extent is there communication between the institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement?

8. Do participants agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered with regard to campus safety?

9. Do participants agree that student access to both the United States and Mexico should be considered with regard to campus safety?

10. Do participants agree that conflicting views of immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety?

11. Do participants agree that students' witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety?

12. Do participants agree that low SES of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the United States should be considered with regard to campus safety?

13. Do participants agree that the presence of undocumented students on campus should be considered with regard to campus safety?

14. What type of threat has been the most common at border institutions of higher education?

15. What type of aggressor has been the most common at border institutions of higher education?

16. To what extent have students with mental disabilities played a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education?

17. How frequently is information shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education regarding students of concern at border institutions of higher education?

18. How frequently is information shared with Mexican institutions of higher education regarding students of concern at border institutions of higher education?

19. How frequently do threat assessment teams at border institutions of higher education per month?

20. How were participants selected to their TAT?

21. Why did participants agree to serve on their TAT?

22. How do participants describe the function of their TAT?

23. How do participants describe their institution's approach to campus safety?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses are connected to the quantitative items in the study.

The first general hypothesis was that safety and security practices at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education largely follow mainstream recommendations. The exceptions to the first general hypothesis were that a legal counsel representative and a disability specialist *will not* be permanent members of the TAT at a border institution of higher education. Second, additional aspects should be considered when addressing safety and security concerns for institutions of higher education in the border region (e.g., student access to two countries, the current immigration climate in the U.S.-Mexico border region, existence and witnessing of

border violence, low SES in the border region, and the presence of undocumented students on college campuses). Third, communication between U.S. and Mexican agencies will be absent. Fourth, the main type of threat on U.S.-Mexico border institution campuses will be direct threat. Fifth, students with mental disabilities will play a role in direct threat situations that occur at institutions of higher education. Thirty-five specific research hypotheses were created to address the five general hypotheses: Research Hypotheses 1 through 7 are related to Research Question 1, Research Hypotheses 10 through 16 are related to Research Question 4, and Research Hypotheses 18 through 22 are related to Research Question 6:

1. The senior student affairs officer or designee will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.

2. A university mental health professional will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.

3. A campus law enforcement representative will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.

4. A university legal counsel member will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.

5. A disability specialist will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.

6. A faculty member will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.

7. A student conduct officer will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.

8. Participants agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses.

9. Participants agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses.

10. Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their campus annually assesses points of functional vulnerability.

11. Less than fifty percent of participants will report that their campus annually assesses points of structural vulnerability.

12. Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution has the ability to issue a timely warning.

13. Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution uses the NIMS.

14. Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution maintains an emergency response plan.

15. Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution trains on-campus first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus.

16. Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution maintains working relationships with local health and safety agencies.

17. Fifty or more percent of participants will define timely warning as within 31 to 45 minutes of an incident.

18. Fifty or more percent of participants will report using electronic mail to issue warnings.

19. Fifty or more percent of participants will report using text messages to issue warnings.

20. Fifty or more percent of participants will report using sirens to issue warnings.

21. Fifty or more percent of participants will report using social media to issue warnings.

22. Fifty or more percent of participants will report using voice mail messages to issue warnings.

23. There is no communication between border institution's law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement.

24. Participants will agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered with regard to campus safety.

25. Participants will agree that student access to both the United States and Mexico should be considered with regard to campus safety.

26. Participants will agree that conflicting views toward immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.

27. Participants will agree that students' witnessing of community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.

28. Participants will agree that low SES of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the United States should be considered with regard to campus safety.

29. Participants will agree that the presence of undocumented students in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.

30. Direct threat will be the most common threat at border institutions of higher education.

31. The cognitive aggressor will be the most common type of aggressor at border institutions of higher education.

32. Students with mental disabilities play a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education 8 to 10 times per calendar year.

33. Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education 1 to 3 times per calendar year.

34. Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with Mexican institutions of higher education 0 times per calendar year.

35. TATs at border institutions of higher education meet two times per month.

While most of the research hypotheses are self-explanatory, it is important to understand the reasoning behind some of them. For example, Research Hypothesis 4 suggests that a participant who is recommended in the literature will not be included in border region TAT. The researcher believed that this was so because institutions seek to have their legal representative absent the TAT in case the institution needs to be protected in court. If the legal representative is a part of the TAT, it is difficult for the legal professional to protect decisions of which he/she was a part in making.

Research Hypothesis 5 is also a “will not” statement but has a different rationale. The researcher believed that institutions may not have the personnel to substantiate such efforts. While the disability specialist may be available for certain cases, the researcher did not hypothesize that the disability specialist would be a permanent member of the TAT.

Similarly, a “will not” statement is presented in Research Hypothesis 11. While it is recommended that points of structural vulnerability be routinely assessed, the researcher believed that this does not happen. This belief stemmed from the researcher’s experience and documented responses in the literature in that many institutions are reactive in nature and deal with issues as they occur or are understood to potentially happen in the near future. Therefore, an assessment of structural vulnerability was not hypothesized to be a focus.

Research Hypothesis 24 suggests that different approaches to campus safety will be needed based on the relationships among law enforcement entities; however, this hypothesis does not suggest that there is no relationship among law enforcement entities.

The questions related to Research Hypotheses 25 through 29 asked participants whether a certain characteristic should be considered to determine whether an opportunity for student resource provision exists. For example, Research Hypothesis 26 focused on conflicting views of immigration. Literature suggests that views of immigration could affect the climate in an area and increase stress in those considered to be immigrants or undocumented persons (Dettlaff & Rycraft, 2006). If participants believe that conflicting views of immigration may need to be considered, it is possible that resources such as counseling and support groups may be offered to those who are in need of such resources but who may not know of their existence within the framework of the institution. As another example, Research Hypothesis 28 was created based on suggestions in the literature that lower SES in the border region may be a cause for increased stress among residents (Arbona et al., 2010; Dettlaff & Rycraft, 2006; Monarrez-Fragoso, 2010; Monarrez-Fragoso & Bejarano, 2010). If the participants believe that SES should be considered in their roles as permanent members of a threat assessment team, suggestions to offer financial assistance directly connected to student success for those who are in need may possibly aid in campus safety. Examples of such aid, should this be the case, may consist of assisting students with on-campus employment, emergency book loans if the institution has such a program, or financial counseling so the student can make better decisions while finding a sense of comfort. While this is one example, the researcher hoped to illustrate how seeking responses to these items may aid institutions in understanding possible campus safety considerations.

All hypotheses were generated as a result of what was suggested by the current literature, best practices reported in the literature, the experiences of the researcher, or a combination of those factors. The researcher has been a permanent member and chair of a TAT at a border institution of higher education for 5 years and has participated in national conversations

regarding TATs as a result of his role as president of a national association that concentrates on student conduct administration and conflict resolution.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire contained 34 multiple-choice questions, some with a Likert-type scale and some with open-ended response choices. Responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed using the constant-comparative method, following a “specific three-part coding approach” (Lichtman, 2012, p. 257): open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding requires the researcher to examine the raw data and to begin assigning categories and identifiers to the raw data. Each category or identifier functions initially as its own specific code. In axial coding, the open codes are then compared to each other to determine whether there is any overlap or similarities in the open codes. If the researcher determines that such similarities exist, the decision is made to consolidate the codes under a new heading if possible. In selective coding, the researcher chooses which codes are most important for the study and selects one to a few codes to display the pertinent concepts derived from the data (Lichtman, 2012).

The questionnaire (Appendix B) was an original instrument created by the researcher because there was no current study of this type. The questions were tailored to the research questions. The validity of the questionnaire instrument was determined by a validation panel of experts familiar with TATs and campus safety and security. Invited panel members were from the U.S.-Mexico border states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, to ensure familiarity with the border context. Panel members did not participate in the actual study. Recommendations for experts were solicited from ASCA, an association that is familiar with student conduct, conflict resolution, and TATs. Six persons were invited based on expertise and availability and five accepted the invitation. The instrument was made available to the panel as

an attachment to an email. Panel members were requested to offer critiques and adjustments via the Comments function in Microsoft® Word®. The panel members' feedback (Appendix B) was used to revise the instrument.

Following integration of feedback from the validation panel, the questionnaire was piloted to a small group of higher education professionals from institutions of higher education beyond the 100 kilometers north of the U.S.-Mexico border but within the states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. Thirteen of 23 invited persons responded to the questionnaire. The pilot group was asked to report the time required to complete the questionnaire so that participants could be informed at the beginning of their attempt. Pilot members indicated that some original wording might be viewed as unclear; however, this was the only critique in this portion of the questionnaire preparation.

As a result of feedback from pilot participants, the questionnaire was finalized for use in the general collection of data. Although the questionnaire was designed to gather perceptions of participants, the design did not allow determination of how many participants were from the same institution or the institution at which a participant was employed. The researcher did this purposefully so as not to have any participant feel that he/she was being evaluated or that the individual institution was being evaluated, which could have had a negative effect on responses.

Data Collection

Data were collected via the questionnaire (Appendix A) that contained multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was electronically administered through Qualtrics™, a service housed at the researcher's institution that allows creation and administration of questionnaires. Each participant was emailed a link to the questionnaire that provided information about the purpose of the study and information to assist in completion of

the questionnaire. The email was sent at 8:00 a.m. Pacific Standard Time so participants on the West coast of the continental United States could access the questionnaire simultaneously with participants in the earliest time zone.

Before the participant could view the questions in the questionnaire, the participant was directed to the page that contained the informed consent form. This required the participant to give informed consent via an electronic signature. Participants were told that they had 7 days to complete and submit the questionnaire. Within the 1-week period, participants were given two reminders to complete the questionnaire, the first reminder 3 three days after initial notification and the second 6 days after initial notification. The survey period ended at 10:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on the 7th day of the survey period. Pacific Standard Time was also chosen for the closing of the questionnaire to ensure an equal amount of response time for those on the West coast of the continental United States.

The questionnaire was administered by the researcher. To protect the confidentiality of the participant, only demographic information was requested in the last section of the instrument. Responses are to be maintained for the minimum of 3 years mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). The data were downloaded from Qualtrics and one copy was maintained in case of computer error or information loss. After analysis, the questionnaire responses, backup copy of the information, and the electronic platform were disabled and/or destroyed. Participants who entered the drawing for the iPad Mini were directed to a separate portion of the platform where their information could be offered for future contact if the iPad was won. Identifying information was not connected to questionnaire responses in order to protect the identity of the participant.

Statistical Treatment

Statistical methods included frequency distributions and single-group *t* tests. The rationale for using frequency distribution for some of the research questions was that there was no baseline and thus no way to make comparisons to other information regarding practices of U.S. border institutions regarding campus safety and/or threat response. Therefore, frequency distribution was used to determine whether personnel or practices were used across border institutions and types of threats. Single-group *t* tests were used data analysis to test the sample population's actual means was a hypothesized mean. The level of significance for the study was set at $\alpha < .05$, a common level for educational and social science research. Appendix C contains the Proposed Statistics Matrix.

Research Question 1 was designed to gather information about types of personnel that border institutions have as part of their TATs. Frequency distribution was used to report percentages of the participants who indicated having specific personnel as members of their TAT. If one of the options was selected by more than 50% of the participants, it was concluded that border institutions had the specified position as part of their TAT.

Research Questions 2 and 3 were designed to determine the extent to which a function existed on campus. Questionnaire items used a Likert-type response choice, and single-group *t* tests were used to compare the actual means to a hypothesized mean to determine the level to which the sought item existed on campus.

Research Question 4 was designed to determine the extent to which U.S.-Mexico border institutions followed the recommendations of IACLEA. Responses were analyzed by frequency distribution. Recommendations were itemized in the response choices; if more than 50% of the

participants indicated that a recommendation was implemented on their campus, it was concluded that border institutions used the IACLEA recommendation.

Research Question 5 was designed to determine how border institutions defined the term *timely warning*. Timing options were given, and frequency distribution was used for analysis. The option that received 50% of the responses determined how U.S.-Mexico border institutions defined timely warning.

Research Question 6 was designed to identify methods that border institutions used to execute a warning. The questionnaire offered a list of warning options and frequency distribution was used to analyze responses. Methods that received 50% of the responses were determined to be used by border institutions.

Research Question 7 was designed to determine whether there was communication between institution law enforcement agencies in the United States and Mexican law enforcement agencies. Options were given for the number of communication instances between law enforcement agencies. Options that received 50% of the responses were concluded to be indicative of border institution practices.

Research Questions 8 through 13 were designed to determine the extent to which stimuli required institutions to consider additional considerations. Since the Likert-type approach was used for these questionnaire items, a single-group *t* test was used to compare the actual mean with the hypothesized mean.

Research Questions 14 and 15 were designed to determine which item was most commonly seen in U.S.-Mexico border institutions. Simple frequency distribution was used to analyze the responses.

Research Question 16 was designed to determine the likelihood that students with disabilities had played a role in direct threat situations. A single-group *t* test was used for analysis of responses.

Research Questions 17 through 19 were designed to determine the frequency of certain practices used by border institutions. Simple frequency distribution was used to analyze responses. Appendix C contains a description of the statistical treatment of responses to questionnaire items.

Chapter Summary

An original study using survey research methods was conducted. The study was designed to identify perceptions of professionals at institutions of higher education in the U.S.-Mexico border region who have permanent membership on the TAT at their campus. The sample was purposefully selected. Quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study are described. Major research questions and specific research questions were identified. The instrument and data collection strategies were described. Statistical methods of analysis included frequency distribution, single-group *t* tests; rationale for the choice of methods was provided. The qualitative method of analysis, constant-comparative method, was discussed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The study examined whether campus safety practices used by institutions in the U.S.-Mexico border region mirrored mainstream recommendations for campus safety response and addressing threatening behaviors exhibited by students. Potential participants were solicited from U.S.-Mexico border region institutions, located within 100 kilometers of the U.S.-Mexico border line of demarcation on the northern side. The VPSA or equivalent at each of the 33 potentially contributing institutions was contacted via email and asked for names and email addresses of members of their TAT. This produced names and email addresses for 92 possible participants, who were sent the questionnaire and given 7 days to complete the questionnaire. Of the 92 possible participants, 45 returned completed surveys, for a response rate of 49%.

Data were transferred to a spreadsheet and statistical treatments on the quantitative portions of the data were completed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study also included a qualitative portion. Qualitative data were gathered via open-ended items in the questionnaire. Analysis of qualitative was conducted using the constant comparative method to generate new information steeped in or originating from the field of study (Lichtman, 2012). In the current study, the field of study was campus safety and security. Therefore, since permanent TAT members were the research sample, the information came from participants and analysis of the data.

First, open coding was used to identify relevant categories from the data (Lichtman, 2012). Then axial coding was used to find similarities among the emerged codes. Once similarities surfaced, codes were combined. Selective coding was then used to identify only those codes that were most important from the researcher's perspective.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

While 45 questionnaire instruments were returned to the researcher, the number of participants who submitted responses to individual demographic items varied. Most of the participants were male. The largest age group was 51 to 60 years. All four border states were represented in the sample, with the majority of the participants employed in Texas. All but one participant was employed at a public institution. The majority of the institutions were 4-year colleges or universities; one participant reported working at both “community college and university facilities” and one at a “graduate and undergraduate institution.” No participants reported working at a “Technical Institute.” Most participants reported to be employed at a school with a majority of commuter students. Both faculty and staff were represented in the sample, with senior level administrators comprising the majority. Two participants indicated that they were police chiefs, one identified as a “mid-level administrator,” and one reported to be in “behavioral health.” More than one third of the participants reported 20 or more years of experience in their primary role, followed by 5–9 years and 10–14 years. There was significant variety in the number of years in current roles with most participants reporting fewer than 10 years. The demographic information is summarized in Table 1.

Research Questions, Research Hypotheses, and Results

This section reviews the research questions, the hypotheses, and the results of statistical treatments used to test the hypotheses. Research Question 1 has seven research hypotheses, Research Questions 2 and 3 have one hypothesis each, Research Question 4 has seven hypotheses, and Research Questions 5 through 18 each have one hypothesis. In the case of inferential statistics, the hypothesis was tested by use of a single-group *t* test. Quantitative

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristic and category	<i>N</i>	<i>f</i>	%
Gender	38		
Female		16	42
Male		22	58
Age (years)	38		
18 to 30		1	3
31 to 40		8	21
41 to 50		8	21
51 to 60		14	37
60 +		7	18
State of employment	38		
Arizona		4	11
California		7	18
New Mexico		7	18
Texas		20	53
Type of institution sponsorship	36		
Private		1	3
Public		35	97
Type of institution by degree offered	38		
Community college		13	34
4-year college or university		23	61
Other		2	5
Type of institution by residential status of a majority of the students	37		
Commuter		31	84
Residential		6	16
Primary employment role of participant	38		
Tenured faculty		3	8
Staff		11	29
Senior-level administrator		20	53
Other		4	11
Participant experience in primary role	37		
Less than 5 years		4	11
5 to 9 years		9	24
10 to 14 years		7	19
15 to 19 years		3	8
20 years or more		14	38

Table 1 (continued)

Characteristic and category	<i>N</i>	<i>f</i>	%
Participant experience in current role	37		
Less than 5 years		15	41
5 to 9 years		10	27
10 to 14 years		5	14
15 to 19 years		2	5
20 years or more		5	14

response choices were assigned values (4 = *strongly agree*, 3 = *agree*, 2 = *disagree*, 1 = *strongly disagree*). Responses to Likert-type items were analyzed by use of a single-group *t* test; a hypothesis was accepted if the mean was 3 or above, except when it was hypothesized that the mean would be lower than 3. Significance level was set at $\alpha < .05$, based on the direction of the hypothesis.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked, *What type of personnel make up the TATS at border institutions of higher education?* The question generated seven hypotheses, each referring to a possible participant in the institution's TAT. If 50% or more of the participants indicated that a position was a part of the institution's TAT, the hypothesis was accepted. Table 2 reports the outcome for each hypothesis related to Research Question 1.

Research Hypothesis 1: *The senior student affairs officer or designee will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* Out of 41 responses, 36 participants (88%) indicated that the Senior Student Affairs Officer or designee was a permanent member of the TAT team at the institution. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Table 2

Composition of Threat Assessment Teams (N = 41)

Position	<i>f</i>	%
Senior Student Affairs Officer or designee	36	88
Campus Mental Health Professional	30	73
Campus Law Enforcement Representative	35	85
Campus Legal Counsel Representative	8	20
Disability Specialist	18	44
Faculty Member	14	34
Student Conduct Officer	27	66
Other	19	46

Research Hypothesis 2: *An institution's mental health professional will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* Out of 41 responses, 30 participants (73%) indicated that their institution's mental health professional was a permanent member of the TAT team at the institution. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 3: *A campus law enforcement representative will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* Out of 41 responses, 35 participants (85%) indicated that their institution's campus law enforcement was a permanent member of the TAT at the institution. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 4: *A university legal counsel member will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* Out of 41 responses, 8 participants (20%) indicated that

their institution's university legal counsel member was a permanent member of the TAT at the institution. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 5: *A disability specialist will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* Out of 41 responses, 18 participants (44%) indicated that a disability specialist was a permanent member of the TAT at the institution. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 6: *A faculty member will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* Out of 41 responses, 14 participants (34%) indicated that a faculty member was a permanent member of the TAT at the institution. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Hypothesis 7: *A student conduct officer will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* Out of 41 responses, 27 participants (66%) indicated that a student conduct officer was a permanent member of the TAT team at the institution. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Participants were given an opportunity to indicate other positions on their institution's TAT. A residential life staff member was mentioned four times (10%), a representative from the senior academic affairs office was mentioned twice (5%), a representative from the Human Resources Department was mentioned twice (5%), and there were single mentions of counseling staff (3%), a public affairs officer (3%), and the Chief of the Fire Department (3%).

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked, *Do participants agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses?* One research hypothesis addressed this question.

Research Hypothesis 8: *Participants will agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses.* The 40 responses to this questionnaire item generated

a mean score of 3.09 ($SD = 0.66$, $df = 39$, $SE = .10$, $t = .94$, $p = .18$). The mean response of 3.09 was higher than the hypothesized mean of 3.0 but the difference between the hypothesized mean and the sample mean was not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked, *Do participants agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses?* One research hypothesis addressed this question.

Research Hypothesis 9: *Participants will agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses.* The 41 responses to this questionnaire item generated a mean score of 3.12 ($SD = 0.67$, $df = 40$, $SE = .10$, $t = 1.15$, $p = .13$). The mean response of 3.12 was higher than the hypothesized mean of 3.0 but the difference between the hypothesized mean and the sample mean was not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4 asked, *Do participants report that their campus follows mainstream safety and security recommendations?* This question was tested by seven hypotheses, each referring to a mainstream safety and/or security recommendation used by the participant's institution of higher education. If it was hypothesized that 50% or more of the participants would report that a recommendation was followed by their institution and 50% or more of the responses were positive, the hypothesis was accepted. If it was hypothesized that 50% or more of the participants would report that a recommendation was not followed by their institution and 50% or more of the responses were negative, the hypothesis was accepted. Table 3 reports the outcome for each hypothesis related to Research Question 4.

Table 3

Reported Following of Safety and Security Recommendations (N = 40)

Recommendation	<i>f</i>	%
Annually assess points of functional vulnerability (policies/procedures)	21	53
Annually assess points of structural vulnerability (buildings/structures)	14	35
Have the ability to issue a timely warning as per the Jeanne Clery Act	34	85
Annually use the National Incident Management System (NIMS)	16	40
Maintain an emergency response plan	38	95
Train first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus	27	68
Maintain working relationships with local health and safety agencies	36	90
Other	3	08

Research Hypothesis 10: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their campus annually assesses points of functional vulnerability.* Out of 40 responses, 21 participants (53%) indicated that their institution annually assessed points of functional vulnerability specific to policies and procedures. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 11: *Less than fifty percent of participants will report that their campus annually assesses points of structural vulnerability.* Out of 40 responses, 14 participants (35%) indicated that their institution annually assessed points of structural vulnerability specific to buildings and structures. As it was hypothesized that fewer than 50% of the participants would indicate that their institution followed this recommendation, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 12: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution has the ability to issue a timely warning.* Out of 40 responses, 34 participants (85%)

indicated that their institution had the ability to issue a timely warning. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 13: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution uses the NIMS.* Out of 40 responses, 16 participants (40%) indicated that their institution uses the NIMS. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Hypothesis 14: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution maintains an emergency response plan.* Out of 40 responses, 38 participants (95%) indicated that their institution maintains an emergency response plan. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 15: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution trains on-campus first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus.* Out of 40 responses, 27 participants (68%) indicated that their institution trains first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 16: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution maintains working relationships with local health and safety agencies.* Out of 40 responses, 36 participants (90%) indicated that their institution maintains working relationships with local health and safety agencies. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Participants were given the opportunity to write in additional responses. No participants offer additional responses.

Research Question 5

Research Question 5 asked, *How do participants define timely warning?*

Research Hypothesis 17: *Fifty or more percent of participants will define timely warning as within 31-45 minutes of an incident.* Table 4 shows that majority of the participants

Table 4

Participants' Definition of Response Time to Constitute Timely Warning (N = 41)

Time frame	<i>f</i>	%
0 to 15 minutes	15	38
16 to 30 minutes	7	17
31 to 45 minutes	1	02
46 to 60 minutes	3	07
61 or more minutes	1	02
Do not know	14	34

considered a timely warning to be within 0 to 15 minutes. Since less than 50% of participants defined timely warning as 31-45 minutes, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 6

Research Question 6 asked, *Do participants report that their campus uses the following kinds of warning?* This question was addressed by five hypotheses, with each hypothesis referring to a possible method of issuing a warning to the campus community. If 50% or more of the participants indicated that a warning method was used by the institution, the hypothesis was accepted. Table 5 reports the outcome for each of hypothesis.

Research Hypothesis 18: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using electronic mail to issue warnings.* Out of 41 responses, 40 participants (98%) indicated that their institution used email messages to issue a warning to the campus community. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Table 5

Methods of Warning Reported by Participants as Used on the Campus (N = 41)

Method	<i>f</i>	%
email	40	98
Text messages	38	93
Sirens	21	51
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)	24	59
Voice mail	24	59
Other	10	24

Research Hypothesis 19: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using text messages to issue warnings.* Out of 41 responses, 38 participants (93%) indicated that their institution used text messages to issue a timely warning to the campus community. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 20: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using sirens to issue warnings.* Out of 41 responses, 21 participants (51%) indicated that their institution used sirens to issue a timely warning to the campus community. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 21: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using social media to issue warnings.* Out of 41 responses, 24 participants (59%) indicated that their institution used social media to issue a timely warning to the campus community. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis 22: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using voice mail messages to issue warnings.* Out of 41 responses, 24 participants (59%) indicated that their institution used voice mail messages to issue a timely warning to the campus community.

Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Participants were given an opportunity to write in additional responses. Two participants stated that the institution's website is used to inform the campus community about a threat, two reported that campus television screens could be used to communicate existence of a threat to the campus community, and there was one mention each regarding word of mouth, a loudspeaker to aid in voice communication, the institution's radio station, and handbills and fliers.

Research Question 7

Research Question 7 asked, *To what extent is there communication between the institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement?*

Research Hypothesis 23: *There is no communication between the border institution's law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement.* Out of 41 responses, 30 participants (73%) reported that they did not know the frequency of contact between the institution's law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement (Table 6). Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 8

Research Question 8 asked, *Do participants agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered with regard to campus safety?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 24: *Participants will agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered with regard to campus safety.* The corresponding questionnaire item generated a mean score of 3.06

Table 6

Reported Communication Between U.S. and Mexican Law Enforcement Agencies (N = 41)

Number of contacts per year	<i>f</i>	%
None	9	22
1 to 3 times	2	5
4 to 7 times	0	0
More than 10 times	0	0
Unknown	30	73

($SD = 0.79$, $df = 38$, $SE = .13$, $t = 0.40$, $p = .34$), which was higher than the mean of 3.0 but not significantly different. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 9

Research Question 9 asked, *Do participants agree that student access to both the United States and Mexico should be considered with regard to campus safety?* One hypothesis addressed this question.

Research Hypothesis 25: *Participants will agree that student access to both the United States and Mexico should be considered with regard to campus safety.* The corresponding questionnaire item generated a mean score of 3.2 ($SD = 0.72$, $df = 39$, $SE = .11$, $t = 1.75$, $p = .04$), which was higher than the hypothesized mean score of 3 but not significantly different. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 10

Research Question 10 asked, *Do participants agree that conflicting views of immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety?* One hypothesis addressed this question.

Research Hypothesis 26: *Participants will agree that conflicting views toward immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.* The corresponding questionnaire item generated a mean score of 2.9 ($SD = 0.77$, $df = 39$, $SE = .12$, $t = -.81$, $p = .21$), which was lower than the hypothesized mean of 3.0 but the difference was not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 11

Research Question 11 asked, *Do participants agree that students' witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 27: *Participants will agree that students' witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.* The corresponding questionnaire item generated a mean score of 3.18 ($SD = 0.75$, $df = 39$, $SE = .12$, $t = 1.48$, $p = .07$), which was higher than the hypothesized mean of 3.0 but the difference was not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 12

Research Question 12 asked, *Do participants agree that low SES of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the United States should be considered with regard to campus safety?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 28: *Participants will agree that low SES of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the United States should be considered with regard to campus safety.* The corresponding questionnaire item generated a mean score of 2.54 ($SD = 0.82$, $df = 38$, $SE = .13$, $t = -3.51$, $p = .00$), which was lower than the hypothesized mean of 3.0. The difference between the actual and hypothesized means was significant but in the opposite direction than hypothesized. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 13

Research Question 13 asked, *Do participants agree that the presence of undocumented students on campus should be considered with regard to campus safety?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 29: *Participants will agree that the presence of undocumented students in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.* The corresponding questionnaire item generated a mean score of 2.32 ($SD = 0.81$, $df = 37$, $SE = .13$, $t = -5.21$, $p = .00$), which was lower than the hypothesized mean of 3.0. The difference between the actual and hypothesized means was significant but in the opposite direction than hypothesized. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 14

Research Question 14 asked, *What type of threat has been the most common at border institutions of higher education?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 30: *Direct threat has been the most common threat at border institutions of higher education.* Table 7 indicates that the majority of the participants reported that criminal threat was the most common threat at their campus, compared to direct threat,

Table 7

Types of Threat Reported by Participants (N = 38)

Type of threat	<i>f</i>	%
Criminal threat (can be cause for arrest or conviction)	24	63
Direct threat (imminent significant risk that cannot be eliminated by policy or procedural changes)	6	16
Tarasoff-level threat (imminent danger discovered in institution's mental health setting)	5	13
True threat (impending danger based on another's statements)	3	08

Tarasoff-level threat, and true threat. Direct threat did not receive 50% percent of the responses.

Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 15

Research Question 15 asked, *What type of aggressor has been the most common at border institutions of higher education?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 31: *The cognitive aggressor has been the most common type of aggressor at border institutions of higher education.* Table 8 indicates that the majority of the participants reported that the primal aggressor was the most common aggressor on their campus.

Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 16

Research Question 16 asked, *To what extent have students with mental disabilities played a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education per calendar year?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Table 8

Types of Aggressor Reported by Participants (N = 38)

Type of aggressor	<i>f</i>	%
Cognitive (calm mannerisms, gives subtle cues of aggression, intent driven)	16	42
Primal (outwardly angry, increased levels of adrenaline, reaction driven)	22	58

Research Hypothesis 32: *Students with mental disabilities played a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education 8 to 10 times per calendar year.* Table 9 indicates that the majority of participants reported that the frequency of students with mental disabilities being involved with direct threat was 1 to 3 times per calendar year. Since the category of 8 to 10 times per year did not receive 50% of the responses, the hypothesis was rejected.

Table 9

Reported Frequencies of Direct Threats Involving Students With Mental Disabilities (N = 36)

Number of events per year	<i>f</i>	%
0 times	4	11
1 to 3 times	16	44
4 to 7 times	10	28
8 to 10 times	3	08
More than 10 times	3	08

Research Question 17

Research Question 17 asked, *How frequently is information shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education regarding students of concern at border institutions of higher education?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 33: *Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education 1 to 3 times per calendar year.* Table 10 indicates that the majority of participants reported that information is shared with other U.S. institutions 0 times per calendar year, followed by 1 to 3 times. The category of 1 to 3 times did not receive 50% of the responses. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

Table 10

Reported Frequencies of Sharing of Information With Other U.S. Institutions (N = 35)

Number of times per year	<i>f</i>	%
0 times	14	40
1 to 3 times	12	34
4 to 7 times	5	14
8 to 10 times	1	3
More than 10 times	3	9

Research Question 18

Research Question 18 asked, *How frequently is information shared with Mexican institutions of higher education regarding students of concern at border institutions of higher education?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 34: *Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with Mexican institutions of higher education 0 times per calendar year.* Table 11 indicates that 31 of 34 (91%) participants reported that information is shared with Mexican institutions 0 times per calendar year. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted.

Table 11

Reported Frequencies of Sharing of Information With Mexican Institutions (N = 34)

Number of times per year	<i>f</i>	%
0 times	31	91
1 to 3 times	1	3
4 to 7 times	2	6
8 to 10 times	0	0
More than 10 times	0	0

Research Question 19

Research Question 19 asked, *How frequently do TATs at border institutions of higher education meet per month?* One hypothesis addressed this research question.

Research Hypothesis 35: *TATs at border institutions of higher education meet two times per month.* Table 12 indicates the majority of participants reported that their institution's TAT

Table 12

Reported Frequencies of Monthly Meetings of Threat Assessment Teams (N = 37)

Number of monthly meetings per year	<i>f</i>	%
Less than 1 time	11	30
One time	5	14
Two times	10	27
Three times	0	0
Four times	9	24
More than four times	2	5

meets less than once per month. The category of two times per month did not receive 50% of the responses. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. A summary of research hypotheses and their outcomes can be found in Appendix D.

Qualitative Findings

While study participants provided a wealth of quantitative data, they also responded to open-ended questions to provide clarity regarding safety and security experiences at their institution. As quantitative responses could involve limitations based on the response options, the qualitative opportunities were offered so that participants' thoughts could be stated and in some cases explained. The response options for the quantitative portions of the questionnaire were generated from best practices regarding campus safety and security, a review of models geared toward campus safety and security, or the researcher's experience. The qualitative data recorded valuable experiences that could not be reported in the quantitative data phase.

Further Considerations in Campus Safety

Participants were asked to offer further considerations regarding campus safety based on their experiences. The responses were divided into five open codes: border stigma, law enforcement training, student background, law and policy implications, and campus connectivity.

Border stigma. Border stigma issues could be considered to be individual or community concerns. Specific to individual concerns was the thought that the perception of law enforcement agencies on either side of the U.S.-Mexico border can affect student behavior. Participants noted that, if students perceive that Mexican law enforcement is corrupt or that U.S. law enforcement does not give as much information as it can, they may behave in ways that allow them to cope with the perceived situation. The type of support and/or treatment provided by law enforcement agencies to students crossing U.S.-Mexico border bridges should be considered, as well as individual fear of Mexican law enforcement agencies not being reliable due to possible corruption.

A male participant from Texas, speaking about Mexican law enforcement corruption, said, “Students may be a target for recruitment to transport drug loads.” A participant who self-identified as a law enforcement officer stated, “Students from high-income families, especially those with business in Mexico, may be targets for kidnapping ransom.” Some participants suggested that, as a result of these types of experiences and stimuli, the state of students’ emotional well-being may be compromised due to similar experiences. A male participant from Texas stated that it may be beneficial to have “options for assisting students” who can be identified as having safety issues when crossing the border.

From a community standpoint, some participants offered that drug trafficking concerns should be considered for border communities as a whole, implying that violence and drug

trafficking shared a connection. As an overall consideration, a female participant employed at a community college mentioned that the “low priority the federal government gives to colleges and universities for providing funds for crime prevention” in the border region regarding colleges and universities is a concern. This point is important as consideration was given to the next point: law enforcement training.

Law enforcement training. While law enforcement entities may have different philosophies depending on the institution, participants spoke to the aspect of law enforcement training as they commented on what else should be considered with regard to campus safety. One of the areas of concern was communication from the law enforcement entity to the campus community as a whole about threats or dangers on campus and in the areas surrounding the campus. A male participant from a community college in Texas noted, as a good summary to other thoughts on this topic, that “campus police never update us on incidents that may be of danger to us.” A female participant from a 4-year institution noted that it is understandable that law enforcement must keep certain information confidential but pointed out that making the community aware of potential threats can be done without total disclosure of information. This was also important to a California male participant from a public institution, who commented that, while issues in the community “may or may not be affected by the U.S.-Mexican border,” he wished that there was more information about “illegal activity that may be occurring in the surrounding neighborhoods of the campus.” He provided further information suggesting that campus law enforcement communication is lacking. Other information in the responses to this question indicated an expectation that law enforcement consider training campus community members on “how to be proactive regarding potential violence” on the campus.

Student background. The two major portions of student background were existence of a student's mental illness that could affect others on the campus and the presence of students with criminal backgrounds. A participant who identified as a tenured faculty member was very direct in stating that "individuals with mental illness or drug and alcohol problems" are a concern. When students with mental illnesses were mentioned, they were mentioned from both aspects of being enrolled in the institution after being diagnosed with a mental illness or developing a mental illness after enrollment. Students who fit these categories were referred to from the standpoint that the proper monitoring or support through counseling or a "support group that can benefit them and their academic career" should be considered to aid student success. A female participant from Texas stated that, if proper monitoring or support is not taken seriously, students "can pose security threats to the university community and health and safety threats to themselves and those around them." Regarding students with criminal backgrounds, a community college staff member offered that the "percentage of students" with a history of criminal activity should be considered, suggesting that the more students on campus with criminal histories, the greater likelihood of an increase in questionable behavior.

Law and policy implications. The two aspects of law and policy implications related to the legal drinking age and weapons laws. Some communities have a drinking age of 18 years of age, other 21 years. A theme was presented that this 3-year gap should be considered with regard to campus safety. A male senior-level administrator said that there should be a better "understanding of concealed carry laws" so that campus community members can gain clarity regarding possible concerns.

Campus connectivity. A female staff member participant stated, "The relationship between on-campus offices and the amount of time it takes to confirm an issue or threat" was

important. This was supported by other participants who mentioned concerns about the layout of the campus, the amount of and type of access to campus facilities, and ways to issue notification of a concern in a timely fashion paramount to the safety of the community. Although many questions were asked to discover what was important regarding models and best practices, the researcher maintains that other considerations remain. New challenges surface every year and call for administrators, law enforcement, and others involved in safety to adapt to new scenarios. While axial coding was intended to be used to combine open codes into salient themes, there were not enough similarities to permit axial coding or selective coding.

Selection to the TAT

Participants were asked about their selection to their institution's TAT. Specifically, they were asked how they were selected to be a member of the team. Responses to this question were assigned to three open codes: positional team need, expertise and/or experience, and institutional appointment.

Positional team need. Many reported that their official position was the reason they were selected to the team. The direct way that it was stated in the response could be perceived as a key reason for the appointment, for example, "Academic Officer," "I'm the lead psychologist in the counseling center," "I was selected because I am the Director for the Disabilities office," "default role of campus," and "I am the Conduct Officer and an Officer of the College. I oversee the Student Health and Wellness Center as well as Residential Life." While it could be assumed that experience is also considered in these appointments, the position was apparently more salient in the appointment process.

Expertise and/or experience. Some responses to this question highlighted expertise and experience as the reason the participant was a part of the institution's TAT. In some cases, the

participant indicated that he/she might be the reason that the team exists on the campus. A male participant from California stated that he is the “Mental Health Counselor and I created the team.” A female senior-level administrator simply stated, “I created the team.” However, others simply stated that their crisis response and/or emergency management experience and the type of contact that they have with students were the primary reasons for appointment to the TAT.

Institutional appointment. Some participants stated that they were members of the team because they were appointed by an upper-level administrator. A female participant from New Mexico stated that she did not know which upper-level administrator had appointed her and offered that she had been appointed “by the President or Senior Cabinet Member.” After examining the data, the researcher combined the open codes “Positional Team Need” and “Expertise and/or Experience” to form the axial code “Team Need.” This was done because of the similarities between the two codes. While a person may have been selected to the TAT because of role or title, experience and expertise could have been gained and displayed through the current position.

Agreement to Serve on the TAT

The participants were asked for their reason for agreeing to serve on the TAT. Responses were assigned to the following open codes: personal perspective, institutional need, student need, organizational role, appointment to the role, and curiosity.

Personal perspective. Some participants stated that the more people are discussing a concern, the greater the chance of identifying the necessary response. Another person’s ability to “lend opinions/advice about developing concerns, [and to] offer advice regarding interventions” were the driving force behind one participant’s his involvement. A female participant from Texas reported that she had accepted the invitation to the team to “bring a different perspective with the

issue at hand.” A staff member with 5 to 9 years of experience stated that a certain standard must be upheld and that the participant “wanted to see that the process was carried out correctly.” Some reported that their personal perspective, steeped in their university position, was important. For example, a male participant from a commuter institution stated that a “medical perspective” was needed in discussions and another male stated that it was important for the team “to have the perspective of the academic side of the house.”

Institutional need. Some participants accepted the invitation to be on the TAT because they had concluded that the needs of the institution required their participation. One strong thought shared by many participants was that institutions have a need for information to be shared to all points of the campus. One law enforcement officer stated, “In order to successfully mitigate risks, early detection and cooperation between campus partners is paramount. We cannot be successful if we work within information silos.” Another participant saw her response to institutional need through her acceptance to being on the team as activating a “sense of duty and responsibility to keep students, staff, and faculty safe through prevention if possible.”

Student need. The need of the students was addressed in the responses regarding participants had agreed to be a part of the TAT. While safety concerns of others in the institution were definitely mentioned, others understood the needs of the student who may have been the source of the behavior. One male senior-level administrator described “the assessment team as a supportive and proactive team developed to assist students with behaviors that are interfering with their ability to be successful.” This participant supported the aforementioned mission and hoped that he could “be of some assistance in the process of helping students.”

Organizational role. Some participants had accepted placement on the team based on their role at the institution. Because a participant was the judicial officer at the time of joining the

team or in position that was perceived to have direct involvement with campus safety and/or security, the participant saw that as the reason to join. A male participant from California described himself as a student advocate through the process. “The ombudsperson can help to ensure that students are receiving a fair process at the university.” Therefore, while student need was mentioned as a part of the reason for acceptance, the role was seen as the determining factor for providing support.

Appointment to the role and curiosity. Some participants stated that their own desire to know what is going on around campus and/or appointment to the role was the deciding factor. A female participant at a residential institution noted the “need to be aware of ongoing or potential threats against students.” Another female staff member in Texas simply stated, “appropriate appointment.” Clearly, there was no uniform reason for joining the institution’s TAT.

Axial coding revealed that the open codes of Personal Perspective and Organizational Role could be combined to form the axial code Positional Perspective. The researcher combined the codes because the responses alluded to participants’ positions within the organization being connected to the perspective they could offer. Thus, the person with a “medical perspective” could speak to health aspects and the person with academic responsibilities could contribute from that perspective. The open codes Understanding of Institutional Need and Appointment to the Role were combined to create the axial code Institutional Need. As some participants may have seen the need to represent the institution due to need, others’ ability to make appointments reflected an awareness to meet institutional need. The resulting axial codes were Positional Perspective, Institutional Need, Student Need, and Threat Management Curiosity.

TAT Function

Participants were asked to describe the function of their institution's TAT. Responses were divided into six codes: threat reduction and prevention, identification of mental health concerns, inter-departmental information sharing, intervention plan creation, student resources, and inform the community about the team.

Threat reduction and prevention. The area spoken of most frequently in the responses was threat reduction and prevention. The category consisted of threats to the community, threats to an individual community member, and/or threats from individuals toward either the community or individual community members "from the lowest to the greatest level of risk and safety." It was clear that threats were to be examined first and then diffused. One Texas participant offered that this happens on campus through "early detection and intervention for individuals who may pose a threat or need coordination of resources to ensure their success with their role in the community." The participant also reported that hotlines are monitored to ensure that this occurs, when there may not be an in-person reporter. Among suggested ways to carry out reduction and prevention, interviews are conducted with the reporter of the concern, students of concern, and others who may have information on the student of concern such as "neighbors, family, friends, classmates (if a student), professors (if a student), coworkers (if an employee), supervisors (if an employee), etc." Participants suggested that, while the TAT may be part of the institution, membership by external entities could be included, including city, county, state, or federal agencies. Additional resources from on-campus and/or off-campus partners may be sought as needed.

Identification of mental health concerns. Some participants reported that the function of their TAT is to identify mental health concerns. Should a mental health concern be suspected,

the team is charged to offer direction of the response. As a male participant from Texas offered, “I provide general comment on reported behaviors that may reflect mental health concerns and make recommendations regarding possible mental health support/interventions.” In reviewing the responses from those who offered that identification of mental health concerns was their team’s primary role, it was not clear whether diagnosis was the standard or just the perception of abnormal behavior.

Interdepartmental information sharing. Participants provided many responses indicating that the team was designed to share information across departments as its core function. A participant stated, “We share info on students, staff, faculty that may be causing some difficulty.” A participant from New Mexico offered that “information sharing, strategic planning and response” was the team’s primary purpose. In all statements, participants reported that they bring information to the team that has been reported to their area, which could be a classroom, department, and/or organizational unit; they relay information on instances witnessed by an individual working in the area within the allotted time between the current meeting and the previous meeting of the team. In all cases, the information highlights a person or situation believed to feature abnormal behaviors, whether being considered to be a “student of concern,” “red-flag issues and students,” “potential threats and students,” or students and/or situations that have emerged as a point of concern for the team. The departmental representatives discuss the intricacies of the situation and have discourse as to what conduct codes and laws mandate their response to the situation. Participants noted that it is the responsibility of the team member to inform others in their area as well. A male participant from California noted that “communication is very consistent and clear with all members in between meetings as things may arise” to ensure that other stakeholders are informed.

Intervention plan creation. While some participants mentioned identifying “threat and response options,” making recommendations about what should be implemented to aid students, distributing information, and/or protecting the institution, other participants reported that their team actually creates the intervention plan. In other words, not only does the team gather and discuss information about the distressed student or situation of concern, evaluate the potential issue, and make recommendations towards a plan; the team actually implements the plan and monitors the plan’s success. One participant stated that the team “comes up with a plan if needed, monitors the outcome to see if the plan worked, [and] creates a new plan if the previous attempt did not work.” The team has the option to determine whether resources can be provided to curb behaviors or make the determination that the student should be removed from the institution. In some cases, the team can actually facilitate the removal.

Student resources and informing the community about the team. Some participants indicated that providing students with resources was their team’s primary function. While some participants stated that resources are to be offered to students of concern, once a student reaches the level of threat, resources should be provided to the student to “mitigate [behavior] before it reaches the threat level.” Also, along the lines of education, others suggested that their team’s primary role was to inform the community about the team’s existence and operations. Some participants reported that their team constantly reviews its procedures and updates the community about how the team functions. Some stated that training programs and activities such as “table top exercises to practice communication flow and procedures for different types of university threats” are conducted to keep the community informed.

Axial coding revealed that some codes were similar and could be combined for better delineation of codes. The open codes Threat Reduction and Prevention and Interdepartmental

Information Sharing were combined to form the code Community Threat Awareness. The researcher combined codes because the distribution of information across the campus is critical if the possibility of threat is to be managed or decreased. Further, the open codes Identification of Mental Concerns, Student Resources, and Inform the Community About Team were combined to form the axial code Community Education. Not only does the community need to know about the team and its functions; the community also needs to know about the resources available for students of concern and how to identify students who exhibit abnormal behaviors, as part of the education needed for a safer community. The resulting axial codes were Community Threat Awareness, Intervention Plan Creation, and Campus Community Education.

Approach to Campus Safety

Participants were asked to describe the approach to campus safety at their border institution of higher education. A majority of the responses to this question included the word *proactive*, indicating that the institution did not simply wait for incidents or threats to occur before a plan was designed to address the concern. Responses regarding the institution's approach were assigned to the following categories through open coding: educational approach, community approach, inadequate approach, and unknown approach.

Educational approach. The first category of approach is the educational approach. Those who stated that this approach is taken by their institution alluded to being focused on keeping students and employees as involved members of the community. A female participant from Texas stated that “only in cases where there seems to be a threat to the community that cannot be avoided would an approach to remove the threat be taken.” As threats do not present themselves in isolation, it can be assumed that this participant was speaking of individuals who were the actors to produce such threats.

Community approach. The community approach presented that campus safety was the responsibility of all campus community members, not just safety personnel. A major part of the community approach is establishing high reporting expectations. Numerous participants used the phrase “reporting culture” to describe the thought of anyone and everyone giving information about any activity that is out of the ordinary. As a female questionnaire participant from Texas wrote, the “entire campus is responsible for maintaining a safe environment and all are expected to report concerning behavior.” The same participant, in referring to the TAT, stated that the team is always trying to develop a “reporting culture.” Many participants mentioned their institution’s police department, emphasizing that campus safety is not merely the responsibility of law enforcement. While police are considered to have a major role in alleviating threats, the participants were clear that other offices and teams such as student conduct, external law enforcement at various levels, and counseling, as well as individual community members, often have a responsibility. In addition to the expectation that everyone report, participants stated that community members should be provided necessary tools and information to be successful in being team players to reduce threats. Community members can have ideas about what person or group of people are the best responders to the concern. One participant summed this by stating that one committee deals with nonimminent threats while their law enforcement agency handles situations of imminent danger, but the TAT remains focused on all situations that may not fit cleanly into either category.

Inadequate approach or unknown approach. Some participants maintained that their institution’s approach was either inadequate or nonexistent. A male participant from Texas offered that his campus did not have “anything in place for campus safety” and that they “are not prepared.” Others offered that their procedures were “mostly reactive,” offered only “prevention

by physical presence and a little through education and community outreach,” or had a “decent” approach but campus partners were not invited to conversations in helpful ways. Some participants could not describe their campus’s approach to safety.

Axial coding was used to combine similar categories. The open codes of Educational Approach and Community Approach were combined to create the axial code Campus Community Education. While an earlier open question concentrated on the function of the TAT was also given the axial code of Campus Community Education, the general question of campus safety approach generated responses that were similar enough to justify the same axial code. Open codes of Inadequate Approach and Unknown Approach were assigned the axial code Reactive Approach because the institutions referred to were determined to offer a response only to a situation that has presented itself if a method of response existed. The researcher purposefully included unknown approaches in this area based on the position that, if a permanent TAT member did not know what approach existed, the community response would be in reaction to the situation and not through use of a plan. Therefore, the axial codes were Campus Community Education and Reactive Approach.

The final open-ended question presented to the participants provided space to share additional comments about campus safety and security at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Of the responses provided, the following open codes emerged: border violence, inter-country access, and further marginalization of students.

Border violence. Of the codes developed for this area, the most frequently stated concern was border violence. Focus was on the reality and/or further possibility of “crossover violence” resulting from dangerous situations in Mexico. A senior-level administrator noted “increased violence across the border and increased ‘crossover’ violence in U.S. border towns.” A female

participant from Texas stated, “There is a valid concern that what affects one side of the river can also potentially affect the other.” Another perception offered by a female staff member was that dangerous actions can be normalized if they are steeped in the belief that “it’s the way of life ‘around here’” referring to the climate in Mexico being in such close proximity to the United States. A female senior-level administrator mentioned that her institution has federal law enforcement agencies to assist their campus police department “for areas adjacent to the college property along river frontage.” A female participant in law enforcement reported that her institution receives “intelligence and cooperation” about threats and other activities along the border through relationships with local branches of “federal law enforcement agencies” such as the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), as well as aid from “violent crime task forces, auto theft task forces, and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas drug task forces.

However, other participants offered a counternarrative. A female participant from New Mexico noted that, “while proximity to the US-Mexican border presents challenges to Mexico, an institution must focus on all international issues and not get complacent because only one ‘foreign’ nation is close by.” Another participant noted that no special response is needed because an institution’s location does not lend to an increase in violence in any way. It was also posited that any institution of higher education will have numerous students from other countries, even if the country of origin is one that is considered to be hostile to the United States. A female participant from Texas stated that, even with the increase in violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region, she has “not seen an increase of violence on the campus.” A male participant stated that border safety does not seem to be an issue, although he admitted that this could be due to the limited information communicated to the campus community regarding “any incidents that occur.”

Intercountry access. Participants suggested certain aspects that present in the border region that may not affect institutions of higher education in other parts of the country. A male participant from Texas stated that students may not be as easily accessed by the institution for follow-up meetings, resources, or services if they distance themselves from the university, even in the case where resources can be offered to the students. A male participant from Texas expressed that students may choose to get resources in Mexico when needed and that there may not be any way to access records of such help received in another country. The point was made that situations involving a student of concern could “leave the institution at a disadvantage by not having access to the student if the student chooses not to” make herself/himself accessible or chooses to avoid dealing with the institution altogether.

Further marginalization of students. The data suggested that students in the U.S.-Mexico border region could be marginalized by institutions, based on surface diversity such as race or ethnicity, depending on how institutions actively focus on safety in the campus community. According to a male participant from California, “It’s a tough balance between educating and making students potentially feel marginalized.” The more focus that is placed on students from the border, the more those students can feel categorized as troubled individuals. In other words, instead of making students feel safer, students can be made to face increased self-consciousness. This thought is supported in that campus safety does not happen in a vacuum and that other stimuli can affect the institution’s aims, even if unintended. Specifically, a male participant mentioned that, “because of the social justice and political context and conversations surrounding the topic,” striking a balance between helping the community and inadvertently causing harm to the community may be more challenging. One could safely make the assumption that the participants were speaking about Hispanic students in the border region.

Through the use of axial coding, open codes Border Violence and Further Marginalization of Students were combined to create the axial code Border Stigma to be combined with the axial code in the first qualitative item in this section. The researcher combined many of the initial categories because aspects such as crossover violence, cultural struggles, drug concerns, reliance on law enforcement agencies, and marginalization of Hispanic students pointed to a stigma of living in the border region as a Hispanic student. Axial codes for the previously mentioned section were Border Stigma and Intercountry Access. While the constant comparative method calls for a third level of coding (selective coding), the researcher determined that all of the axial codes were needed to display the salience of the study.

Limitations of the Study

While the study was designed to the best of the researcher's abilities, limitations are acknowledged. Although the study concentrated on four border states, the majority of the participants (53%) were from Texas. As a result, it is possible that some of the data may be more indicative of the state of Texas than the border region as a whole. Similarly, while there was representation from all four border states, the sample was small. Items that were deemed to be statistically insignificant might have been shown to be significant with a larger sample.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the data and reported results of statistical treatments of qualitative information. The statistics consisted of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used were frequency distributions to reflect the background and experiences of the participants and to determine the composition of the institutional TATs, whether the institution followed mainstream safety and security recommendations, the most common type of threat to the host institution, and the most common type of aggressor at the institution.

In total, 23 research questions were addressed and 35 research hypotheses were tested. The first seven research hypotheses focused on permanent TAT members at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Research Hypothesis 8 tested whether campus policies are proactively shared with the campus community at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Research Hypothesis 9 tested whether campus procedures are proactively shared with the campus community at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Research Hypotheses 10 through 16 focused on the extent to which U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education followed safety and security recommendations for higher education campuses. Research Hypothesis 17 focused on the perceived response time for a timely warning. Research Hypotheses 18 through 22 focused on the method of warning used to inform the campus community at a U.S.-Mexico border institution of higher education. Research Hypothesis 23 focused on the communication between U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education and Mexican law enforcement agencies. Research Hypothesis 24 focused on the extent to which the relationship between law enforcement agencies at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education and Mexican law enforcement agencies should be considered. Research Hypothesis 25 tested whether student access to both the United States and Mexico should be considered with regard to campus safety. Research Hypothesis 26 tested whether conflicting views of immigration should be considered with regard to campus safety. Research Hypothesis 27 tested whether students seeing community violence should be considered with regard to campus safety at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Research Hypothesis 28 tested whether lower SES of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region, compared to that of the rest of the United States, should be considered with regard to campus safety. Research Hypothesis 29 tested whether the presence of undocumented students on campus should be considered with regard to

campus safety. Research Hypothesis 30 tested for the most common type of threat at U.S.-Mexico border institutions. Research Hypothesis 31 tested for the most common type of aggressor at U.S.-Mexico border institutions. Research Hypothesis 32 tested to understand the frequency that students with mental disabilities play a role in direct threats at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Research hypothesis 33 tested the frequency with which border institutions shared information about students of concern with other U.S. institutions of higher education. Research Hypothesis 34 tested the frequency with which border institutions shared information about students of concern with Mexican institutions of higher education. Research Hypothesis 35 tested the frequency of TAT meetings.

The following details the quantitative findings of the study. Four of the seven permanent member positions to serve on TAT were confirmed, with the legal counsel representative, disability specialist, and faculty member being rejected. Research Hypotheses 8 and 9, regarding campus safety policies and procedures, were rejected. Regarding Research Hypotheses 10 to 16, which tested for safety and security recommendations followed by the institution, five of the seven were accepted, with the recommendations to assess points of structural vulnerability annually and annual use of the NIMS being rejected. Research Hypothesis 17 regarding the perceived response time for a timely warning was rejected. Research Hypotheses 18 through 22, regarding methods of warnings used to inform the campus community were accepted. Research Hypothesis 23, focused on communication between institutional law enforcement agencies and Mexican law enforcement agencies, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 24, regarding whether the relationship between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement jurisdictions should be considered, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 25, which focused on student access to both the United States and Mexico, was accepted. Research Hypothesis 26, focused on conflicting views of

immigration, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 27, focused on students seeing violence in the border region, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 28, focused on lower SES, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 29, focused on the presence of undocumented students, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 30, focused on the most common type of threat, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 31, focused on the most common type of aggressor, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 32, focused on students with mental disabilities playing a role in direct threat situations, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 33, focused on border institutions sharing information with other U.S. institutions of higher education, was rejected. Research Hypothesis 34, focused on border institutions sharing information with Mexican institutions of higher education, was accepted. Research Hypothesis 35, focused on the frequency of TAT meetings, was rejected.

The pertinent themes emerged from the qualitative data through use of the constant comparative method. Regarding further considerations that should be made concerning campus safety for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education, the data supported that considerations should be made with respect to border issues, law enforcement training, students' background prior to enrolling at the institution, and campus connectivity. Specific to border issues, aspects to consider included corruption in Mexican law enforcement and its impact on students, treatment of students at U.S.-Mexico border crossings, concerns about drug trafficking and violence related to drug trafficking, and the lack of funding for crime prevention on the border. Specific to law enforcement training, the data supported that communication from campus law enforcement entities is inadequate regarding potential threats and/or illegal activity in the community. The data also support that law enforcement should offer more training to community members regarding proactive ways to identify and prevent threat situations. With

regard to student background, many participants stated that a student's history of mental illness and criminal background should be handled in a way that the student could be monitored to protect the institution from possible dangers and/or threats. Regarding law and policy implications, participants agreed that proper understanding of concealed carry law and policy and legislation pertinent to the legal drinking age were related to campus safety. With regard to campus connectivity, the relationships among campus offices, the time needed to confirm a danger or threat, the layout of the campus environment, and the ability to issue a timely warning were concerns.

The data indicated that participants had been selected to the TAT based on their position, their expertise/experience, or simply by appointment. Participants considered their personal perspective to be valuable to the TAT and reported that they adequately considered the needs of the institution and spoke to student needs. They had agreed to serve on the TAT due to their role in the organization or their desire to be knowledgeable about campus community incidents, and because they had been appointed to the role. The data indicated that the functions of the TAT consisted of threat assessment and prevention, identification of mental health concerns, information sharing across departments, creation of intervention plans, resources made available to students, and education of the campus community about the team's purpose and actions. Participants' stated approaches to campus safety were categorized as educational in nature, a community approach, inadequate, or unknown to the larger community. The participants considered border violence, intercountry access to the United States and Mexico by students, and the potential marginalization of students on campus to be chief concerns for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Summary of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to examine campus safety and security practices at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Five general research questions were addressed:

1. To what extent do practices at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education mirror mainstream recommendations?
2. To what extent are practices implemented to ensure safe and secure campuses used by border institutions created with their geographical locations in mind?
3. To what extent is there communication between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agencies?
4. What is the major type of threat present on U.S.-Mexico border institution campuses?
5. To what extent do students with disabilities play a role in direct threat situations at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education?

To address the above questions the researcher surveyed permanent members of TATs at the study campuses. The U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education were those within the northern 100 kilometers of the U.S.-Mexico border (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2012). Permanent members of the institutions' TAT were selected because literature suggested that these professionals would have access to information regarding safety and security practices across the campus (Delworth; 2009; Dunkle et al., 2008).

The research was conducted in the four states that border Mexico: Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. The participants were identified through their employing institutions'

VPSA (or equivalent) and names and email addresses were provided to the researcher. A link to the questionnaire was sent to all potential participants, including access to the consent form, instructions, and the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered electronically to ensure a timely response from participants. The questionnaire contained both quantitative and qualitative items. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency distributions and inferential statistics of single-group *t* tests. Qualitative data were analyzed using the constant-comparative method.

Conclusions

Discussion of Quantitative Findings

Research Hypothesis 1: *The senior student affairs officer or designee will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* This hypothesis was accepted, as the U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education were in line with what current literature (Dunkle et al., 2008) suggested for institutions in general. Based on the researcher's experience, it makes sense to have the senior student affairs officer (or the designee) on the team for multiple reasons. As this role would have upper decision-making authority, the ability to act swiftly as a result of the team's newly found information is plausible. As many student services components such as counseling centers, student conduct offices, and disability offices are under direction of the student services area, the senior student affairs officer has the ability to demand speedy responses in those areas as needed, while also fulfilling the role of point of contact. The senior student affairs officer would most likely have access to members of the cabinet at the institution's presidential level to discuss instances of the highest threat levels to inform campus safety and security responses while being in a position to advocate for students as necessary.

Research Hypothesis 2: *An institution's mental health professional will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* This hypothesis was accepted, as the data supported that U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education were in accordance with what current literature (Dunkle et al., 2008) suggested for institutions in general. In the researcher's experience, the mental health professional should be a member of the threat assessment team for various reasons. While instances will occur that require removal of a student from the campus community, the person who serves the campus as the mental health expert can offer expertise to make a better determination on which students must be removed in cases that have mental health concerns as an aspect of the decision-making process. Team members are charged with offering resources to students and protecting the institution, but not all team members have the training to discern behaviors that can cause harm to others in the campus community. The mental health professional can conduct an assessment of the student if allowed to meet with her/him. If the mental health professional chooses not to conduct the assessment, a referral can be made to resources in the external community. The mental health professional may know of resources that are available for students who may not be able to pay; the professional may have relationships and/or agreements with external entities to ensure that the student of concern receives the proper care to remain on the campus or return to campus after the necessary treatment has been received. If the student of concern already has a relationship with the mental health professional's office, the student may sign a release to allow information to be shared with the TAT to answer questions about the student's mental health status.

Research Hypothesis 3: *A campus law enforcement representative will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* This hypothesis was accepted, leading to the conclusion that U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education mirror what current literature (Dunkle et

al., 2008) suggests for institutions in general. This finding is also supported by the experience of the researcher. The law enforcement representative can determine whether the behaviors in question violate criminal codes. This person is trained to know when it may be best to confront the student of concern, should criminal elements exist, in a way that the campus would be least disturbed so that other campus community members can go on with their daily activities. The law enforcement professional may be able to access the criminal history of the student to understand documented past incidents and student temperament. Even more, if the law enforcement representative concludes that the threat is likely to cause a disturbance beyond the scope that campus safety and security experts can handle, this person would be able to request additional law enforcement resources, even those external to the institution's campus, to ensure proper response to meet the level of threat.

Research Hypothesis 4: *A university legal counsel member will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* This hypothesis was accepted, indicating that U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education were not congruent with the recommendations of current literature for institutions overall, as most participants in the study stated that a legal counsel representative did not have permanent membership on the TAT. Current literature suggests that this position have a permanent place on the TAT. Yet, it has been the researcher's experience that the campus legal counsel member is generally not a permanent member of the TAT. This may be so because, if the situation arises that the institution must defend a decision made by the TAT and the legal counsel member is a part of the team, it would be more difficult to defend the decision if the legal office had been involved. However, the legal counsel representative may be called on by the TAT to revisit a decision, should the situation arise. It is also possible that the number of situations that may require TAT attention would remove the legal counsel member

from many daily concerns that are in the purview of the person's duties. The researcher has seen the number of TAT cases rise consistently over the past 4 years; campuses without large legal offices could put legal counsel employees in a position of strain if they were required to be permanent members of the TAT. Many of the institutions in the U.S.-Mexico border region are community colleges, with no residential options on the campus, as indicated by the data that 84% of the participants indicated that their campus is a commuter campus. Because of this status, student access to the physical campus will be decreased compared to residential campuses, potentially lessening the demand for legal counsel per campus.

Research Hypothesis 5: *A disability specialist will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* This hypothesis was accepted, indicating that these U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education were not congruent with recommendations in the current literature for institutions overall, as the data showed that the majority of participants reported that the disability specialist was not a part of the permanent TAT. As in the case of the previous hypothesis, current literature suggests that this position have a permanent place on the TAT. However, it has been the researcher's experience that a disability specialist is not a permanent member of the TAT, probably because all TAT cases do not involve a student of concern who has a detectable disability. Only when cases arise in which a student's disability is detected, either because a disability seen by an observer or when the disability is discovered through communication in a TAT meeting, would the disability specialist be included. Also, having the disability specialist as a part of the permanent team may lead to situations in which the professional participates in meetings but has nothing to contribute, which could be seen as a waste of institutional resources.

Research Hypothesis 6: *A faculty member will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* This hypothesis was rejected. Current literature does not suggest that a faculty member should be a permanent member of the TAT; however, based on the researcher's experience, a faculty member has been a part of the permanent TAT and has been maintained to give a perspective from the academic viewpoint of the institution. The faculty member can inform department chairs, college deans, or the Chief Academic Officer as appropriate.

Research Hypothesis 7: *A student conduct officer will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.* This hypothesis was accepted. Current literature does not suggest that this position have a permanent place on the TAT. However, it has been the researcher's experience that the student conduct officer should be a permanent member of the TAT. In cases that involve an issued threat or that are considered a policy violation, the institution's disciplinary system may need to be activated. It is the responsibility of the student conduct officer to know the disciplinary process completely so that a rush to activate the process does not occur when circumstances do not meet the threshold for a disciplinary case. Also, for cases that go beyond possible danger to include institutional property or a community member being harmed, a student may need to be removed from the campus, pending results of the disciplinary process. If this occurs, the student of concern is still entitled to due process, which allows the student to be heard, to offer evidence, and to question accusers. The student conduct officer is in the position to expedite the process so that the student does not miss many class sessions if allowed to remain on the campus. Speed is important in these situations because temporary removal from the campus could be seen as punishment without due process if the student is not allowed to go to classes for a significant period of time, causing missed assignments or information that could result in lower grades.

Research Hypotheses 8 and 9. Research Hypothesis 8 stated, *Participants will agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses* and Research Hypothesis 9 stated, *Participants will agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses*. Both of these hypotheses were rejected. This indicates that these border institutions should do a better job of sharing campus safety policies and procedures throughout the campus. Failure to do so could place the institution at risk in a situation that requires knowledge of the safety policies and procedures. Sharing campus safety policies and procedures will help campus community members' in making decisions in a situation of threat. Sharing policies and procedures also reduces guessing by individual community members if policies and procedures are easy to understand and contain no ambiguity. Campus populations that share information are swifter in initiating appropriate responses to potentially dangerous situations.

Research Hypothesis 10: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their campus annually assesses points of functional vulnerability*. This hypothesis was accepted. The practices follow the recommendations in the literature pertaining to institutions of higher education in general. In the researcher's experience, functional vulnerability is monitored very closely. Should an institution be unfortunate to experience a threat situation that results in harm, one of the first items to be examined is the institution's process for dealing with threatening situations. Should the institution prove deficient in preparation, the institution is then open to public scrutiny, damage to reputation, monetary damages, or even loss of life that could be perceived to have been avoidable. As a result of the situation at Virginia Tech (Davies, 2008; Lipka, 2012), many institutions have turned their attention to strengthening their functional plans to decrease vulnerability to the greatest extent possible (Dunkle et al., 2008).

Research Hypothesis 11: *Less than fifty percent of participants will report that their campus annually assesses points of structural vulnerability.* This hypothesis was accepted; however, the literature, for institutions in general, suggests that assessment of vulnerabilities for buildings and structures should be conducted annually (Thrower et al., 2008). Yet, based on the researcher's experience, this type of assessment does not occur, which participants' responses confirmed. While functional vulnerabilities are reviewed often because of changes in law or policies, the same law and policy changes are not inherent regarding physical campus structures. With that, the researcher considers the assessment of structural vulnerabilities to be reactive at best. In other words, attention is brought to a structural concern when someone notices a precarious situation or when a failure of some sort has surfaced. The researcher has seen many cases in which facilities departments and/or other entities that are responsible for environmental health and safety concerns respond to items that have been brought to their attention rather than conducting constant review of structures.

Research Hypothesis 12: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution has the ability to issue a timely warning.* This hypothesis was accepted. The data indicated that the recommendation to institutions in general was followed by U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. This is important, as timely warnings go beyond being recommendations and are a requirement of the Clery Act, which is a federal mandate.

Research Hypothesis 13: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution uses the NIMS.* This hypothesis was rejected. While the recommendation for institutions in general is for this system to be accessed, U.S.-Mexico border institutions, according to the study's participants, do not follow this recommendation. As NIMS is designed to aid entities to minimize harm and loss of property, the researcher hypothesized that all

institutions in the U.S.-Mexico border region would access this system. Not only is the NIMS system a nationwide resource; it has the ability to get various governmental agencies, agencies in the private sector, and nongovernmental entities to work together for aid when needed.

Collaboration among the various entities is possible because NIMS is a nationwide system, maintains conceptual responses for all hazard types, and can be used for incidents of all scales and types. Further, NIMS can aid institutions by training for preparedness, managing information and communication, strengthening the institution's ability to manage resources, offering assistance with situation command, and providing information for ongoing maintenance of safety systems (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2011).

Research Hypothesis 14: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution maintains an emergency response plan.* This hypothesis was accepted. The recommendation to institutions in general is also followed by U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. With the increase in incidents in recent years, the literature suggested that the maintenance of an emergency response plan is necessary at all institutions (Thrower et al., 2008). There are advantages to maintaining an emergency response plan, such as having a document that guides an institutional response in a dangerous situation. Also, should a situation occur that has not been encountered before, there may be information in the plan that can be adapted to the new situation. The existent plan can be updated any time a new situation occurs instead of the institution being completely reactive in dangerous situations. A failure to maintain an emergency response plan places the institution and its community members at an increased level of harm should a danger become present.

Research Hypothesis 15: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution trains on-campus, first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus.* This

hypothesis was accepted. The literature suggests that training of first responders is necessary (Thrower et al., 2008). The researcher's experience has been that, when a potentially dangerous situation arises, the whole community is responsible for acting in some way. If first responders are not trained for potential dangers, the institution adds elements of risk by leaving community members to rely on their thoughts to guide reactions and/or responses. Therefore, a poorly coordinated response could lead to greater risk and injury to community members.

Research Hypothesis 16: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report that their institution maintains working relationships with local health and safety agencies.* This hypothesis was accepted. The data indicate that the recommendation to institutions in general is followed by U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. It has been the researcher's experience that, depending on the magnitude of the threatening event, the institution alone may not have the necessary resources to aid the campus community. Therefore, other entities, such as victim's advocacy groups, hospitals, external police agencies and fire departments, may need to respond in collaboration with on-campus entities to ensure effective community safety response. These working relationships can help external agencies to be familiar with the campus layout to aid in evacuation procedures if needed and to identify key offices that can offer assistance based on their designated roles.

Research Hypothesis 17: *Participants will define timely warning as within 31-45 minutes of an incident.* This hypothesis was rejected. The results showed no definite time frame that was agreed on by the participants. In addition, there seemed to be no time frame in the literature to suggest a recommendation for institutions, regardless of location, for executing a timely warning.

Research Hypothesis 18: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using electronic mail to issue warnings.* This hypothesis was accepted. The data indicate that it is a

common practice for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education to use email messages to issue warnings to the campus community. It is the experience of the researcher that electronic media are used by a great number of community members. Also, it is the researcher's belief that email is one of the more regularly used mediums for faculty, staff, and students who are connected to the institution. The researcher believes that community members have a high likelihood of discovering information through email because of frequent use. Nonetheless, the researcher recognizes negative aspects of the use of email to offer warnings. First, many devices through which email can be accessed may not have an alert setting. Therefore, the message may be delivered to an email account but not read because the recipient does not know the message has arrived. Second, the researcher has encountered numerous instances in which students do not access their institutional email account and may primarily use an external email account such as Yahoo and Gmail for their daily email needs. It may be dangerous for an institution to assume that students will access their school email accounts to receive information or important safety updates. While some may suggest that the institution also use alternative email addresses for students, the researcher disagrees; instead, campus community members should be encouraged to use their school email addresses to ensure that any information that is distributed is protected to the best of the institution's ability.

Research Hypothesis 19: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using text messages to issue warnings.* This hypothesis was accepted. The data indicate that it is a common practice for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education to use text messages to issue warnings to the campus community. As more individuals are using smartphones (McDonald, 2013), text message accessibility is increasing as well. Therefore, texting can reach a large number of people regardless of their location.

Research Hypothesis 20: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using sirens to issue warnings.* This hypothesis was accepted. The data indicate that it is a common practice for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education to use sirens to issue warnings to the campus community. The researcher is not surprised by this outcome. Sirens have been used by institutions for decades and are one of the oldest methods used to alert campus communities. However, while sirens alert the campus that something is wrong, they do not offer information about the nature of the problem or threat. As no directions are given by a siren, the siren may actually cause more harm than good. For example, if a siren sounds and the first reaction of the campus population is to vacate buildings in the hope of fleeing to safety, should the danger be outside of the building, those fleeing the building may be headed toward the dangerous situation. The possibility also exists that, since no information is given by a siren, the siren may be ignored by many and the lack of action by community members could be dangerous.

Research Hypothesis 21: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) to issue warnings.* This hypothesis was accepted. The data indicate that it is a common practice for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education to use social media to issue warnings to the campus community. Recently, social media has been used for anything from entertainment to starting social revolutions, such as the 2011 Egyptian revolution which caused then-President Hosni Mubarak to remove himself from office. It has been the researcher's personal experience that many use social media to give updates about their lives, as well to get news at various levels (e.g., local, state, national, international). It has also been the researcher's experience that, when anything of importance happens on an institution's campus, once it is placed on social media, it is transmitted at amazing speeds to people within and outside of the institution.

Research Hypothesis 22: *Fifty or more percent of participants will report using voice mail messages to issue warnings.* This hypothesis was accepted. The data indicate that it is a common practice for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education to use voice mail messages to issue warnings to the campus community. Although voicemail is one of the older electronic methods to give information, the more avenues that are used to distribute important information, the more likely the information is to reach the desired populations. This would be the same for warnings.

Research Hypothesis 23: *There is no communication between border institution's law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement.* This hypothesis was rejected. However, the data show that the majority of the participants had no knowledge of any communication occurring between their institutions and Mexican law enforcement entities. Therefore, the data were not sufficient to suggest a true finding either way.

Research Hypothesis 24: *Participants will agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered with regard to campus safety.* Although the mean threshold was met regarding this hypothesis, the difference was not significant and the hypothesis was rejected. While some believe that the relationship between their campus law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement is something to consider, there is not a significant concern for TAT members regarding the relationship. Further, this is not an apparent issue for U.S.-Mexico border institutions. The researcher believes that, while participants have indicated that the U.S.-Mexico border region provides some aspects to consider, the relationship between law enforcement agencies is not one of them. The researcher further believes that a perception may exist that what happens in one country is the responsibility of the country in which the incident occurs. The possibility also exists that, based

on the participants' qualitative responses, they did not agree that law enforcement entities share information with the general community or that any information shared between the institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement entities may not be of benefit to the community.

Research Hypothesis 25: *Participants will agree that student access to both the United States and Mexico should be considered with regard to campus safety.* This hypothesis was accepted. The results suggest that students' ability to access both the United States and Mexico may need to be considered with regard to campus safety for U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. There are numerous possible explanations for this finding. First, in the case that a campus community either makes a mistake or is considered to be a danger or threat, the person may be able to access the other country to avoid taking responsibility, depending on the nature and level of the situation. If the campus community member wants to avoid any type of intervention from the institution, he/she can leave the country and not have to deal with constant contact by the institution unless contact is desired. Records of student troubles in Mexico may not be accessible by U.S. institutions if the student does not want them to be accessible. Therefore, the U.S. institution may have no way to access a student's background even if there is cause for concern.

Research Hypothesis 26: *Participants will agree that conflicting views toward immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.* This hypothesis was rejected. The results suggest that participants believed that conflicting views of immigration do not warrant additional consideration with regard to U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education campus safety. The findings may suggest that the participants actually disagreed that conflicting views of immigration should be considered at all.

While this finding is not significant, it is possible that, should the distribution of participants by state to change, the significance level of the findings could have changed. For example, with the passing of the Texas DREAM Act, Texas allows residents who have lived in Texas for 3 years or more to receive in-state tuition rates regardless of whether or not they are citizens of the United States (Cadik, 2013). However, Arizona passed a law in 2012 that stated that the immigration status could be checked for anyone believed to have received illegal access to the United States (“Arizona’s Bad Immigration Law,” 2012). This leads to the presumption that Texas is more welcoming to immigrants than Arizona. Also, the majority of the participants (53%) reported being employed by an institution in Texas. It is possible that, if the majority of the participants would have reported being employed by an institution in Arizona, the results could have been different in that more participants might have suggested that conflicting views of immigration may significantly influence campus safety.

Research Hypothesis 27: *Participants will agree that students’ witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.* This hypothesis was rejected. While some participants agreed that students’ witnessing community violence is something to consider, there is not a significant concern by TAT members regarding this part of the students’ experiences. Further, this is not an apparent issue for U.S.-Mexico border institutions. There may be several reasons for this outcome. First, while border violence has been a concern in recent years, the concentration of violence has been on the Mexican side of the border. Therefore, participants who have a connection to Mexico, such as Mexican residency or family members who still live there, may believe that the violence aspect has an effect on students, while participants who have no connection to Mexico may not understand the concern. Participants may currently be less sensitive to border violence, which

would cause concern in some participants but not to a significant level. The third possibility is that study participants may not be affected by border violence in their personal lives and thus see no reason for students to be affected.

Research Hypothesis 28: *Participants will agree that low socioeconomic status of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the US should be considered with regard to campus safety.* This hypothesis was rejected. The results suggest that participants agreed that low SES in the U.S.-Mexico border region should not be taken into consideration with regard to U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Even more, the results suggest that participants strongly disagreed that low SES is connected to negative poor behaviors. Further, the results suggest that participants did not equate lower SES to danger. The researcher maintains that SES is relative to the region of the residents. Since SES is lower in the border region as a whole, it is possible that disparities between the wealthy and the impoverished are not so great that behaviors are negatively affected. While the literature suggests that low SES may be related to increased stress and limited resources (Arbona et al., 2010; Dettlaff & Rycraft, 2006; Monarrez-Fragoso, 2010; Monarrez-Fragoso & Bejarano, 2010), the results of the study suggest that participants did not find a correlation between low SES and inappropriate actions. It is possible that the participants, who are residents of the border region, may not see their behaviors as affected by SES and do not understand how students would be affected, either.

Research Hypothesis 29: *Participants will agree that the presence of undocumented students in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered with regard to campus safety.* This hypothesis was rejected. The results suggest that participants agreed that the presence of undocumented students in the U.S.-Mexico border region should not be taken into consideration with regard to campus safety. The participants apparently strongly disagreed that the

undocumented status of students should be considered with regard to campus safety, for a few reasons. Participants may have felt that undocumented students are of no concern because they are afraid getting into trouble with undocumented students that could lead to deportation and/or separation of the family structure. Deportation would threaten the student's educational opportunity. To go even further, short of causing any trouble, undocumented students may try not to bring any attention to themselves, depending on the state of residence. As stated earlier in this chapter, Arizona passed a law allowing for checking immigration status of anyone believed to be undocumented. A state immigration climate such as Arizona's is grounds for an undocumented person to not bring unwanted attention to herself/himself. With regard to state climates like that of Texas, which passed the Texas DREAM Act, there is no literature to suggest that undocumented students are at any more risk for poor behavior than those who are documented.

Research Hypothesis 30: *Direct threat is the most common threat at border institutions of higher education.* This hypothesis was rejected, as the majority of the participants identified the most common threat as criminal threat. This suggests that most threats on their campuses are those that can be causes for arrest or conviction rather than those that can be considered to have imminent significant risks only, without reaching the criminal level. This suggests that, unless a criminal situation surfaces, the threat may be undetected and hence not responded to. Further, it seems plausible that participants are connected to campuses that are not versed in identifying students of concern who are exhibiting subtle signs of distress or that faculty, staff, or students do not report behaviors until they have reached a critical point. The researcher considers these data to be problematic. Since the participants are permanent members of their institution's TAT, it is reasonable to assume that information would be shared prior to a criminal threat situation in

most cases. The data suggest that, even though permanent TAT members are charged with receiving information and meeting threat situations at the lowest levels possible, institutions may most likely respond when criminal implications surface. In the case of Virginia Tech and similar active shooter situations, the person of concern did not rise to the level of criminal threat. Using the Center for Aggression Management's (2012) definitions, the person of concern could not even be identified as a primal aggressor.

Research Hypothesis 31: *The cognitive aggressor is the most common type of aggressor at border institutions of higher education.* This hypothesis was rejected, as the majority of the participants identified the most common aggressor as the primal aggressor. This finding suggests that border institutions most commonly have aggressors who are outwardly angry and reaction driven rather than driven by intent and offering subtle cues of aggression. When considered with Hypothesis 30, it appears that the participants in this study worked at institutions with cultures that handle threats that are overt in nature. While it is important to address the behaviors of the primal aggressor, the Center for Aggression Management (2012) suggested that the cognitive aggressor has thought much about the situation and can be extremely dangerous. Further, the Center acknowledged that most training programs do not provide entities with tools to recognize the cognitive aggressor. Recent nationally known threat situations on college campuses such as the tragedy at Virginia Tech in 2007 or the University of Alabama-Huntsville incident in 2010 did not feature primal aggressors.

Research Hypothesis 32: *Students with mental disabilities play a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education 8 to 10 times per calendar year.* This hypothesis was rejected, as none of the response choices received a majority. It is clear that situations of direct threat involving students with mental disabilities vary by institution. The data also suggest that

there is no specific trend in direct threat situations involving students with mental disabilities. The possibility also exists that, unless students show strong signs of a mental disability, the disability may not even be accounted for by the TAT. If the disability has not been accounted for, the student may not be receiving treatment or at the least has not been registered with the disabilities office on campus, if one exists.

Research Hypothesis 33: *Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education 1-3 times per calendar year.* This hypothesis was rejected, as most participants stated that information was shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education 0 times per calendar year. The data suggest that border institutions keep student information within the institution. However, the data also suggest that some institutions share information about students of concern 1 to 3 times per year, which was the second choice by participants. However, what cannot be determined by the data is whether border institutions initiate the contact with other U.S. institutions, supply information to other U.S. institutions upon request, or use a combination of these types of information sharing.

Research Hypothesis 34: *Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with Mexican institutions of higher education 0 times per calendar year.* This hypothesis was accepted, as the clear majority of participants stated that information about student of concern is shared 0 times per calendar year. The lack of information sharing is not surprising, as the data has also shown no relationship with U.S. institutional law enforcement agencies or Mexican law enforcement agencies. While the data cannot be used to determine whether there is a correlation between the two, there seems to be no communication between the two countries regarding students of concern. The researcher contends that this information is

important for either of two reasons. If information about students of concern is shared between U.S. and Mexican institutions, there is a possibility that both U.S. and Mexican institutions will be in a better position to assist the student and protect the institution simultaneously, creating a safer environment for students to learn and institutional business to be conducted. However, another way to view these findings is that information sharing is not necessary. While the number of students who transfer between U.S. institutions and institutions in Mexico is unknown, the fact that more than 90% of the participants reported that they shared information 0 times per year establishes that lines of communication are nearly nonexistent at this point. Thus, the lack of information sharing between U.S. and Mexico institutions can be considered a non-issue.

Research Hypothesis 35: *TATs at border institutions of higher education meet two times per month.* This hypothesis was rejected because “two times” choice did not receive 50% of the responses. In fact, there was great variance across all categories. However, the data suggest that there is no standard meeting frequency across border institutions of higher education. The lack of standard meeting frequency could be attributed to a lack of literature offering a meeting standard, or best practices, to guide TATs to determine a base meeting frequency. Based on the researcher’s experience, it is beneficial to have TAT meetings every 2 weeks, with the understanding that additional meetings can be scheduled as needed. This frequency seems sufficient because team members can share information that does not reach the level of emergency at a scheduled time. If an emergency situation arises, the TAT members can meet to discuss the situation at hand so that the institution can respond in a swift fashion. Also, it is difficult for permanent team members to meet more frequently than biweekly without the meeting schedule becoming cumbersome and interfering with other responsibilities.

Discussion of Qualitative Findings

Conclusions were drawn based on responses to the open-ended items in the questionnaire. Regarding further considerations, the data indicated that the location of institutions in proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border presents unique challenges. As students may need to come in contact with border law enforcement personnel at crossings, their emotional well-being should be considered as the stressors may influence students in a variety of ways. Stressors can present through thoughts of being contacted by drug traffickers “to transport drug loads,” as indicated in questionnaire responses. Sentiments about drug trafficking and the stress that accompanies the thought of being targeted to traffic were captured by the code Border Stigma.

The perception of inadequate funding in the border region also surfaced, specifically with regard to crime prevention. A female participant who was employed at a community college echoed the sentiment expressed by others by stating that border proximity is the key factor responsible for the “low priority the federal government gives to colleges and universities for providing funds for crime prevention.” This perceived lack of funding can give persons in the campus community concerns about all-round safety.

Considerations emerged with regard to law enforcement training. Many participants indicated that they do not receive adequate information regarding possible threats or dangers in the campus environment. Thus, the community may not be informed about significant risks. This could present a concern due to a fear of the unknown. The thought also surfaced that anything the community members could do to become more involved and proactive may be stifled due to lack of information from law enforcement. This thought was placed under the code Law

Enforcement Training. A male participant employed by a community college in Texas stated that “campus police never update us on incidents that may be of danger to us.”

The desire to have more information on students’ background was assigned to the code Student Background. The first reason behind the desire was so that close monitoring and support could be offered to entering students with documented mental illness or mental illness that is diagnosed/identified while they are enrolled. The second reason was so that community members could “know the percentage of students with a criminal background” to get a better understanding of possible dangers. Further, the data suggested that communities may desire for students with mental disabilities and/or criminal backgrounds to be able to “see if students of concern can be afforded resources to change problem behaviors” for on-campus success.

The data also indicated concerns about law and policy implications specific to the lack of understanding pertinent to the ability to carry a concealed weapon on the campus. The ability to carry concealed weapons was coded under Law and Policy Implications. The fact that the weapons concern emerged brings to the forefront the issues that border campuses possibly have with access to weapons. The impact of weapons on a campus could be connected to the campus proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border or be based on the culture of the particular state in which the institution is located. For example, currently in the state of Texas, the governor’s race is a public display of sentiments regarding differences in opinions on gun laws (Hawkins, 2014). Last year, the Texas House of Representatives passed a law allowing students, staff, faculty, and visitors to keep firearms in their cars even on campus, which was a change in previous legislation, which did not allow guns on campus (MacLaggan, 2013). As many crucial discussions and situations occur on campuses, the thought that students of concern may have access to firearms on the campus can cause discord.

Building layout surfaced as a source of concern and was coded under Campus Connectivity. This is consistent with the literature that states that higher education campuses are more spread out and less connected than PK–12 institutions (Drysdale et al., 2010). Drysdale et al. stated that campus community partners such as faculty, staff, and students are generally less connected on campus, as well. This supports the participants’ concerns about how a timely warning would be communicated and the ability to make quick decisions in responding to campus incidents. Based on the participants’ responses, campuses are open structures that can present safety and security challenges in a threatening situation.

The data allowed the researcher to make determinations as to how members of the TATs at U.S.-Mexico border institutions were selected to be a part of the team. In many cases, the permanent team member was asked to be a part of the team because of his/her position in the institutional structure. The participant’s agreement to function as a permanent member of the TAT because of position was coded under Team Need. A female participant employed at a Texas institution stated, “I was selected because of my position and expertise.” However, in these cases, participants did not state how the determination was made to include the position as a part of the team. If a strategic decision was made to include the position, either it was just not stated in the response or the person did not know why the position was included on the team.

Regarding those participants who stated that their expertise was the reason for their inclusion on the TAT, some stated that they had created the team, hence their permanent membership. Situations in which the participant either created the team or was placed on the team due to level of expertise were coded under Team Need.

Other responses indicated that the participant had crisis response training and/or had been involved in emergency management. A male participant employed in Texas stated, “I

served on the Crisis Management Team when I had supervisory responsibility for Residence Life.” Another offered that it was her/his “experience with crisis and emergency management, [and] type of contact with students” that had led to her/his inclusion. Others stated that they had been appointed to the team but the identity of the appointing official was unknown. As the participants apparently had no choice in the matter, these situations were coded as Institutional Appointment.

The data also showed many reasons why participants may choose to be a part of the TAT. The data provide insight that many permanent team members agree to serve on the team because they believe themselves to have a different perspective from others; this position was coded Positional Perspective. A female participant at a Texas institution posited that she accepted permanent membership on the TAT “to enhance the team’s assessment of the situation, and bring a different perspective with the issue at hand.” A male participant from a commuter institution offered that “it is critical to the team to have medical perspective in our discussions.”

A sense of importance and pride accompanied reasons to accept, as well. As the makeup of the TAT can be perceived to be staff heavy, there is also a sense that participants whose role is primarily academic may agree to serve so that the academic perspective can be honored in team meetings. The data also suggest that the institution’s well-being is to be given strong consideration, coded under Institutional Need. There is definitely an element of desire to protect the institution from an individual standpoint, as well as from the view of a connected group available to share information across the campus. A female participant employed at an institution in New Mexico commented, “We share info on students, staff, and faculty that may be causing some difficulty Our police dept. is very good at keeping all informed about criminal activity. We are taking a proactive approach to heading off any problem areas.” Another added

that their TAT proactively works “with all law enforcement entities to share intelligence and learn of issues that could become threats.”

Participants also alluded to how much they care about their students and that their level of care for students weighed heavily in their decision to serve on their institution’s TAT. The care for students perspective was coded under Student Need. Student success is important to team members and, if anything can be implemented to aid the student in being successful, the participants in this study offered that they were willing to assist.

While data also showed that some TAT members may have joined the team because they had no choice due to appointment, others wanted to have an understanding of what is happening in the campus community with regard to threats and potential concerns for safety. This desire to know of the happenings on the campus with regard to safety was coded under Threat Management Curiosity. One participant, employed at a private institution in Texas, stated that she had a “need to be aware of ongoing or potential threats against students.”

Regarding the TAT functions, differences in perception were evident. Since TATs can have more than one core function, the responses should not be taken as the only possible answers regarding the team’s functions. Depending on what is needed by the team, one function may be more salient at any given time. One prominent function was threat reduction and prevention, coded under Campus Community Education. A clear theme developed that highlighted the sharing of information from sources throughout the campus community and of interviewing anyone who may have knowledge of abnormal behaviors and situations. A female participant employed at an institution in Texas stated that their “office of Student Conduct officials are always prepared to discuss student conduct with all university parties.” A participant from New Mexico stated that her institution’s approach was “complete with interviews and investigations

of neighbors, family, friends, classmates (if a student), professors (if a student), coworkers (if an employee), supervisors (if an employee), etc.” Therefore, these interviews can include anyone on, or external to, the campus community. TATs can also persons who are not faculty, staff, or students, such as visitors, vendors, and contractors, to a take temporary position on the team to understand the situation.

The data showed that monitoring potential situations of mental health was a core function of the team. If a mental health concern is present, the team can be expected to offer resources for the party of concern and determine whether person needs further action. In some teams, the process is taken even farther, in that a full plan of action can be created, implemented, and monitored for success. If the plan requires that the student be removed for a specific period of time, the team also has the ability to do so. Even more so than working directly with students, some teams have taken a proactive approach to train members of the campus community on what to do in cases of emergency response and to keep members of the campus community informed about how to detect an issue with a student.

Regarding the approach to campus safety at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education, the data indicated an educational approach, coded under Campus Community Education. A female participant from a Texas institution offered that “only in cases where there seems to be a threat to the community that cannot be avoided would an approach to remove the threat be taken.” It was clear that most would remove a student from the community only if there were no other options to assist the student. This approach in itself can work to reinforce the sense of belonging to the community.

The data suggested that, to strengthen the sense of community at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education, methods to establish a culture of reporting are prevalent by

concentrating on the use of electronic media, communication of expectations across campus, and proper use of forms. The researcher believes that a culture of reporting increases community responsibility in community members who truly accept it. The data showed that “strong partnerships between departments and across divisions” and “proactive communication to the community through available technology” are sustained at some institutions. This creates the sense that safety and security concerns are the community’s responsibility, not just the charge of those who are hired as safety or law enforcement officials. The data suggest that efforts to train all willing community members should be advertised and made available. With this training, as stated by Achampong (2010), community members will have a better idea of which entities are prepared to address certain elements of threat.

As a counter story to all of the positive aspects that were cited, a core group of participants indicated that their institution’s approach to campus safety was not at a healthy level. In fact, the word *inadequate* was used by many participants, in addition to practices being referred to as reactive. Mentions of inadequacy and reactive responses were coded as Reactive.

The data made evident that the understanding of community had not been defined, as some participants commented that their institution is concerned only with happenings on the physical campus rather than with happenings in the immediate surrounding areas of the institution as well. As one participant suggested, their team’s function is to “get the most appropriate help to those in need and to protect the campus.” Another added that their approach is to “to respond to campus threats and emergencies.” At the extreme end of the spectrum, some participants stated that they had no idea what the approach to campus safety and security was on their campus.

Border violence, student access to both the United States and Mexico, and marginalization of students were the final themes generated from participants' responses. The subject of crossover violence was presented in two contrasting ways, both coded under Border Stigma. There was a strong belief that safety and security on or around U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education campuses are threatened by "crossover violence." This provides a thought that, even though the countries are separated by a physical border, the threat of violence causing a negative impact on the U.S. side of the border is possible. The data indicate that students who are enrolled in U.S. institutions and are residents of Mexico may believe that the behavioral climate is the same and behave in similar ways to what has been observed in Mexico, due to its proximity. As posited by a female participant employed at a Texas institution, people may "rationalize their acts based on the argument that 'it's the way of life around here.'"

Another theme offers opposition to this view. The border does not seem to be an issue for some, as there is the belief that "crossover violence" does not currently exist. There is also the belief that "proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border does not increase danger to an institution, nor does it necessitate any special response by an institution." As U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education enroll students from countries perceived to be hostile toward the United States in general and does not employ special responses to said students, nothing should be implemented specific to students from Mexico.

However, when access to both countries is mentioned, the theme of students being able to "disappear" when a concern arises was prevalent, coded as Intercountry Access. A Texas participant posited "that students, who need resources, may choose to get resources in Mexico if they have access, and may leave the institution at a disadvantage by not having access to the student if the student chooses not to" allow the institution to contact her/him. Moreover, the

ability to offer students resources and protect the institutional community may be lessened as a result.

Finally, the idea of marginalization was raised, coded under Border Stigma. While students are to be educated about safety and security in the campus community, all education should be conducted in a responsible way. Failure to do so could cause students to feel that they have limited acceptance on the campus and that they are perceived to be a part of the problem, not part of a viable solution. As posited by one male participant employed at an institution in California, “It’s a tough balance between educating and making students potentially feel marginalized. I don’t have an answer . . . it is more challenging nowadays because of the social justice and political context and conversations surrounding this topic.”

The data generated many themes. The following section presents recommendations for practices at U.S.-Mexico institutions of higher education.

Recommendations for Practice

It is recommended that U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education and the U.S. government adopt the following safety and security practices.

1. Since current literature suggests that a legal counsel representative be a permanent member of the campus TAT for higher education institutions in general (Dunkle et al., 2008), U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education should include their campus’s legal representative on the TAT. In so doing, all legal ramifications connected to the decisions of the team, as well as institutional policy interpretations, can be vetted in meetings of the permanent team members. Also, if the legal representative is involved in the decision-making process, valuable information regarding the decision can be articulated later if needed. The researcher understands that there will be an oppositional view to this recommendation. First, opposition will

state that legal counsel should be not work as a permanent TAT member because it will take an exorbitant amount of time away from the true course and scope of their work. If legal counsel representatives are to provide legal advice to campus community members and protect the institution from lawsuits, that is different from working on a team designed to prevent threatening situations and provide resources for dangers that may not occur. Second, opposition will state that having legal counsel in permanent team meetings may keep them from being able to protect the institution, should someone challenge a decision. Legal counsel could be perceived as being its own witness in legal proceedings. While these situations can occur, if institutions can afford to have a legal counsel representative, it is recommended that this happen to avoid procedural and legal troubles on the front end of an incident.

2. Current literature suggests that a disability specialist be a part of the permanent TAT (Dunkle et al., 2008). As laws and policies at the federal and state levels often change with regard to working with students with disabilities, the disability specialist should be up-to-date with changes in order to aid the team in finding a suitable path to helping a student of concern who may possess a disability. The disability specialist may also have a better understanding of what accommodations can be provided to decrease a level of threat without putting an unreasonable burden on the institution while remaining inside the scope of the laws.

3. While current literature does not suggest that a faculty member be a part of the permanent TAT, it is recommended herein that a faculty member be assigned to the TAT. Also, if there is an administrator in the office of the Chief Academic Officer or Provost who has faculty experience and may be able to return to faculty ranks, this person may be valuable. As the data offered that some faculty in U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education have been assigned a permanent role on the team, these individuals, especially those with a faculty

designation in the Provost's Office or equivalent, are able to field concerns from instructors. Further, administrators with faculty designation who are in the Chief Academic Officer's or Provost's office will have a higher likelihood of knowing whether the student in question is exhibiting behavior in isolation or has displayed similar behaviors in other offices or classes on the campus. On campuses that place importance on hierarchy, an administrator with faculty designation who is the Chief Academic Officer's or Provost's office can be perceived to have a power position and influence a higher degree of compliance by other faculty members in reporting behaviors of concern. Instructors have regular interactions with students, and as students of concern exhibit behaviors, a faculty member could get valuable information to the team that might go unnoticed in other facets of campus life.

4. U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education should ensure that campus safety policies are communicated to the campus community on an annual basis. As many students, faculty, and staff are new to the institution, each year brings new opportunities to educate new community members who are not familiar with campus policies. The communication of policies should happen in as many ways as are possible. Examples are incorporation of campus signs, use of announcement television screens, and faculty and student orientation programs. Two specific policies to be highlighted should focus on underage drinking and possession of firearms on the campus. As mentioned in the data report and analysis sections of this paper, community members may feel ill prepared or left out of the community because of a lack of information. Informed community members can offer more proactive responses to support campus and community safety.

5. U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education should ensure that campus safety procedures are communicated to the campus community on an annual basis. While many

community members may understand the written policies of an institution, this may not naturally transfer to understanding what to do in a threat situation. Therefore, annual training should be offered to community members. Law enforcement should be involved in this training and in some cases take an active role in dissemination of information. If the law enforcement agency is seen as an active participant in training, an increased level of credibility is possible if the law enforcement agency is respected by the general community. Law enforcement personnel can hear concerns from the campus community that may aid them in understanding the needs of constituents and stakeholders.

6. U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education should conduct annual assessments of structural vulnerabilities, including campus buildings. The data suggest that many participants were concerned about the layout of campuses and the amount of time required to access resources in case of emergency. Further, in cases where evacuations are ordered and/or when community members are directed to find secure shelter where they are, the campus community can find comfort in knowing that their buildings are secure.

7. U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education should require that law enforcement personnel use the NIMS to assist in response to incidents. As this is a federal system, the available resources may be more than are possessed by local law enforcement agencies. As the data suggest a perception that some border law enforcement efforts are underfunded by the federal government, NIMS may be a resource to counteract that perception if utilized appropriately; it may also supply resources that have not been utilized before.

8. U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education should ensure that students who have access to both countries should be given resources and safety information pertinent to safe travel and management of stressors. As the data suggest increased dangers for students who cross

the border frequently, the more information that students can use to help them to create safer situations, the better their travels may be. The literature (Brilliant, 2000; Crockett et al., 2007; Smart, & Smart, 1995) and data from the current study suggest that students in the border region may have increased stress due to family situations and seeing dangerous incidents; thus, increased levels of mental and emotional health resources may be needed.

9. U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education should ensure that all permanent TAT members know the purpose and scope of the TAT. This will require proper training of each team member to be able to discuss why the team is in existence, the types of situations the team is designed to work through and/or not handle, and the procedures employed by the team to develop and implement a plan if that is a part of the team's role. Team members should be able to explain how the purpose and scope of the TAT are different from those of the disciplinary system.

10. Border institutions could benefit from additional training for two purposes: (a) to identify persons of concern and situations of threat at the lowest levels possible, and (b) to detect cognitive aggressors on the institution's campus. The data showed that, even though study participants were members of their institution's permanent TAT, they reported that most of the threat situations with which they dealt involved criminal threat. This is in contrast to the literature, which suggests that direct threat, which in many instances is a lower standard than criminal threat, should be the standard used by institutions to inform responses to situations of potential danger (U.S. Department of Education, OCR, 2010). Even more, study participants stated that the most common aggressor dealt with was the primal aggressor. However, most higher education tragedies that involved threats and violence since 2007 were due to actions of a cognitive aggressor. Therefore, since the cognitive aggressor has been the most common

aggressor in recent tragedies, the border institutions should provide training to detect signs of a distressed student who may also be a threat to others but does not exhibit signs of a primal aggressor.

11. The institution should ensure that training given to the campus community is culturally sensitive and perceived to be equitable. As the data suggest, students may feel marginalized based on the location of the institution and perceive that only Hispanic students may present a threat. Therefore, it may be beneficial for training programs to concentrate on behaviors and responses to behaviors, rather than on the characteristics of the person.

12. The U.S. government should provide a definition of the time frame for a timely warning. Per the Clery Act, all institutions must execute a timely warning if a dangerous situation or crime has occurred on or adjacent to the campus. However, a time frame to define *timely* has not been established. The data showed that a little more than one third of the participants considered a timely warning to occur within 15 minutes of a situation; yet, a similar number had no idea of the time frame and others considered it be between 16 minutes and an hour. If a stricter definition is given, institutions can be held to a higher level of compliance, thereby increasing the accountability of the institutions with regard to safety response.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. A study should be conducted with each individual border state as the sample source to include areas outside of the 100-kilometer border region. While this study concentrated on the border region across states, an individual state might have a cultural climate specific to that state, influenced by the state's laws and policies. Therefore, it is possible that some areas of interest that may have been significant or insignificant in this study could change if tested with states as individual samples. The researcher chose not to include this aspect in this study because no

baseline had been established for the topic at a general level; the current study was seen as a way to gain information about U.S.-Mexico border institutions as a whole.

2. Student perceptions of safety and security practices at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education may be valuable to understand. Students' perceptions are important because students are part of the institution's community and can contribute to maintaining safety in numerous ways. As higher education campuses are comprised of students more than any other group, student buy-in is important to circulate the need to be familiar with campus safety and security practices. While some people may be students in their primary campus role, many also function as employees or in other capacities on campus. The current study surveyed professionals in institutions of higher education. Students' perspectives were not sought because students were not likely to be permanent TAT members at their institutions. No literature suggests that students would be permanent members of a TAT in higher education. Further, the researcher has not seen any instances in which students were permanent members of an institution's TAT.

3. A study could be conducted to assess how U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education detect issues of direct threat. The literature suggests that direct threat is a well-discussed topic area in higher education. Some literature (e.g., Drysdale et al., 2010; Sokolow et al., 2011) speaks directly to direct threat situations involving students with disabilities. However, the participants in this study indicated that criminal threat was the most common threat type that they faced. It is possible that criminal threat is most prevalent or that direct threat is not detected appropriately.

4. A study could be conducted to analyze the benefits of communication between U.S. institutions of higher education law enforcement entities and Mexican law enforcement agencies.

As one of the significant and accepted hypotheses addressed considerations for students who have access to both the United States and Mexico, further research could be conducted to determine what communication can be beneficial between law enforcement agencies in the two countries. Specifically, further research may show whether students of concern can receive better resources on either side of the border if communication between U.S. law enforcement entities and Mexican law enforcement entities occurs regularly.

5. A study could be conducted to analyze safety and security practices of border institutions of higher education by institution type. Specifically, the research could be used to compare practices of 2-year and 4-year institutions. While both types of institutions are higher education institutions by design, there may be similarities and differences in the operations of the two types of institutions regarding safety and security practices. As one third of the participants in the current sample identified as community college employees, the findings from such a study could be a significant contribution to higher education as a whole.

6. As the use of electronic media seems to be increasing exponentially, a study could be conducted to examine how electronic threats can affect safety and security practices at border institutions of higher education. The term *electronic threats* refers to the method by which the threat is issued and not a threat type, such as Clery/FERPA threats, criminal threat, direct threat, Tarasoff-level threats, or true threats. Electronic threats may fit into any or all of the aforementioned threat categories. However, as institutions make strides to increase the number of electronic class offerings, some of which may allow people to become students who may never have access to the physical campus during their enrollment, it seems logical to expect increases in positive and negative electronic traffic to occur. Such a study could inform safety and security practices of all institution types that allow online or distance-learning courses.

7. A national study to understand the safety and security practices at U.S. institutions of higher education could be conducted. While the current study focused on U.S.-Mexico border institutions, the researcher discovered that, while various entities suggest best practices and offer recommendations regarding campus safety and security, there is no standard regarding higher education practices. A study to provide a national view on the topic would provide a programmatic baseline to accompany the theoretical frameworks and sustain and/or improve their safety and security functions. While each institutional campus is different, institutions can adapt applicable practices from the findings of the study.

8. Professionals desire information from law enforcement agencies, and research can be conducted to define the threshold for information that can be shared for the benefit of the community while not jeopardizing police investigations or student privacy. As policies and procedures of institutions of higher education run simultaneously with criminal investigations and procedures, each can potentially help the other. However, each investigation may possess information that cannot to be shared with the other. Research could be conducted to understand what can be shared so that more information can be used while protecting both processes. As FERPA and Clery have threat thresholds that can be waived in certain circumstances, a better understanding of the necessary criteria for waiving privacy requirements is needed for the benefit of the community and the protection of individual rights.

Chapter Summary

This chapter offered a review of the overall purpose of this study, highlighted the use of procedures used in the study, and discussed the analysis of the data. Each research hypothesis was reviewed, along with conclusions that resulted from data review. The study established that some recommended TAT members are generally not represented in U.S.-Mexico border

institution TATs. The study determined national recommendations for campus safety and security were being followed at border institutions. The study determined what methods are used to issue warnings to the campus communities of border institutions. The study provided understanding of considerations that may be helpful in maintaining a safe campus environment at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education. Recommendations for practice and future research were based on study findings.

REFERENCES

- Achampong, F. K. (2010). Integrating risk management and strategic planning. *Planning for Higher Education*, 38(2), 22-27.
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12181). (2010). Part 36, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities (as amended by the final rule published on September 15, 2010). Retrieved from http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII_2010/titleIII_2010_withbold.htm
- Amir v. St. Louis University, 184 F.3d 1017, 1024 (8th Cir.1999).
- Arbona, C., Olvera, N., Rodriguez, N., Hagan, J., Linares, A., & Wiesner, M. (2010). Acculturative stress among documented and undocumented Latino immigrants in the United States. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 32, 362-384.
- Arizona's bad immigration law takes effect. (2012, September 20). *Washington Post* [online]. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/arizonas-bad-immigration-law-takes-effect/2012/09/20/3516da52-02a6-11e2-91e7-2962c74e7738_story.html
- Barbee, P. W., Combs, D. C., Ekleberry, F., & Villalobos, S. (2007). Duty to warn and protect: Not in Texas. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory, and Research*, 35(1), 18-25.
- Benton, S. A., Robertson, J. M., Tseng, W., Newton, F. B., & Benton, S. L. (2003). Changes in counseling center client problems across 13 years. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 34(1), 66-72.
- Brabeck, K., & Xu, Q. (2010). The impact of detention on Latino immigrant children and families: A quantitative exploration. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 32, 341-361.

- Brilliant, J. J. (2000). Issues in counseling immigrant college students. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 24, 577-586.
- Cadik, E. (2013). *Texas state senators call for preservation of the DREAM act (Burnt Orange Report)*. Retrieved from <http://www.texas-state-senators-call-for-preservation-of-the-dream-act>
- Castro-Salazar, R., & Bagley, C. (2010). “Ni de aquí ni from there”: Navigating between contexts—Counter-narratives of undocumented Mexican students in the United States. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 13(1), 23-40.
- Center for Aggression Management (2012). *Cognitive and primal aggression*. Retrieved from <http://www.aggressionmanagement.com/CognitiveandPrimalAggression.html>
- Cervantes, J. M., Mejía, O. L., & Mena, A. G. (2010). Serial migration and the assessment of extreme and unusual psychological hardship with undocumented Latina/o families. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 32, 275-291.
- Chen, G. (2013). *Border security: Moving beyond past benchmarks*. Retrieved from www.aila.org/content/default.aspx?docid=43061
- Cornish, J. A. E., Riva, M. T., Henderson, M. C., Kominars, K. D., & McIntosh, S. (2000). Perceived distress in university counseling center clients across a six-year period. *Journal of College Student Development*, 41(1), 104-109.
- Crane, P. T. (2006). “True threats” and the issue of intent. *Virginia Law Review*, 92, 1225-1277.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed-methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Crockett, L. J., Iturbide, M. I., Torres Stone, R. A., McGinley, M., Raffaelli, M., & Carlo, G. (2007). Acculturative stress, social support, and coping: Relations to psychological adjustment among Mexican American college students. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13*, 347-355.
- Davies, G. K. (2008). Connecting the dots: Lessons from the Virginia Tech shootings. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* [online]. Retrieved from <http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/January-February%202008/full-connecting-the-dots.html>
- Delworth, U. (2009). The AISP model: Assessment-Intervention of Student Problems. *New Directions for Student Services, 128*, 11-21. Retrieved <http://0-web.ebscohost.com.lib.utep.edu/ehost/detail?sid=81b909b7-6788-48eb-b409-be17dad28fd8%40sessionmgr4&vid=4&hid=15&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1z aXRl#db=eft&AN=508118388>
- Dettlaff, A. J., & Rycraft, J. R. (2006). The impact of migration and acculturation on Latino children and families: Implications for child welfare practice. *Protecting Children, 21*(2), 6-21.
- Diaz-Strong, D., Gomez, C., Luna-Duarte, M. E., & Meiners, E. R. (2010). Dreams deferred and dreams denied. *Academe, 96*(3) [online]. Retrieved from <http://0-web.ebscohost.com.lib.utep.edu/ehost/detail?sid=f4218527-3b98-4592-b094-ca27cd208449%40sessionmgr114&vid=1&hid=127&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl>

- Drysdale, D., Modzeleski, W., & Simons, A. (2010). *Campus attacks: Targeted violence affecting institutions of higher education*. Washington, DC: U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- Dunkle, J. H., Silverstein, Z. B., & Warner, S. L. (2008). Managing violent and other troubling students: The role of threat assessment teams on campus. *Journal of College and University Law, 34*, 585-636.
- Finch, B. K., Kolody, B., & Vega, W. A. (2000). Perceived discrimination and depression among Mexican-origin adults in California. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 41*, 295-313.
- Fry, R., & Lopez, M. H. (2012). Now largest minority group of four-year college campuses: Hispanic student enrollments reach new highs in 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/08/20/iii-hispanic-college-enrollments/>
- Furman, R., Negi, N. J., Iwamoto, D. K., Rowan, D., Shukraft, A., & Gragg, J. (2009). Social work practice: Key issues for social workers. *Social Work, 54*(2), 167-174.
- Gildersleeve, R. E. (2010). Access between and beyond borders. *Journal of College Admissions, 206*, 3-10.
- Hawkins, A. (2014). *Wendy Davis' open carry support proves Texas Gov. race all about guns*. Retrieved from <http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Government/2014/02/06/Wendy-Davis-Support-Of-Open-Carry-Proves-Texas-Gov-Race-Is-All-About-Guns>
- Hinshaw, S. P. (1992). Academic underachievement, attention deficits, and aggression: Comorbidity and implications for intervention. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 60*, 893-903.

- Kaplin, W. A., & Lee, B. A. (2007). *The law of higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- La Fe Policy Research and Education Center (2008). *U.S. /Mexico border fact sheet: Demographic profile*. Retrieved from www.lafepolicycenter.org
- Lannon, P., & Sanghavi, E. (2011). New Title I regulations regarding direct threat: Do they change how colleges and universities should treat students who are threats to themselves? *NACUA Notes*, 10(1). Retrieved from <http://www.higheredcompliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/NACUANOTE-TitleIRegs1.pdf>
- Lewis, W. S., Schuster, S. K., & Sokolow, B. A. (2012). *Suicidal students, BITs, and the direct threat standard*. Retrieved from <http://www.nabita.org/docs/2009NCHERMwhitepaper.pdf>
- Lichtman, M. (2012). *Qualitative research in education: A user's guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lipka, S. (2012). Jury's verdict against Virginia Tech sends strong message to colleges. *Chronicle of Higher Education* [online]. Retrieved from <http://0-web.ebscohost.com.lib.utep.edu/ehost/detail?vid=5&hid=15&sid=3ec5b945-cc49-49ed-b2dc-20eaccdca4db%40sessionmgr14&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=a9h&AN=73812309>
- Lundquist, A., & Shackelford, A. (2011). Responding to and supporting students with disabilities: Risk management considerations. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 154, 65-75.
- MacLaggan, C. (2013). Texas house approves campus carry bill permitting guns at colleges. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/06/texas-house-campus-carry-guns-colleges_n_3225310.html

- Market Intelligence for Higher Education. (1997). Campus safety is now a significant factor in college choice: Students and parents are equally concerned about safety at college. *Student Poll*, 2(2), 1-12.
- Martínez, O. J. (1994). *Border people: Life and society in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.
- Martinez, A. E., & Hardwick, S. W. (2009). Building fences: Undocumented immigration and identity in small border town. *FOCUS on Geography*, 52(4), 48-55.
- McDonald, C. (2013). *Smartphone sales increase by 50%*. Retrieved from <http://www.computerweekly.com/news/2240208332/Smartphone-shipments-increase-by-50>
- McKendall, M. J. (2009). *The intersection of student disability and discipline issues*. Retrieved from <http://www.law.stetson.edu/conferences/highered/archive/media/higher-ed-archives-2009/document/i-mckendall-intersection-of-disability-pdf.pdf>
- Monarrez-Fragoso, J. E. (2010). Death in a transnational metropolitan region. In K. Staudt, C. M. Fuentes, & J. E. M. Fragoso (Eds.), *Cities and citizenship at the U. S.-Mexico border: The Paso Del Norte metropolitan region* (pp. 23-42). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Monarrez-Fragoso, J. E., & Bejarano, C. (2010). The disarticulation of justice: Precarious life and cross-border feminicides in the Paso del Norte region. In K. Staudt, C. M. Fuentes, & J. E. Monarrez-Fragoso (Eds.), *Cities and citizenship at the U. S.-Mexico border: The Paso Del Norte metropolitan region* (pp. 43-70). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- O'Malley, K., Wheeler, I., Murphey, J., O'Connell, J., & Waldo, M. (1990). Changes in levels of psychopathology being treated at college and university counseling centers. *Journal of College Student Development*, 31, 464-465.

- Peréz, P. A. (2010). *College choice process of Latino undocumented students: Implications for recruitment and retention*. Retrieved from http://williamperezphd.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/perezp-2010-jca.24230302.pdf
- Pérez, W., Cortés, R. D., Ramos, K., & Coronado, H. (2010). "Cursed and blessed": Examining the socioemotional and academic experiences of undocumented Latina and Latino college students. *New Directions for Student Services*, 131, 35-51.
- Protect Our Kids. (2013). *Survey results: Parents concerned about safety on campus*. Retrieved from <http://www.protectcampuskids.org/survey-results>
- Romo, D. D. (2005). *Ringside seat to a revolution: An underground cultural history of El Paso and Juarez, 1893-1923*. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press.
- Russell, T. T., & Madrigal, J. F. (1998). *Counseling in the U.S.-Mexico border region*. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED422552.pdf>
- Sáenz, B. A. (1992). *Flowers for the broken*. Seattle, WA: Broken Moon Press.
- Scarpa, A., Haden, S. C., & Hurley, J. (2006). Community violence victimization and symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder: The moderating effect of coping and social support. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 21, 446-469.
- Smart, J. F., & Smart, D. W. (1995). Acculturative stress of Hispanics: Loss and challenge. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 73, 390-396.
- Sokolow, B. A., & Lewis, W. S. (2009). *Second-generation behavioral intervention practices*. Retrieved from <http://www.nabita.org/docs/2009NCHERMwhitepaper.pdf>
- Sokolow, B. A., Lewis, W. S., & Schuster, S. K. (2011). *Threat, threat, threat, threat, or threat?* *NaBITA*. Retrieved from <http://nabita.org/documents/THREATTHREATTHREATTHREATTHREATFINALarticleforwebsite.pdf>

- Staudt, K., & Spener, D. (1998). The view from the frontier: Theoretical perspectives undisciplined. In D. Spener & K. Staudt (Eds.), *The U.S.-Mexico border: Transcending divisions, contesting identities* (pp. 3-33). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Tarasoff v. Regents of the University of California, 17 Cal. 3d 425, 551 P.2d 334, 131 Cal. Rptr. 14 (Cal. 1976).
- Thrower, R. H., Healy, S. J., Margolis, G. J., Lynch, M., Stafford, D., & Taylor, W. (2008). *Overview of the Virginia Tech tragedy and implications for campus safety: The IACLEA blueprint for safer campuses*. Retrieved from <http://www.usask.ca/campussafety/Files/IACLEA%20Blueprint%20for%20Safer%20Campuses>
- United States-Mexico Border Health Commission. (2013). *Border region*. Retrieved from http://www.borderhealth.org/border_region.php
- U.S. Department of Education. (2011). *Dear colleague letter*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR). (2003). *Letter from Shearlyn Goldbecker, Team Leader, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, to Kent Chabotar, President, Guilford College, March 6, 2003*. Retrieved from http://www.bsk.com/pdfinfomemos/Guilford_College.pdf
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR). (2005). *OCR letter to Marietta College, March 18, 2005*. Retrieved from <http://www.nacua.org/meetings/virtualseminars/october2005/Documents/MariettaCollegeOCRComplaint.pdf>

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR). (2010). *OCR letter to Spring Arbor University, December 16, 2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.galvin-group.com/resources/section-two-ada504-compliance-ocr-letters/relevant-ocr-decisions-and-lawsuits/ocr-letters.aspx>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). *Policy and guidance*. Retrieved from <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2011). *National Incident Management System (NIMS): Overview*. Retrieved from www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system.gov
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2012). *U.S.-Mexico Border 2012: La Paz Agreement*. Retrieved from www.epa.gov/Border2012/docs/LaPazAgreement.pdf
- Virginia v. Black, 538 U.S. 343 (2003) 262 Va. 764, 553 S. E. 2d 738, affirmed in part, vacated in part, and remanded.
- Wang, X. (2012). Undocumented immigrants as perceived criminal threat: A test of the minority threat perspective. *Criminology*, 50, 743-776.
- Warner, S. L., & Schutjer, L. (2009). *Threading the needle: Best practices in dealing with distressed and dangerous students*. Fort Collins, CO: National Association of College and University Attorneys.
- Watts v. United States, 394 U.S. 705 (1969).

APPENDIX A

U.S. -Mexico Border Region Campus Safety Questionnaire

Section A: Campus Operations

Please select the most appropriate response to the following statements:

1. Identify each of the personnel that make up your campus threat assessment team:
 - a. Senior Student Affairs Officer or designee
 - b. Campus Mental Health Professional
 - c. Campus Law Enforcement Representative
 - d. Campus Legal Counsel Representative
 - e. Disability Specialist
 - f. Faculty Member
 - g. Other (Please, explain): _____
2. Campus safety policies are proactively shared within your campus
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
3. Campus safety procedures are proactively shared within your campus
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
4. Does your campus implement the following recommendations? (Please select all that apply)
 - a. Annually assess points of functional vulnerability (policies/procedures)
 - b. Annually assess points of structural vulnerability (buildings/structures)
 - c. Have the ability to issue a timely warning as per the Jeanne Clery Act
 - d. Annually use the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
 - e. Maintain an emergency response plan
 - f. Train first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus
 - g. Maintain working relationships with local health and safety agencies
 - h. Other (Please, explain): _____
5. Your campus considers a timely warning to take place within:
 - a. 0-15 minutes
 - b. 16-30 minutes
 - c. 31-45 minutes
 - d. 46-60 minutes
 - e. 61 minutes or more
 - f. I do not know

6. What kinds of warnings are issued to the campus community in a calendar year? (Please select all that apply)
 - a. Email
 - b. Text Messages
 - c. Sirens
 - d. Social Media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter)
 - e. Voice mail messages
 - f. Other (Please, explain): _____
7. How often does your institution's law enforcement entity communicate with Mexican law enforcement per calendar year?
 - a. 0 times
 - b. 1-3 times
 - c. 4-7 times
 - d. 8-10 times
 - e. More than 10 times
 - f. I do not know
8. The relationship between your institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered in regards to campus safety.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

Section B: Border Approaches to Campus Safety

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

1. Student access to both the U.S. and Mexico should be considered in regards to campus safety.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
2. Conflicting views of immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
3. Students seeing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

4. Lower socioeconomic status of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the U.S. should be considered in regards to campus safety.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 5. The presence of undocumented students on campus should be considered in regards to campus safety.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 6. In your experience, what other aspects should be considered in regards to campus safety?
-

Section C: Nature of Concern

Please select the most appropriate response to the following statements:

1. In your experience, the most common type of threat on your campus has been:
 - a. Criminal Threat (can be cause for arrest or conviction)
 - b. Direct Threat (imminent significant risk that cannot be eliminated by policy or procedural changes)
 - c. Tarasoff-level Threat (imminent danger discovered in your institution's mental health setting)
 - d. True Threat (impending danger to occur based on another's statements)
2. In your experience, the most common type of aggressor on your campus has been:
 - a. Cognitive Aggressor (calm mannerisms, gives subtle cues of aggression, intent driven)
 - b. Primal Aggressor (outwardly angry, increased levels of adrenaline, reaction driven)
3. How often do students with mental disabilities play a role in direct threats on your campus in a calendar year?
 - a. 0 times
 - b. 1-3 times
 - c. 4-7 times
 - d. 8-10 times
 - e. More than 10 times

Section D: Additional Questions

1. How often does your institution share information, regarding students of concern, with neighboring institutions in the U.S. in a calendar year?
 - a. 0 times
 - b. 1-3 times
 - c. 4-7 times
 - d. 8-10 times
 - e. More than 10 times

2. How often does your institution share information, regarding students of concern, with neighboring institutions in Mexico in a calendar year?
 - a. 0 times
 - b. 1-3 times
 - c. 4-7 times
 - d. 8-10 times
 - e. More than 10 times

3. How often does your institution's threat assessment team meet monthly?
 - a. Less than one time
 - b. One time
 - c. Two times
 - d. Three times
 - e. Four times
 - f. More than four times

4. How were you selected to be on your institution's threat assessment team?

5. Why did you agree to serve on your institution's threat assessment team?

6. Please describe the function of your threat assessment team.

7. In your opinion, describe the approach to campus safety at your border institution of higher education.

8. Please share any additional comments you have on campus safety and security at U.S.-Mexico border institutions of higher education:

Section E: Demographic Information

Please select the most appropriate response to the following statements:

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Other (Explain):_____

2. Within which range is your age?
 - a. 18-30
 - b. 31-40
 - c. 41-50
 - d. 51-60
 - e. 61 or over

3. In which US state do you work?
 - a. Arizona
 - b. California
 - c. New Mexico
 - d. Texas

4. Which of the following best describes your institution?
 - a. Private
 - b. Public

5. Which of the following best describes your institution?
 - a. Community College
 - b. Four-year College or University
 - c. Technical Institute
 - d. Other: (Please explain)_____

6. Which of the following best describes your institution?
 - a. Commuter
 - b. Residential

7. What is your primary role at your institution?
 - a. Faculty – Tenured
 - b. Faculty – Non-Tenured; Tenure-Track
 - c. Faculty – Non-Tenured; Non-Tenure Track
 - d. Staff
 - e. Senior Level Administrator
 - f. Other (Please Explain):_____

8. How many years of experience do you have in your primary role?
 - a. Less than 5 years
 - b. 5-9 years
 - c. 10-14 years
 - d. 15-19 years
 - e. 20 years or more
 - f.

9. How many years have you been employed in your current position?
 - a. Less than 5 years
 - b. 5-9 years
 - c. 10-14 years
 - d. 15-19 years
 - e. 20 years or more

Thank you for your participation!

If you would like to be entered into the iPad mini raffle, please send your contact information using the information below. Additionally, please contact me, using the information below, if you would like a summary of the results of the study.

Ryan C. Holmes
Doctoral Candidate
rholmes@utep.edu
xxx-xxx-xxxx

APPENDIX B

Questions Presented to the Validation Panel

The following questions were presented to a panel of experts to determine the validity of the survey instrument and to solicit suggestions as to how it may be improved.

1. How appropriate is the instrument title for this study? Please explain.
2. How easy are the instructions for the instrument to understand? What can be done to improve them?
3. How easy are the questions to understand? Please explain.
4. Does the order of the question categories make sense? If not, how can it be improved?
5. Do you have any recommendations on how to better ask any of the questions? If so, how?
6. Should the comment section be included in the instrument or removed? Why or why not?
7. Are there any demographic questions that should be added or taken away from the current instrument?
8. Are there any additional comments you believe should be considered to improve the instrument?

APPENDIX C

Proposed Statistics Matrix

Research Questions	Research Hypotheses	Rationale for Hypotheses	Applicable Questionnaire Items	Proposed Statistic	Notes
--------------------	---------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------	-------

Campus Operations

What type of personnel make up the Threat Assessment Teams at border institutions of higher education?	The senior student affairs officer or designee will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Based on the literature, it is common for the senior student affairs officer or a designee to be a part of an institution's TAT.	Section A, Question 1	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that the senior student affairs officer or designee is a part of the permanent TAT structure.
	An institution's mental health professional will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Based on the literature, it is common for an institution's mental health professional to be a part of an institution's TAT.	Section A, Question 1	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that a mental health professional is a part of the permanent TAT structure.
	A campus law enforcement representative will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Based on the literature, it is common for a campus law enforcement officer to be a part of an institution's TAT.	Section A, Question 1	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that a campus law enforcement representative is a part of the permanent TAT structure.

	A university legal counsel member will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	As an institution's legal counsel member may need to defend the actions of the TAT in some situations, legal counsel will not be directly involved in TAT decisions.	Section A, Question 1	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If fewer than 50% of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that a university legal counsel member is not a part of the permanent TAT structure.
	A disability specialist will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Because a mental health professional may be a permanent part of the TAT, and many TAT situations may not involve a student with a physical disability, the disability specialist may be an "as needed" person.	Section A, Question 1	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If fewer than 50% of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that a disability specialist is not a part of the permanent TAT structure.
	A faculty member will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Based on the literature, it is common for a faculty member to be a part of an institution's TAT.	Section A, Question 1	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine the where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that a faculty member is a part of the permanent TAT structure.
	A student conduct officer will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Because many student officers may have information on students of concern, it may be beneficial for this person to be a permanent member of an institution's TAT	Section A, Question 2	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine the where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that a student conduct officer is a part of the permanent TAT structure.

Do participants agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses?	Participants agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses.	It is common practice for safety policies to be shared at any institution of higher education (e.g. at student orientation, employee orientation, compliance training, etc.)	Section A, Question 2	Single-group <i>t</i> -test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.	If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that campus safety policies are shared within border institutions of higher education.
Do participants agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses?	Participants agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses.	It is common practice for safety procedures to be shared at any institution of higher education (e.g. at student orientation, employee orientation, compliance training, etc.)	Section A, Question 3	Single-group <i>t</i> -test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.	If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that campus safety procedures are shared within border institutions of higher education.
Do participants report that their campus follows mainstream safety and security recommendations?	Fifty or more percent of participants report that their campus annually assesses points of functional vulnerability.	In the wake of many dangerous situations at institutions of the higher education across the country, border institutions concentrate on functional vulnerability	Section A, Question 4	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions annually assess points of vulnerability.
	Less than fifty percent of participants report that their campus annually assesses points of structural vulnerability.	Though reviews of functions occur, the researcher believes the routine check of buildings and structures does not.	Section A, Question 4	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If fewer than 50% of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions do not routinely assess points of structural vulnerability.

	Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution has the ability to issue a timely warning.	It has become common practice for all institutions of higher education to be in compliance with the Clery Act which also requires the ability to issue a timely warning.	Section A, Question 4	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions do have the ability to issue a timely warning.
	Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution uses the National Incident Management System (NIMS).	As institutions have or have access to a law enforcement entity, NIMS will be used in times of emergencies.	Section A, Question 4	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions use the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
	Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution maintains an emergency response plan.	With the events of Virginia Tech and other campus emergencies, the researcher believes that border institutions will have created such plans in case of emergencies.	Section A, Question 4	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions do maintain an emergency response plan
	Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution trains on-campus, first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus.	The researcher believes that campus law enforcement at border institutions of higher education may have fewer resources and may choose to train additional campus entities in ways to assist during emergencies.	Section A, Question 4	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions do train on-campus first responders to deal with public safety matters.

	Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution maintains working relationships with local health and safety agencies.	The researcher believes that campus law enforcement at border institutions of higher education may have fewer resources and may choose to maintain working relationships with local health and safety agencies for the institution's benefit.	Section A, Question 4	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions maintain working relationships with local health and safety agencies
How do participants define timely warning?	Participants define timely warning as within 31-45 minutes of an incident.	There is currently no information on what is truly considered a timely warning.	Section A, Question 5	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If the majority of participants select the answer choice of 31-45, it will be determined that border institutions consider a warning within 31-45 minutes to be timely.
Do participants report that their campus uses the following different kinds of warning?	Fifty or more percent of participants report using electronic mail to issue warnings.	Because email messages are an outlet that can contact numerous campus community member, they will be used	Section A, Question 6	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions use email messages to warn the campus community.
	Fifty or more percent of participants report using text messages to issue warnings.	Because text messages are an outlet that can contact numerous campus community member, they will be used	Section A, Question 6	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection	If 50% or more of participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions use text messages to warn the campus community.

	Fifty or more percent of participants report using sirens to issue warnings.	Because sirens are an outlet that can contact numerous campus community member, they will be used	Section A, Question 6	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions use sirens to warn the campus community.
	Fifty or more percent of participants report using social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) to issue warnings.	Because social media is an outlet that can contact numerous campus community member, it will be used	Section A, Question 6	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions use social media to warn the campus community.
	Fifty or more percent of participants report using voice mail messages to issue warnings.	Because voice mail messages are an outlet that can contact numerous campus community member, they will be used	Section A, Question 6	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions use voice mail messages to warn the campus community.

Law Enforcement

<p>To what extent is there communication between your institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement?</p>	<p>There is no communication between border institution's law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement.</p>	<p>Because an international border divides the U.S. and Mexico, and also because the two countries and governed by different laws, the researcher believes that communication does not occur between institutional law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement.</p>	<p>Section A, Question 7</p>	<p>Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.</p>	<p>If the majority of the participants select the answer choice of 0 times, it will be determined that border institutions consider there to be no communication between their institution of higher education's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement.</p>
<p>Do participants agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered in regards to campus safety?</p>	<p>Participants agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered in regards to campus safety.</p>	<p>Because communication may be nonexistent between law enforcement entities on a regular basis, and because students have access to two countries, additional considerations may be needed.</p>	<p>Section A, Question 8</p>	<p>Single-group <i>t</i>-test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.</p>	<p>If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that the relationship between law enforcement jurisdictions in the US-Mexico border region call for additional considerations in approaches to campus safety.</p>

Border Approaches to Campus Safety

<p>Do participants agree that student access to both the U.S. and Mexico should be considered in regards to campus safety?</p>	<p>Participants agree that student access to both the U.S. and Mexico should be considered in regards to campus safety.</p>	<p>The researcher believes that anytime a student can move between countries, this lends to more variables in approach than when working with an inland student with no access to another country. Therefore, an increase in variables ultimately equates to an increase in considerations.</p>	<p>Section B, Question 1</p>	<p>Single-group <i>t</i>-test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.</p>	<p>If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that border institutions annually assess points of vulnerability.</p>
<p>Do participants agree that conflicting views of immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety?</p>	<p>Participants agree that conflicting views toward immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.</p>	<p>The researcher believes that the view of immigration features tensions between racial groups and causes increases in variables behavior. Therefore, an increase in variables ultimately equates to an increase in considerations.</p>	<p>Section B, Question 2</p>	<p>Single-group <i>t</i>-test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.</p>	<p>If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that that current view of immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region requires additional considerations in the approach to campus safety.</p>
<p>Do participants agree that students' witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety?</p>	<p>Participants agree that students' witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.</p>	<p>The researcher believes that the witnessing of community violence may cause an increase of mental stress in students. Therefore, an increase in mental stress may equate to the need to increase considerations.</p>	<p>Section B, Question 3</p>	<p>Single-group <i>t</i>-test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.</p>	<p>If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that students' witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region require additional considerations in the approach to campus safety.</p>

<p>Do participants agree that low socioeconomic status of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the U.S. should be considered in regards to campus safety?</p>	<p>Participants agree that low socioeconomic status of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the U.S. should be considered in regards to campus safety.</p>	<p>The researcher believes that low socioeconomic status may cause an increase of mental stress in students and lack of resource availability for those who really need it. Therefore, an increase in considerations may be warranted.</p>	<p>Section B, Question 4</p>	<p>Single-group <i>t</i>-test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.</p>	<p>If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that low socioeconomic status of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the U.S. require additional considerations in the approach to campus safety</p>
<p>Do participants agree that the presence of undocumented students on campus should be considered in regards to campus safety?</p>	<p>Participants agree that the presence of undocumented students in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.</p>	<p>The researcher believes that undocumented students may be less likely to seek help if needed for fear of not knowing who to trust. Therefore, additional considerations may be warranted to better serve the student in need.</p>	<p>Section B, Question 5</p>	<p>Single-group <i>t</i>-test will be used comparing the actual mean with the hypothesized mean of 3.0 with an alpha (α) level of .05. It is believed that the actual mean will be 3.0 or greater.</p>	<p>If the actual mean is 3.0 or greater, it can be determined that the presence of undocumented students on campus requires additional considerations in the approach to campus safety.</p>

Nature of Concern

What type of threat has been the most common at border institutions of higher education?	Direct threat will be the most common threat at border institutions of higher education.	The researcher believes this to be true because direct threat seems to be the most common at non-border institutions of higher education.	Section C, Question 1	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions consider direct threat to be the most common threat at border institutions.
What type of aggressor has been the most common at border institutions of higher education?	The cognitive aggressor will be the most common type of aggressor at border institutions of higher education.	Because many incidents on campuses have not been predictable, the researcher believes that the cognitive aggressor is more prominent.	Section C, Question 2	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If 50% or more of the participants select this answer choice, it will be determined that border institutions consider the cognitive aggressor to be the most common at border institutions.
To what extent have students with mental disabilities played a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education?	Students with mental disabilities will play a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education 8-10 times per calendar year.	There is currently no information as to how many times students with mental disabilities play a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education in a calendar year.	Section C, Question 3	Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.	If the majority of the participants select the answer choice of 8-10 times per calendar year, it will be determined that border institutions considers student with mental disabilities to play a role in direct threats at that level.

Additional Questions

<p>How frequently is information shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education regarding students of concern at border institutions of higher education?</p>	<p>Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education 1-3 times per calendar year.</p>	<p>There is currently no information as to how many times border institutions of higher education share information about students of concern with other U.S. institutions of higher education in a calendar year.</p>	<p>Section D, Question 1</p>	<p>Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.</p>	<p>If the majority of the participants select the answer choice of 1-3 times per calendar year, it will be determined that border institutions share information about students of concern with other U.S. institutions of higher education in a calendar year.</p>
<p>How frequently is information shared with Mexican institutions of higher education regarding students of concern at border institutions of higher education?</p>	<p>Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with Mexican institutions of higher education 0 times per calendar year.</p>	<p>There is currently no information as to how many times border institutions of higher education share information about students of concern with Mexican institutions of higher education in a calendar year.</p>	<p>Section D, Question 2</p>	<p>Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.</p>	<p>If the majority of the participants select the answer choice of 0 times per calendar year, it will be determined that border institutions share information about students of concern with Mexican institutions of higher education in a calendar year.</p>
<p>How frequently do threat assessment teams at border institutions of higher education meet per month?</p>	<p>Threat assessment teams at border institutions of higher education meet two times per month.</p>	<p>There is currently no information as to how many times threat assessment teams at border institutions of higher education meet per month.</p>	<p>Section D, Section 3</p>	<p>Frequency distribution (a descriptive statistic) will be used to determine where most participants are clustered based on choice selection.</p>	<p>If the majority of the participants select the answer choice of 0 times per month, it will be determined that threat assessment teams at border institutions of higher education meet two times per month.</p>

APPENDIX D

Summary of Research Hypotheses

Research Hypotheses	Outcome
1: The senior student affairs officer or designee will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Accepted
2: An institution's mental health professional will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Accepted
3: A campus law enforcement representative will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Accepted
4: A university legal counsel member will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Accepted
5: A disability specialist will not be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Accepted
6: A faculty member will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Rejected
7: A student conduct officer will be a permanent member of a border institution's TAT.	Accepted
8: Participants agree that campus safety policies are proactively shared within their campuses.	Rejected
9: Participants agree that campus safety procedures are proactively shared within their campuses.	Rejected
10: Fifty or more percent of participants report that their campus annually assesses points of functional vulnerability.	Accepted
11: Less than fifty percent of participants report that their campus annually assesses points of structural vulnerability.	Accepted
12: Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution has the ability to issue a timely warning.	Accepted
13: Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution uses the National Incident Management System (NIMS).	Rejected
14: Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution maintains an emergency response plan.	Accepted
15: Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution trains on-campus, first responders to deal with public safety matters on campus.	Accepted
16: Fifty or more percent of participants report that their institution maintains working relationships with local health and safety agencies.	Accepted
17: Participants define timely warning as within 31-45 minutes of an incident.	Rejected
18: Fifty or more percent of participants report using electronic mail to issue warnings.	Accepted

19:	Fifty or more percent of participants report using text messages to issue warnings.	Accepted
20:	Fifty or more percent of participants report using sirens to issue warnings.	Accepted
21:	Fifty or more percent of participants report using social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) to issue warnings.	Accepted
22:	Fifty or more percent of participants report using voice mail messages to issue warnings.	Accepted
23:	There is no communication between border institution's law enforcement and Mexican law enforcement.	Rejected
24:	Participants agree that the relationship between their institution's law enforcement entity and Mexican law enforcement should be considered in regards to campus safety.	Rejected
25:	Participants agree that student access to both the U.S. and Mexico should be considered in regards to campus safety.	Accepted
26:	Participants agree that conflicting views toward immigration in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.	Rejected
27:	Participants agree that students' witnessing community violence in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.	Rejected
28:	Participants agree that low socioeconomic status of residents in the U.S.-Mexico border region as compared to the rest of the US should be considered in regards to campus safety.	Rejected
29:	Participants agree that the presence of undocumented students in the U.S.-Mexico border region should be considered in regards to campus safety.	Rejected
30:	Direct threat will be the most common threat at border institutions of higher education.	Rejected
31:	The cognitive aggressor will be the most common type of aggressor at border institutions of higher education.	Rejected
32:	Students with mental disabilities play a role in direct threats at border institutions of higher education 8 to 10 times per calendar year.	Rejected
33:	Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with other U.S. institutions of higher education 1-3 times per calendar year.	Rejected
34:	Information about students of concern at border institutions of higher education is shared with Mexican institutions of higher education 0 times per calendar year.	Accepted
35:	Threat assessment teams at border institutions of higher education meet two times per month.	Rejected

CURRICULUM VITA

Ryan C. Holmes earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Loyola University of New Orleans in 2001. He completed a Master of Arts degree in Counseling and Personnel Services at the University of Maryland-College Park in 2004. He was awarded a Master's degree in Bilingual/Bicultural Studies by La Salle University in September 2008. In 2010 he joined the doctoral program in Educational Leadership and Administration at The University of Texas at El Paso. He has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards while completing doctoral work, including the Distinguished Service Award in 2010 and the Donald D. Gehring Award for Sustained Leadership and Contributions to the Field of Student Conduct Administration in 2014, both from the Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA). He served as the 2012-2013 President of ASCA and as an Expert Review Panelist for the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education to review student conduct program standards in 2014. He served on the 2013-2014 American College Personnel Association's Ethics Consortium Committee. In 2010 to 2013 he was the writer and principal investigator for the grant Health and Wellness Initiative for Women Attending Minority Institutions awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Women's Health. While pursuing his degree, he served as Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution in UTEP's Division of Student Affairs.

Permanent Address: 6305 Franklin Desert Drive, El Paso, Texas 79912 / rholmes@utep.edu