Building Bridges & Identifying Gaps in Preparation for Campus Crises:

Collective Institutional Responses and Future Trends

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Three Goals of the Presentation

- To provide an interactive forum for discussing specific critical incident and crisis preparation and management strategies and to share collegial advice.
  - Disclaimer (New Program vs. Dissertation Program):
- To illustrate research findings that suggest common and exemplary preparation strategies and management initiatives.
  - Akers, C. R. (2008). Evolution of emergency operations strategies: Structure and process of crisis response in college student affairs. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 68 (12).* (UMI Proquest No. 1453185051).
- To promote a growing list of valuable critical incident and crisis preparation resources available to SA administrators.

Building Bridges, Identifying Gaps

Definition of Terms

- **Crisis:**
  - "a traumatic event that seriously **disrupts** our coping and problem-solving abilities. It is typically **unpredicted**, **volatile** in nature and may even **threaten** our survival. A crisis can present a **drastic and tragic change** in our environment. This change is generally **unwanted** and **frightening**, and may leave us with a sense of **vulnerability** and **helplessness**" (Lerner, Volpe, & Lindell, 2004, p. 9).
  - Zdziarski (2006) defined crisis as "an event, often **sudden** or **unexpected**, that **disrupts** the normal operations of the institution or its educational mission and **threatens** the well-being of personnel, property, financial resources, and/or reputation of the institution" (p. 5).

Definition of Terms

- **Crisis Response Plan** (CRP) - (Lerner, Volpe, & Lindell, 2004)
  - Series of actions and protocols taken by an institution in preparation for and reaction to a crisis on campus.
- **CRP Structure** - (Lerner, Volpe, & Lindell, 2004)
  - Focuses on the structural elements of a CRP.
  - Provides the formal written plan, preparation, training, assessment, and services/programs provided to constituents in times of crises.
- **CRP Process** - (Lerner, Volpe, & Lindell, 2004)
  - Focuses on the emotional effects of a crisis.
  - Provides immediate and continued assistance to those individuals involved in the crisis.

Review of the Problem

- Due to recent campus tragedies and a post-9/11 world, university officials are reviewing and placing stronger emphasis on crisis preparation and how to develop and implement their crisis response procedures and protocols.
- Categories of Crises (Zdziarski, 2001).
  - **Natural** crises (abnormal weather patterns);
  - **Facility** crises (threats of damage or actual damage to campus buildings; infiltration by domestic and international terrorist groups, i.e. ALF, ELF, etc.; research interests, chemical labs)
  - **Criminal** crises (violent acts or threats inflicted on an individual or property by another individual or group of individuals; further implications for campus research, labs, etc.)
  - **Human** crises (accidental injuries and deaths, substance abuse, simple campus protests, natural deaths, etc.)
- All occur across our campuses each year, threatening the stability and mission of our institutions.

Crisis Preparation: Recipe for Success?

Recipe for Success? Wisdom?

Recipe for Success? Courage?

Recipe for Success? Heart?

We're Not in Kansas Anymore!

We're in Jackson, Tennessee

We're in College Station, TX

We're in New Orleans, Louisiana

We're in DeKalb, Illinois

We're in Iowa City, Iowa

We're in Northridge, California

We're in Blacksburg, Virginia

We Have New Business…

…and We Have Old Business.

Recent Examples

- Texas A&M University
- UNC - Chapel Hill (1996)
- Seton Hall University
- U. of Wyoming (1998), Ok. State U
- U. of Georgia
- U. of Pennsylvania
- U. of Arizona
- Catawba College
- U. of Florida
- U. of Texas
- Dartmouth College
- Delaware State
- Union University
- NYU, CUNY, St. John's
- GW, Georgetown, Howard
- University of Wyoming (2001)
- Dawson College (Canada)
- Duquesne University
- U. of Arkansas
- U. of Idaho
- U. of Mississippi
- Harvard University, MIT
- Colorado State University
- Cal State - Northridge
- Tulane, Southern, UNO, Xavier, etc.
- Virginia Tech, Northern Illinois U.
- Duke University
- UNC - Chapel Hill (2008)
- Auburn University
- U. of Central Arkansas
- University of Iowa
- LSU, Louisiana Technical College

Building Bridges, Identifying Gaps

Crisis Preparation: Recipe for Success

- Where are the Gaps in Crisis Management?
- What is a **Progressive** Crisis Management Strategy?
  - Examine from the Emergency Management Frame
    - P (M)
    - P
    - R
    - R
    - E

"Progressive Ingredients"

- Department/Division Plan and Prep Commonalities
  - Top Down Support and Total Campus Buy-In
  - Flexible, not Rigid
  - Dynamic, not Static
    - It's a Process, not a Finished Product
  - Focuses on Communication and Collaboration
    - Internal and External; Fully Integrated
  - Understandable and Functional
    - Incorporates ICS
  - Planned and Trained Thoroughly
    - Team Approach; Everyone in Unison
  - **Proactive, not Reactive**

Building Bridges, Identifying Gaps

Building Bridges, Identifying Gaps

"Evolution of Emergency Operations Strategies: Structure and Process of Crisis Response in College Student Affairs"

2008 Dissertation of the Year

Southern Association of College Student Affairs

Purpose of the Dissertation Study

- To analyze the crisis response policies, strategies, and programs of different types of institutions and to explore which elements of structure and process are and are not being implemented across different types of institutions.
  - 7 Dichotomies of Type
  - Analysis of Student Enrollment Size
  - Analysis of Geographic Location
- The study was also developed to add to considerable gaps in research and empirical studies related to crisis response on college and university campuses.

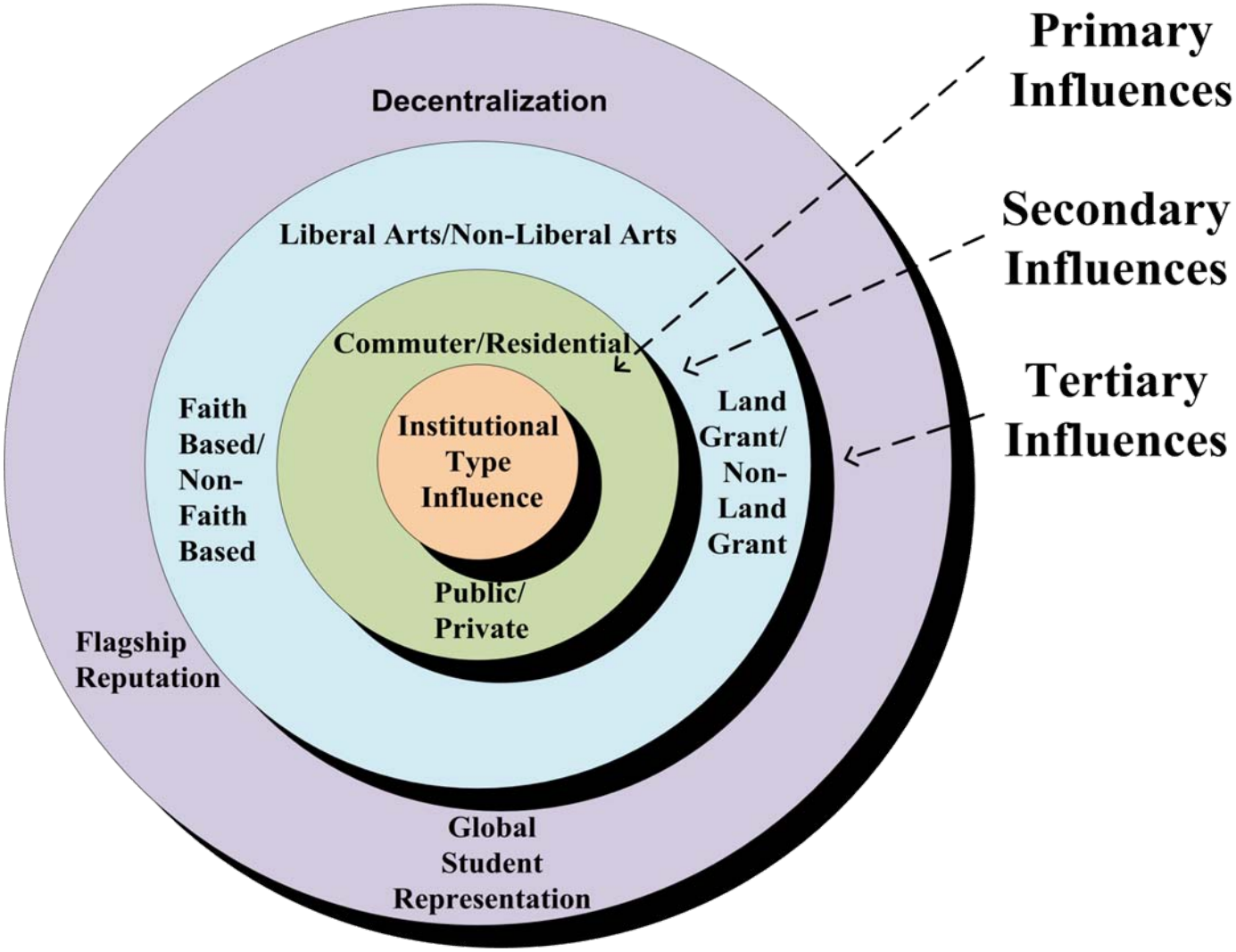
Dissertation Research Questions 1-4

- **Definition:** What constitutes a crisis from the perspective of the institution and from the division of student affairs, according to institutional policy?
- **Preparation:** Who is involved in the development and process of crisis response protocols and how do institutions prepare themselves for crisis response?
- **Needs Assessment/Response:** Whose needs are being met in times of crisis and what are these needs? How are these needs being addressed?
- **Evaluation:** How are crisis response protocols evaluated and improved?

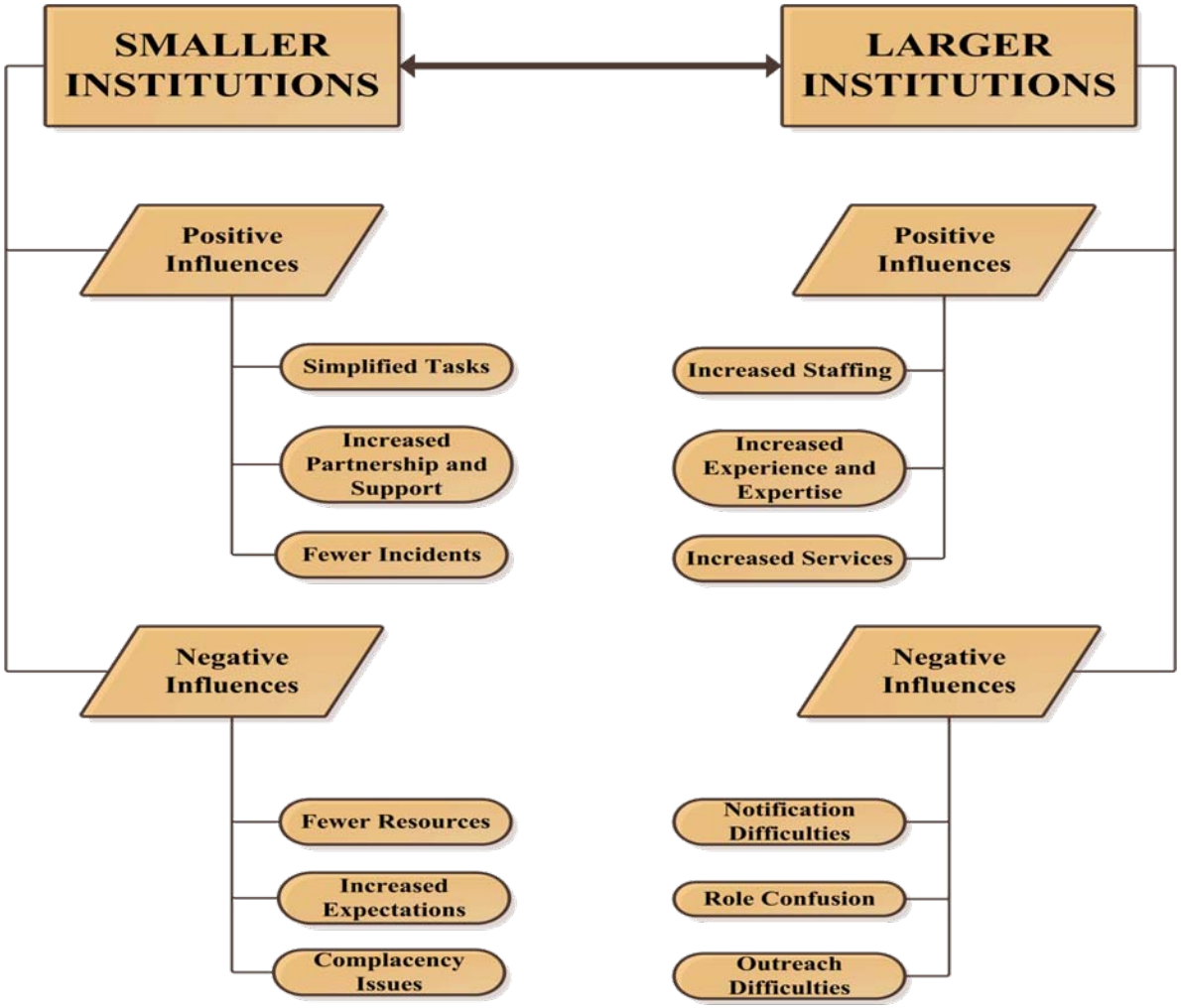
Dissertation Research Questions 5-7

- **Type Influence:** Does type of institution influence crisis response on campus?
- **Size Influence:** Does the size of the institution based on student enrollment influence crisis response on campus?
- **Location Influence:** Does the geographic location of the institution influence crisis response on campus?
  - Analyses:
    - Quantitative Analyses:
      - *t*-Tests of Independent Means and ANOVAs
    - Qualitative Analyses for Consistent Patterns and Themes
    - Horizontalization and Synthesis

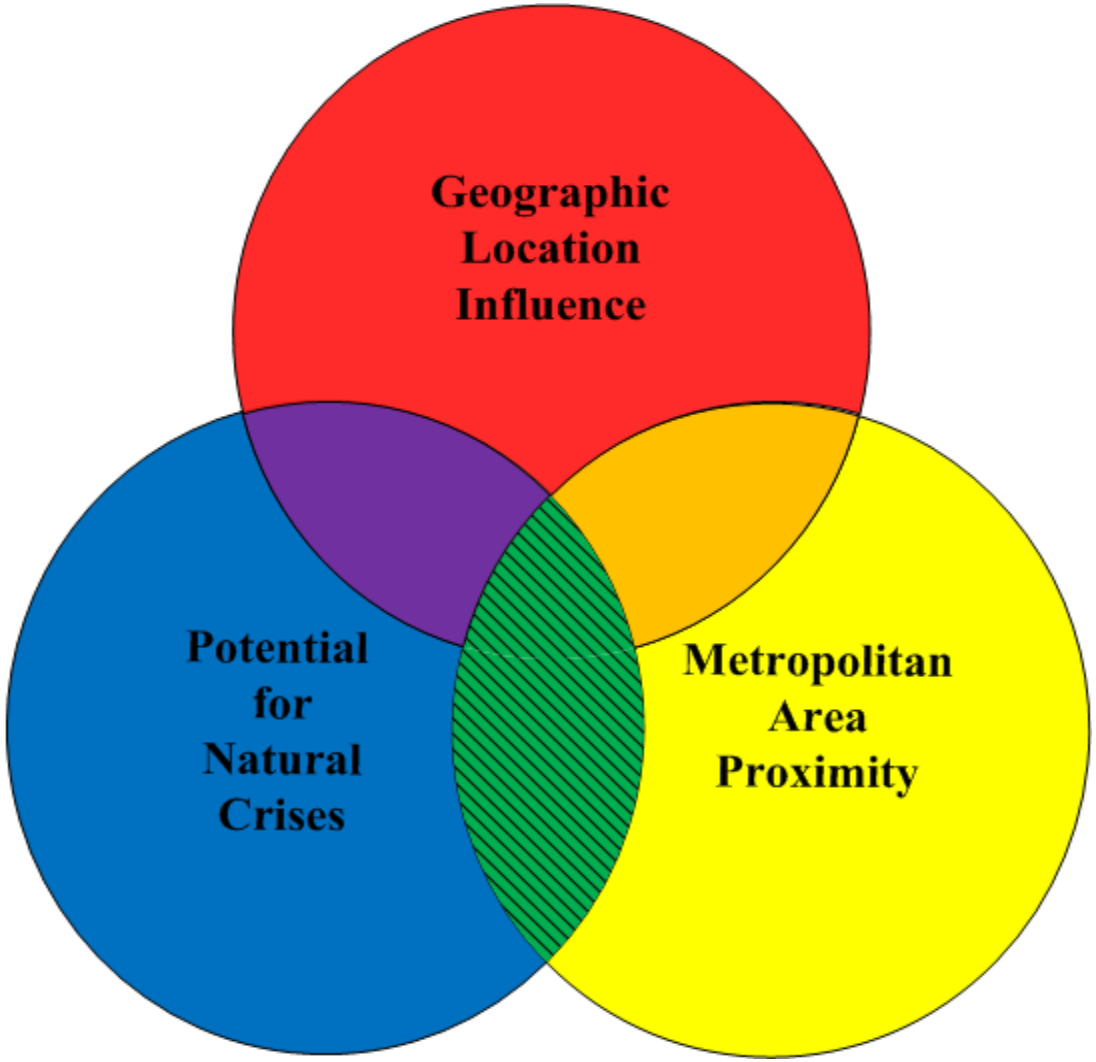
RQ5: Findings (Institutional Type)



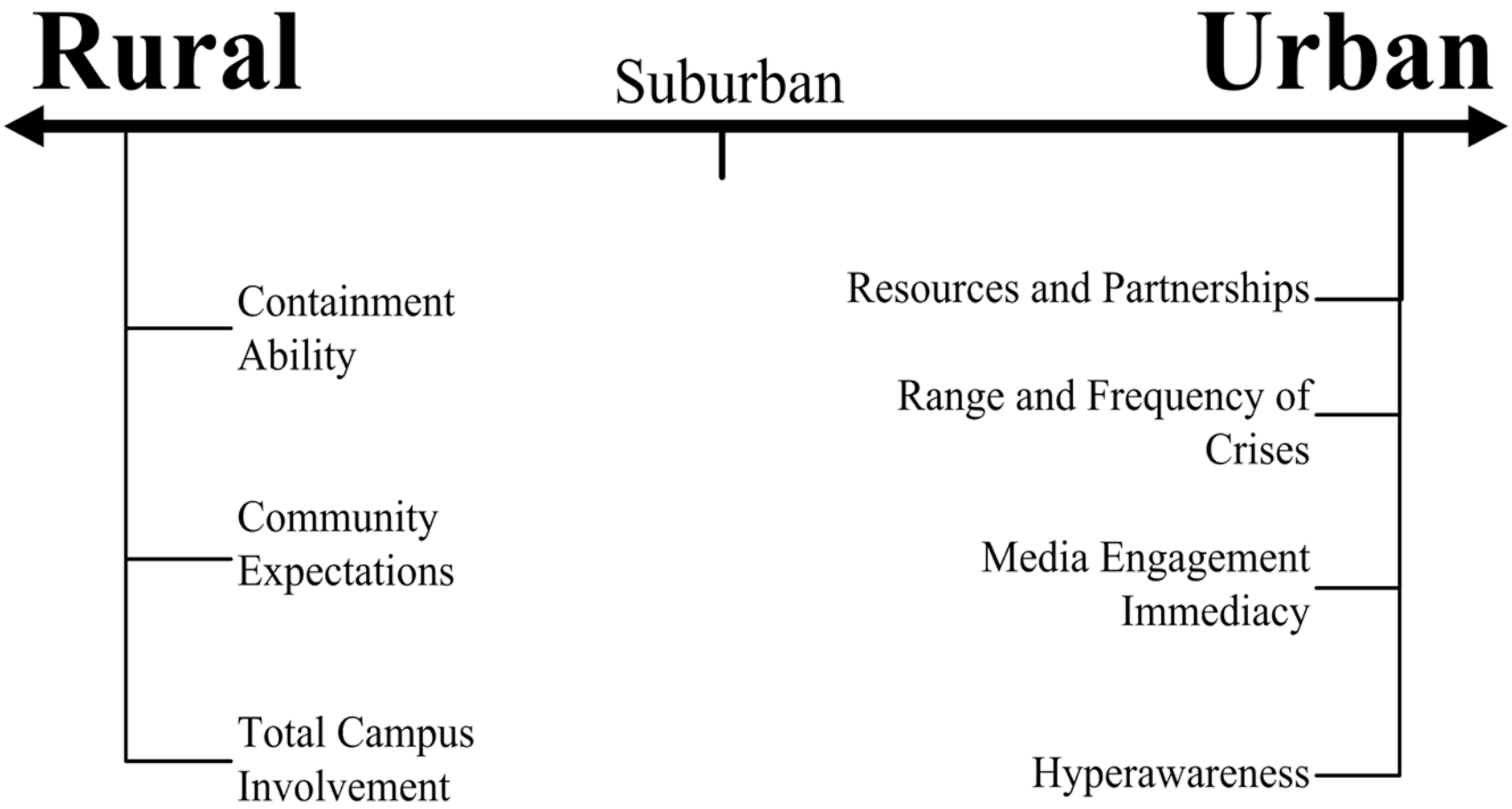
RQ6: Findings (Institutional Size)



RQ7: Findings (Geographic Location)



RQ7: Findings (Geographic Location)



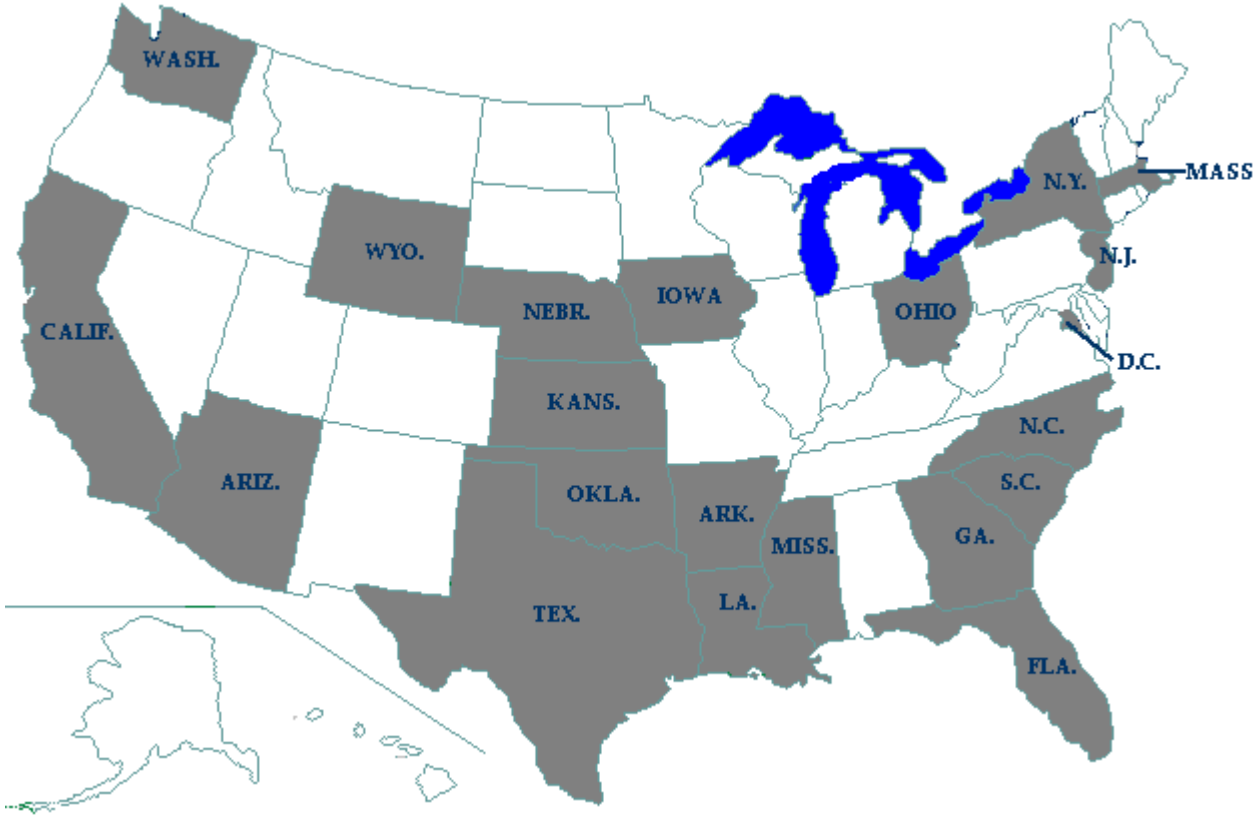
Participating Institutions (n= 51)

- The primary goal was to secure participation from a manageable sample of institutions with the following characteristics:
  - Public (32); Private (19)
  - Commuter (18); Residential (33)
  - Two-Year (3); Four-Year (48)
  - HBCU (4); PWI (47)
  - Liberal Arts (4); Non-Liberal Arts (47)
  - Land Grants (15); Non-Land Grants (36)
  - Religiously Affiliated (11); Non-Religiously Affiliated (40)
  - Very Small/Small (9); Medium (7); Large (14); Very Large (21)
  - Rural (6); Suburban (18); Urban (27)

Participant Demographics (n= 51)

- Arkansas (1)
- Arizona (1)
- California (4)
- Florida (9)
- Georgia (8)
- Iowa (1)
- Kansas (1)
- Louisiana (4)
- Massachusetts (1)
- Mississippi (5)
- Nebraska (1)
- New Jersey (2)
- New York (2)
- North Carolina (3)
- Ohio (1)
- Oklahoma (1)
- South Carolina (1)
- Texas (2)
- Washington (1)
- Washington, DC (1)
- Wyoming (1)

Participant Demographics (n= 51)



Data Collection – Mixed Methods

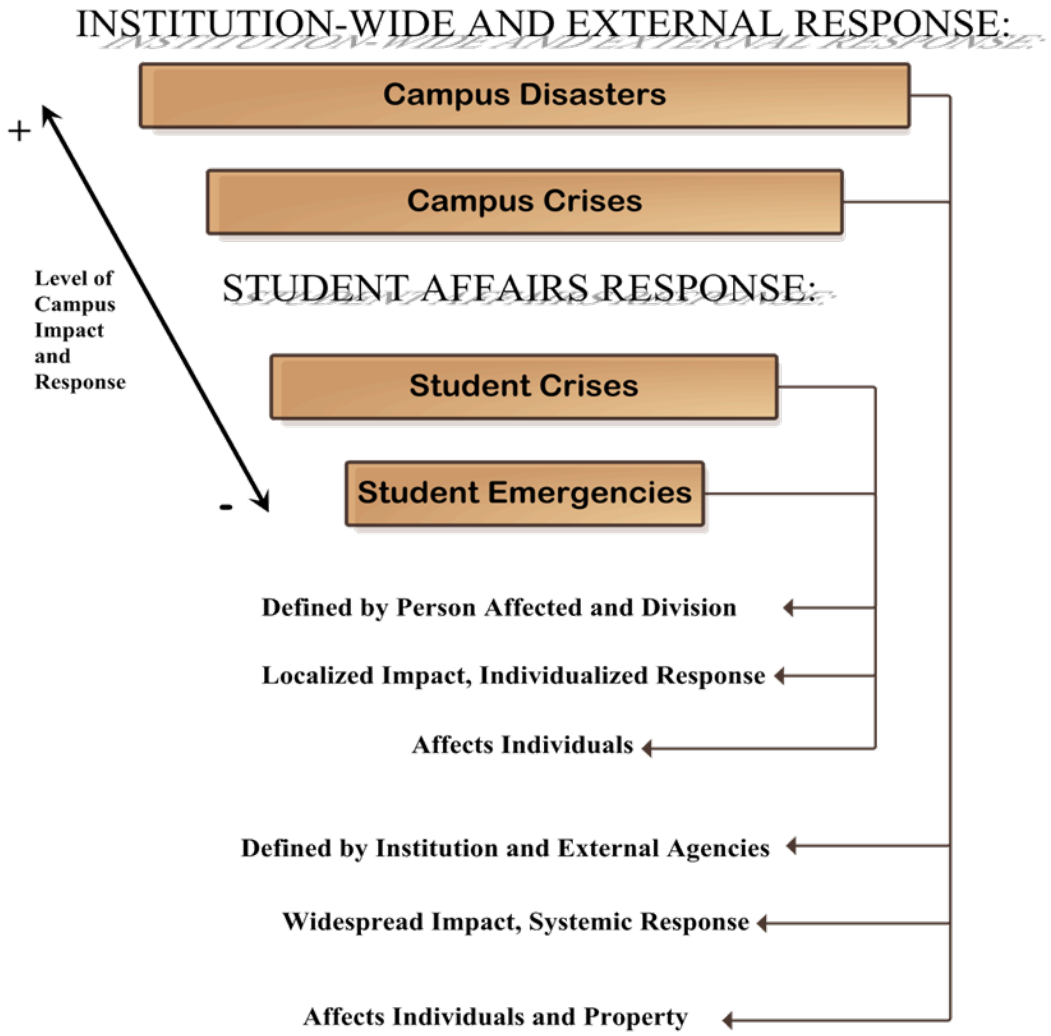
- 114-item *Crisis Response Survey*
  - Definition
  - Structure
    - Organization
    - Education, Preparation, Training
    - Assessment/Evaluation
    - Memorials
  - Process
    - Response
  - Structure and Process
    - Communication and Collaboration
- Likert Scale
- Return Rate: 94.44% (51 of 54)

- 51 Qualitative Interviews
  - Conducted via telephone over 18 days
    - Structure, Process, and Structure/Process
  - Initial Point of Entry – CSAO
  - Average Interview - ~37 minutes
    - 86 minutes – longest interview
    - 16 minutes – shortest interview
  - Data transcribed, coded, and analyzed
  - Member checks, peer reviews

Research Question 1

- What constitutes a crisis from the perspective of the institution and from the division of student affairs, according to institutional policy?
  - Analysis:
    - Qualitative Analysis for Consistent Patterns and Themes
    - Horizontalization and Synthesis

Research Question 1: Findings



Research Question 1: Discussion

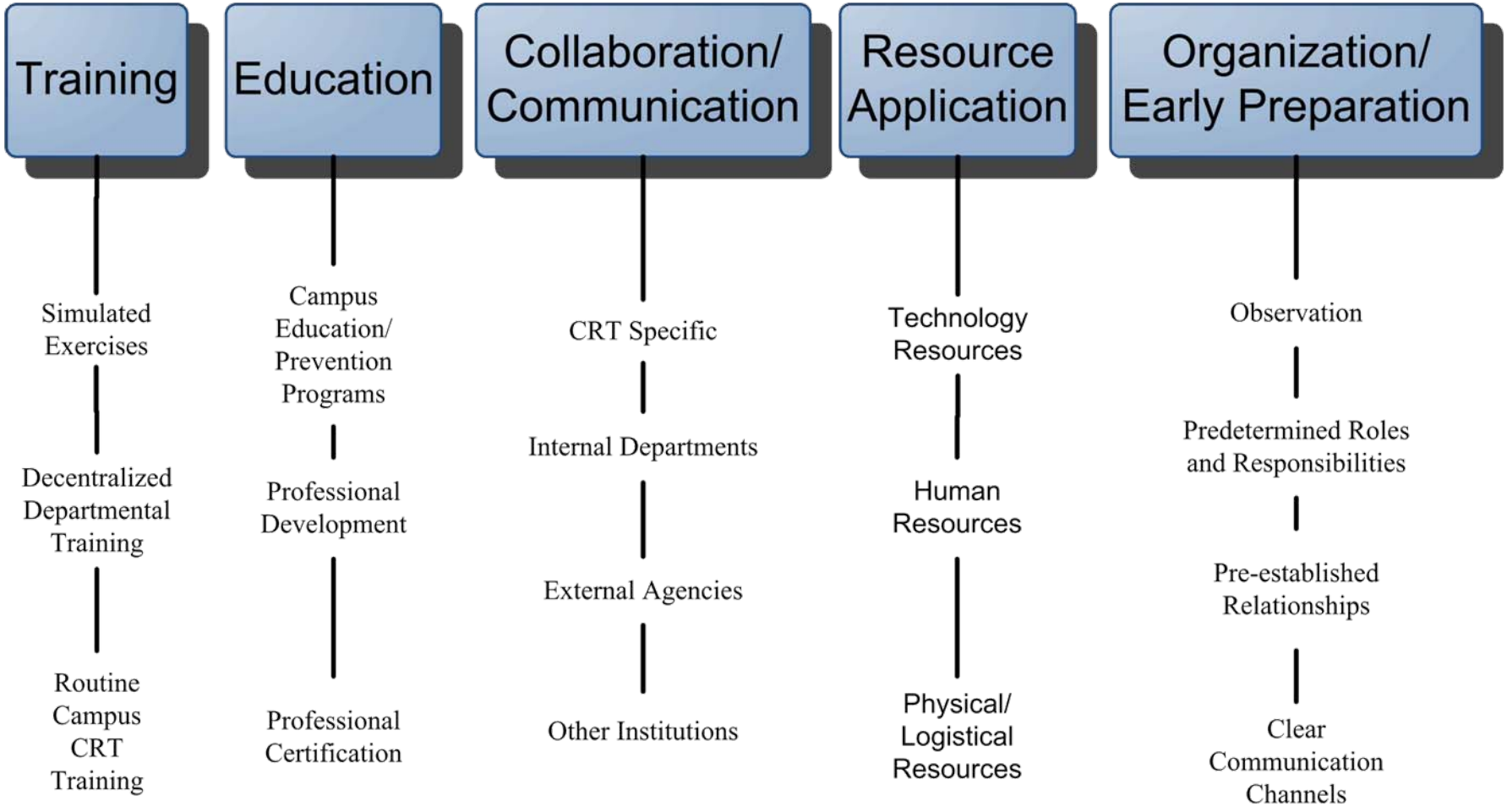
- Critical Points to Examine:
  - Exceptions to the Rule: Very small/small institutions in many cases.
  - Even minor student emergencies can escalate quickly without efficient recognition and response.
  - Response to Primary victims AND Secondary victims

Research Question 2

- Who is involved in the development and process of crisis response protocols and how do institutions prepare themselves for crisis response?
  - Analysis:
    - Qualitative Analysis for Consistent Patterns and Themes
    - Horizontalization and Synthesis
    - Surveys and Interviews

Research Question 2: Findings

Research Question 2: Findings



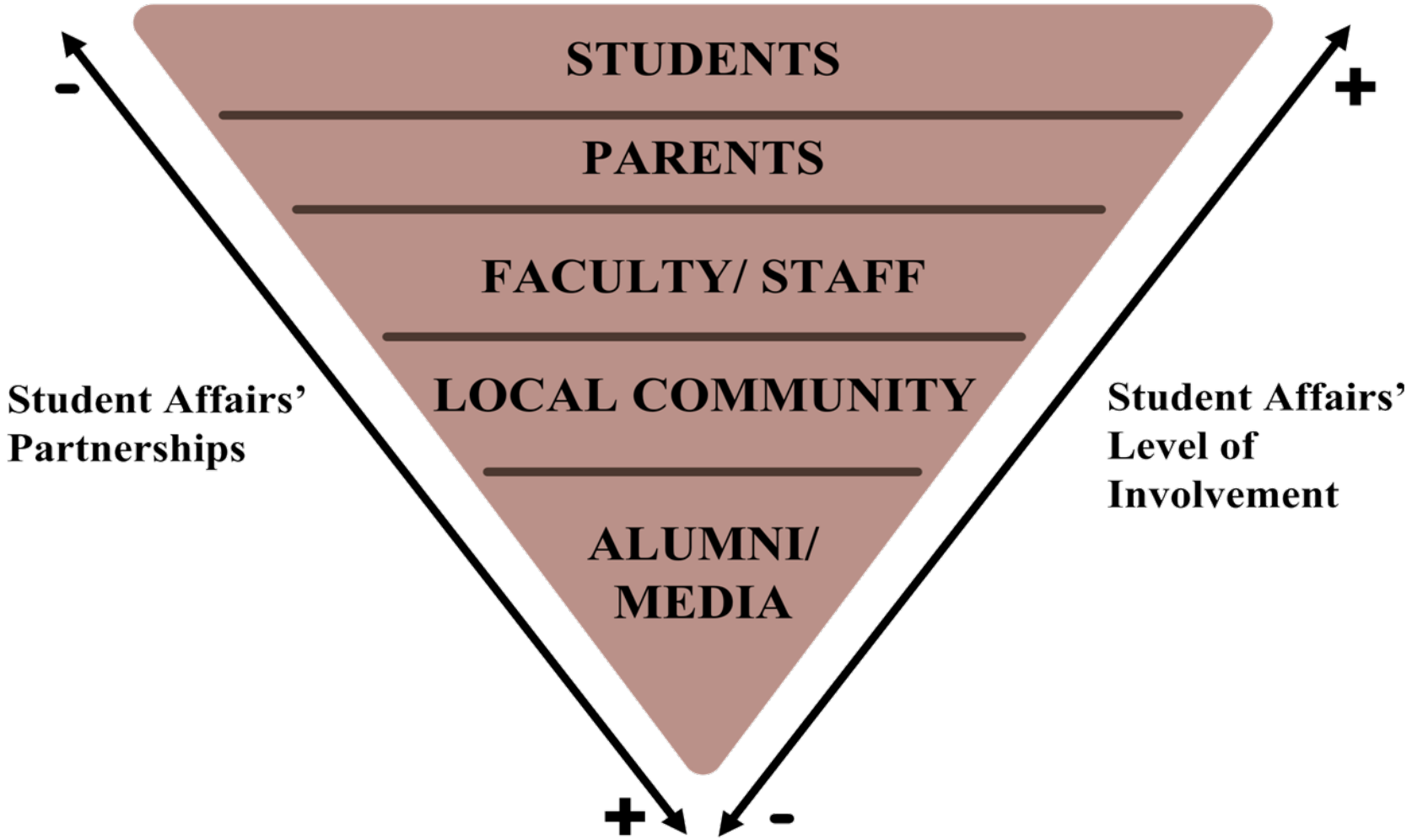
RQ2: "What More Can We Do?"

- How are you preparing your campus and community for crises and critical incidents? What strategies/initiatives/relationships have been beneficial? What more can we do?
- Membership and Preparation of CRT varies across institutions
  - Each institution is unique and has its own needs (Coastal Institutions).
  - Training is largely decentralized and varies from department to department.
  - Majority suggested that this aspect of the CRP needed to be improved.
    - Frequent training exercises;
    - Opportunities and rewards for continuing education and enhanced communication and collaboration;
    - Additional innovative technological advances;
    - Early preparation and organization

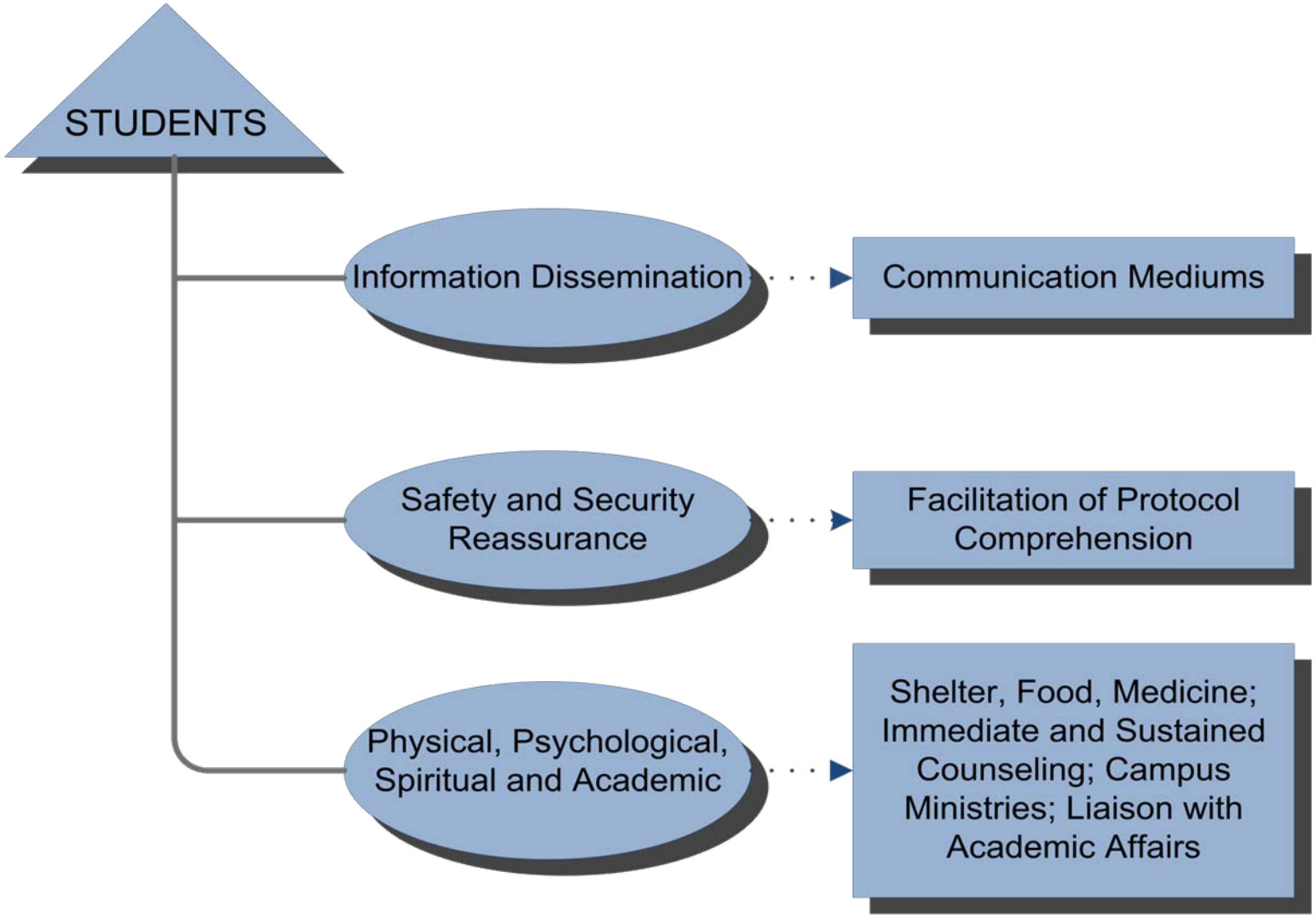
Research Question 3

- Whose needs are being met in times of crisis and what are these needs? How are these needs being addressed?
  - Analysis:
    - Qualitative Analysis for Consistent Patterns and Themes
    - Horizontalization and Synthesis

Research Question 3: Findings



Research Question 3: Findings



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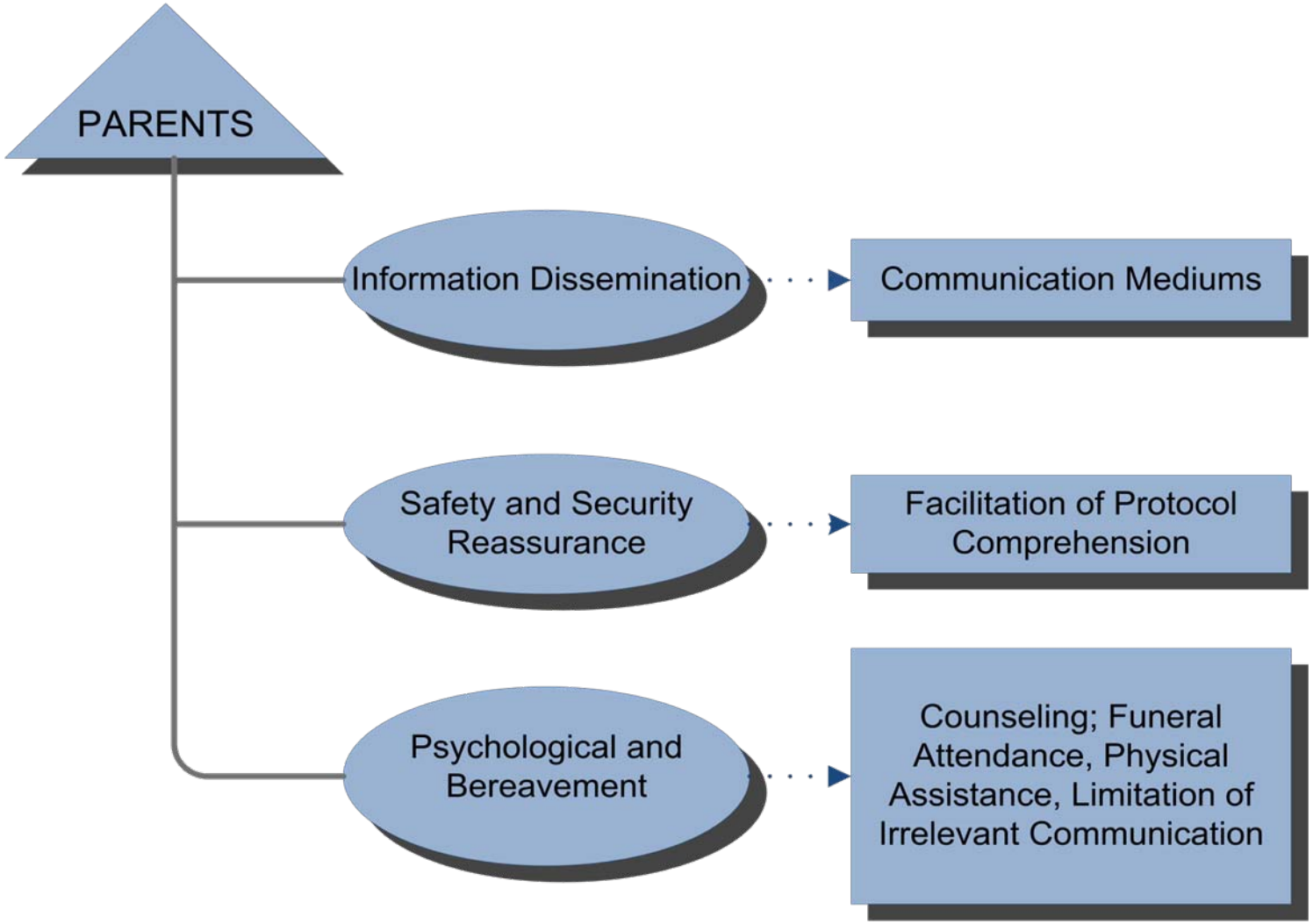

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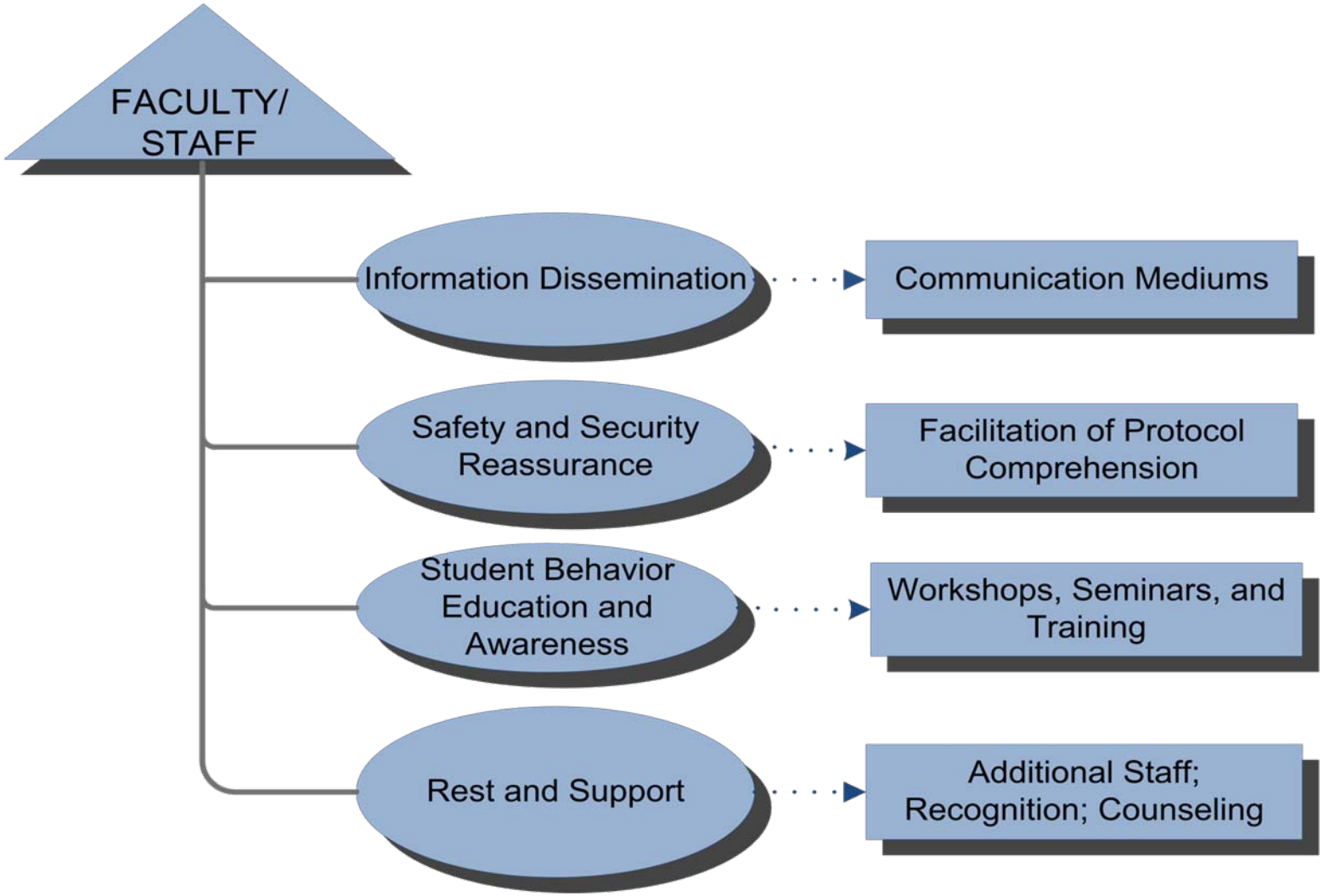

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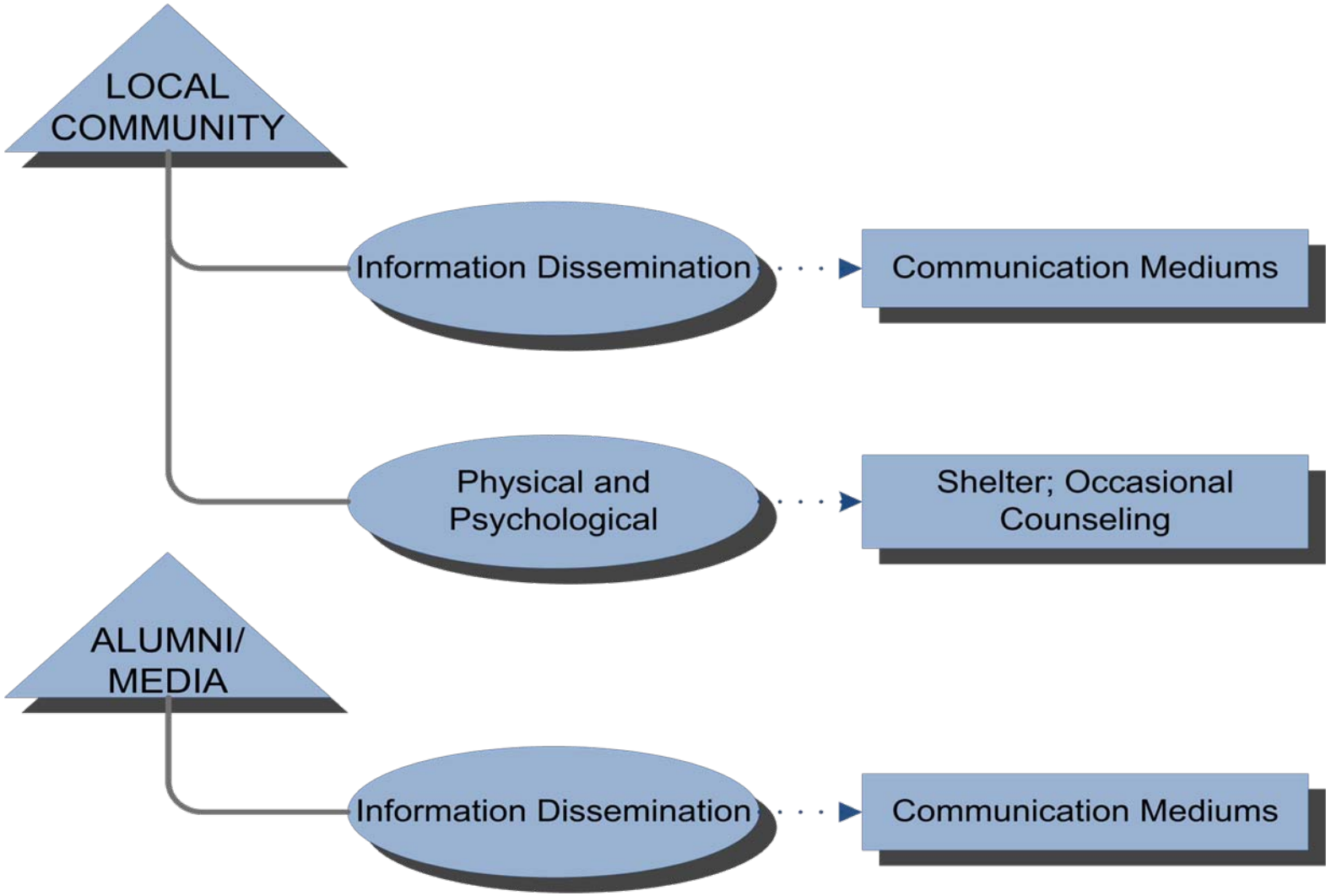


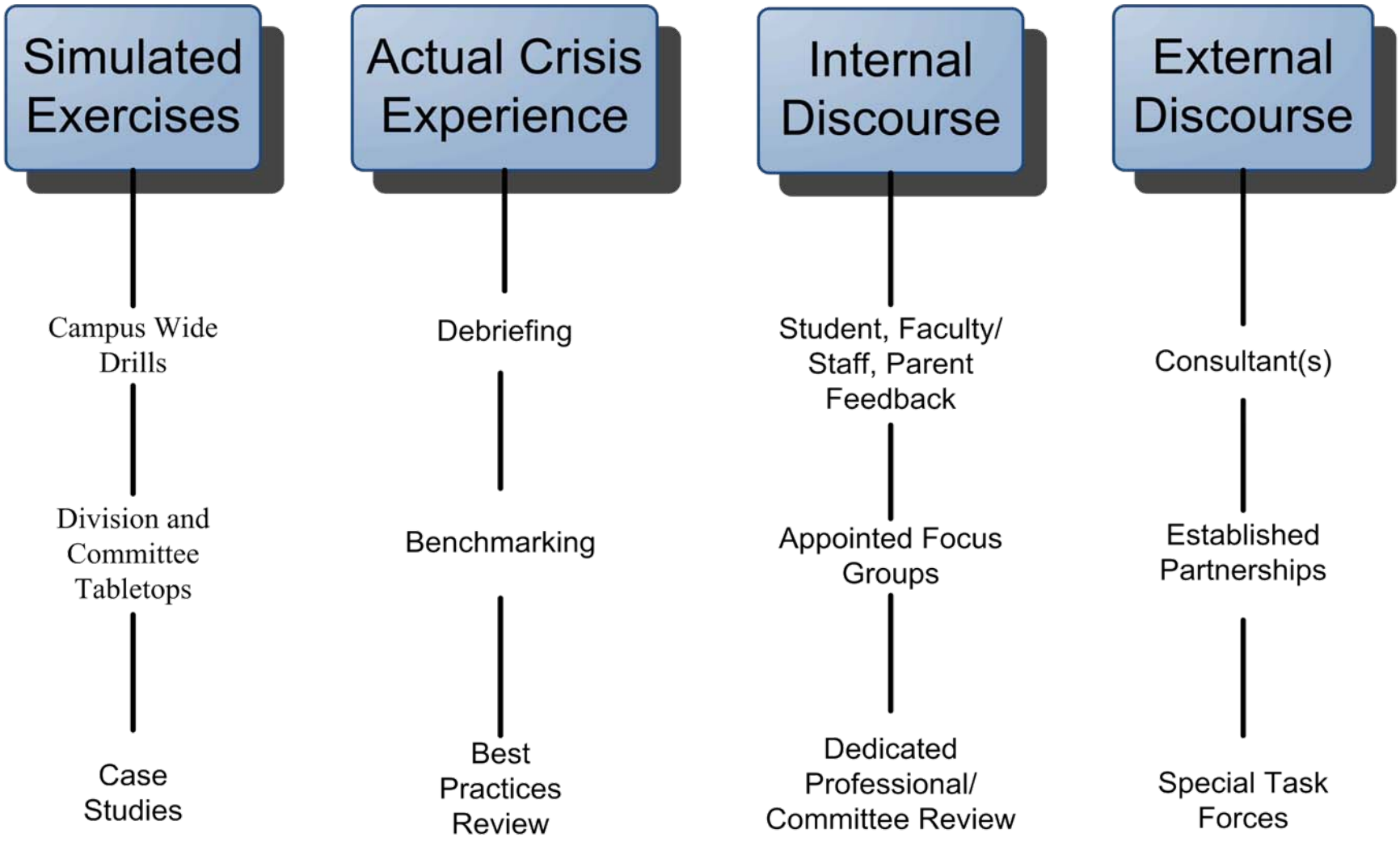
RQ3: "What More Can We Do?"

- Are there additional stakeholder groups and/or needs? If so, who are they, what are their needs, and how are you addressing them? What more can we do?
  - In the future, this area will increase in importance.
    - Media awareness and societal expectations continue to grow in the face of threats to safety and security.
  - The population most often affected is the students.
    - The need for first responders who understand them is crucial. Who understands the students the most? The answer is obvious.
  - **Additional Concerns:**
    - How do institutions of different types, sizes, and locations generate the funds and resources needed to reach ALL relevant constituent needs?

Research Question 4

- How are crisis response protocols evaluated and improved?
  - Analysis:
    - Qualitative Analysis for Consistent Patterns and Themes
    - Horizontalization and Synthesis

Research Question 4: Findings



RQ4: "What More Can We Do?"

- How are your campuses evaluating response plans and efforts? What more can we do?
  - No CRP is complete without the evaluation phase.
    - Surprising numbers of participants indicated they needed much work.
    - Just as evaluation and assessment is a priority in our daily work, so too should it be in the area of crisis response. The potential ramifications are unacceptable.
    - **Additional Concerns:**
      - Does external evaluation open up the institution to liability concerns?

Building Bridges, Identifying Gaps

Beneficial Resources

- **Relevant Literature and Empirical Studies** (Books, Reports, etc.)
  - *In Search of Safer Campuses: Emerging Practices for Student Affairs in Addressing Campus Violence* (2008)
  - *Leadership Exchange: Is Your Campus Ready? Crisis Management in a New Era* (2008)
  - *Crisis Communication: A Casebook Approach (2007)*
  - *Campus Crisis Management: A Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Prevention, Response, and Recovery* (2007)
  - *Crisis Management: Responding from the Heart* (2006)
  - *A Practical Guide for University Crisis Response* (2004)
  - *Instilling Principles of Risk Management into the Daily Practice of Student Affairs* (2001)
  - *Campuses Respond to Violent Tragedy* (1994)
  - *Coping with the Disruptive College Student* (1994)
- **Empirical Studies**
  - Dissertation Studies – Akers (2007); Zdziarski (2001), Hartzog (1981)

Beneficial Resources

- **Emergency Management Resources Related to Campus Emergencies**
  - United States Department of Education
    - *Action Guide for Emergency Management for Institutions of Higher Education (2009)*
    - *Steps for Developing a School Emergency Management Plan (2007)*
    - *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities*
  - United States Secret Service
    - *Safe Schools Initiative Guide and Report*
    - *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*
  - United States Department of Health and Human Services
    - *Report to the President on Issues Raised by the Virginia Tech Tragedy*
  - National Domestic Preparedness Consortium
    - *Strategy for Campus Emergency Preparedness (2007)*

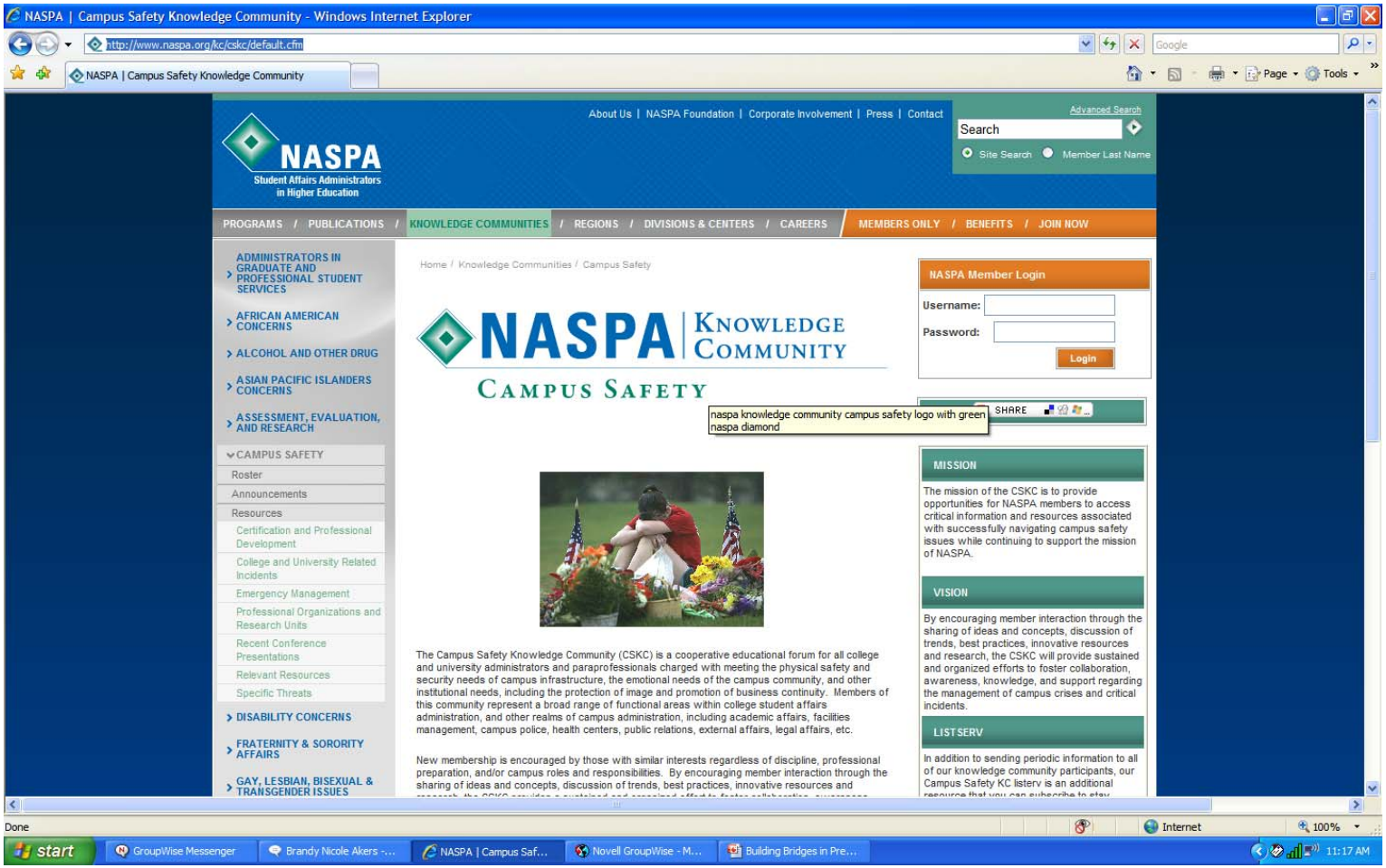
Beneficial Resources

- **Additional Emergency Management Related Resources**
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency
    - *State and Local Guide (SLG) 101: Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning*
  - National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities
    - *Safe Schools Facilities Checklist*
  - International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators
    - *Blueprint for Safer Campuses*
  - Additional Resources
    - *Florida Report on the Gubernatorial Task Force for University Campus Safety*
    - *NIMS Implementation Activities for Schools and Higher Education Institutions*
    - *Pandemic Flu: A Planning Guide for Educators*

Beneficial Resources

- **Professional Associations and Specialized Centers/Communities**
  - NASPA, ACPA, SACSA, ACHA, ASJA, ICISF, NEMA, IACLEA, NACUBO
  - NIMH, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, The Jed Foundation, Ulifeline
  - National Center for Higher Education Risk Management, National Center for Crisis Management, Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project, American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress, National Domestic Preparedness Consortium
  - College & University Disaster Assessment Research Center, US DOE Higher Education Center for Emergency Preparedness, FEMA, DHS, NCBRT at LSU
  - NASPA Campus Safety Knowledge Community
- **Specific Institutional Reports and Initiatives**
  - Student Involvement: Ready Campus, Campus CERT Teams
  - Virginia Tech: Campus Shootings Report, Faculty/Staff Guidelines, Safe Watch
  - Tulane: Post Katrina Report
  - Texas A&M: Bonfire Report
  - Drills: UNC- Greensboro I, UNC-Greensboro II (Caution: Sensitive Nature)
  - Memorials: Virginia Tech, Texas A&M, Northern Illinois
  - *Shots Fired on Campus* (linked from NASPA CSKC website)

NASPA Campus Safety KC



NASPA Campus Safety KC

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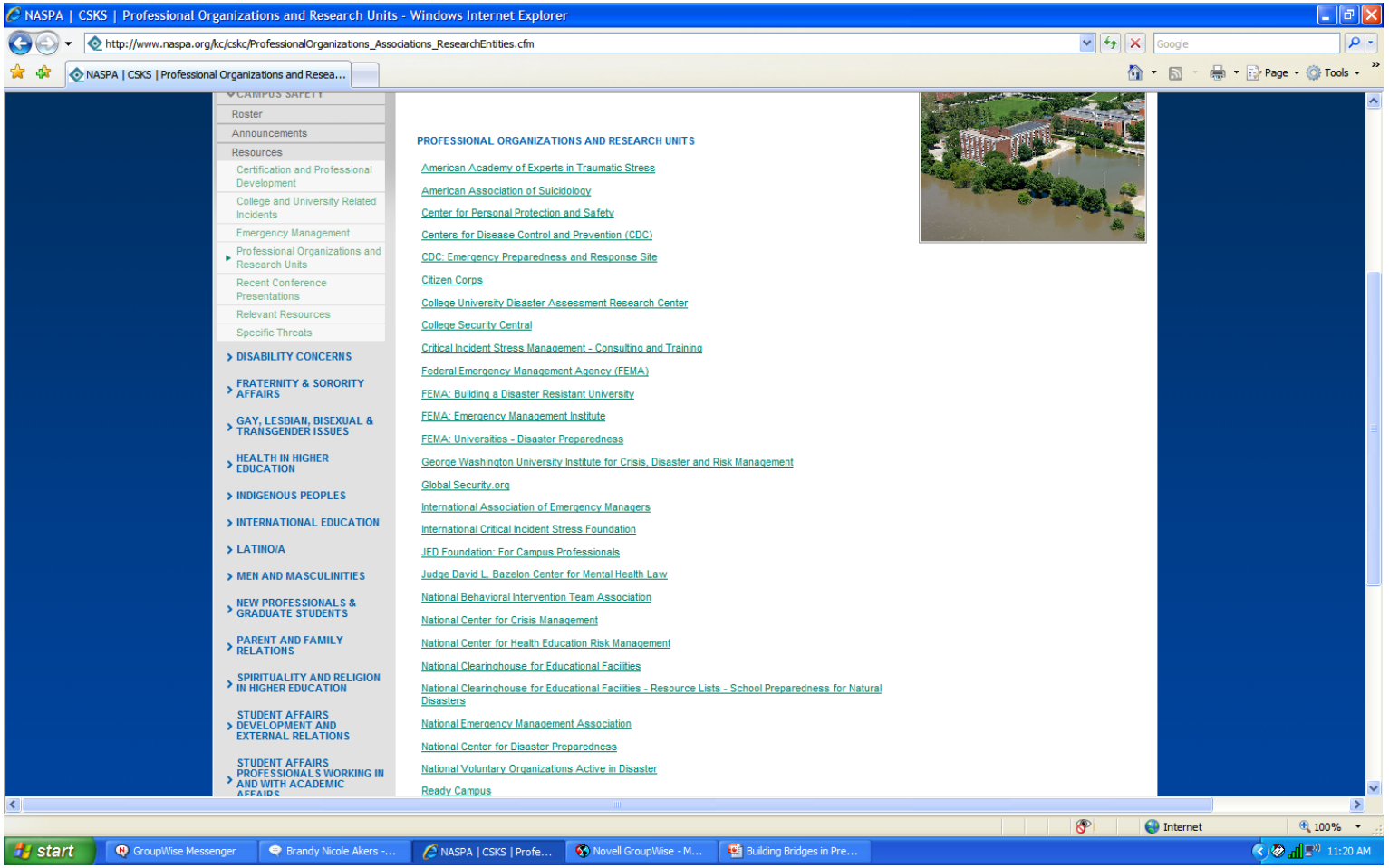

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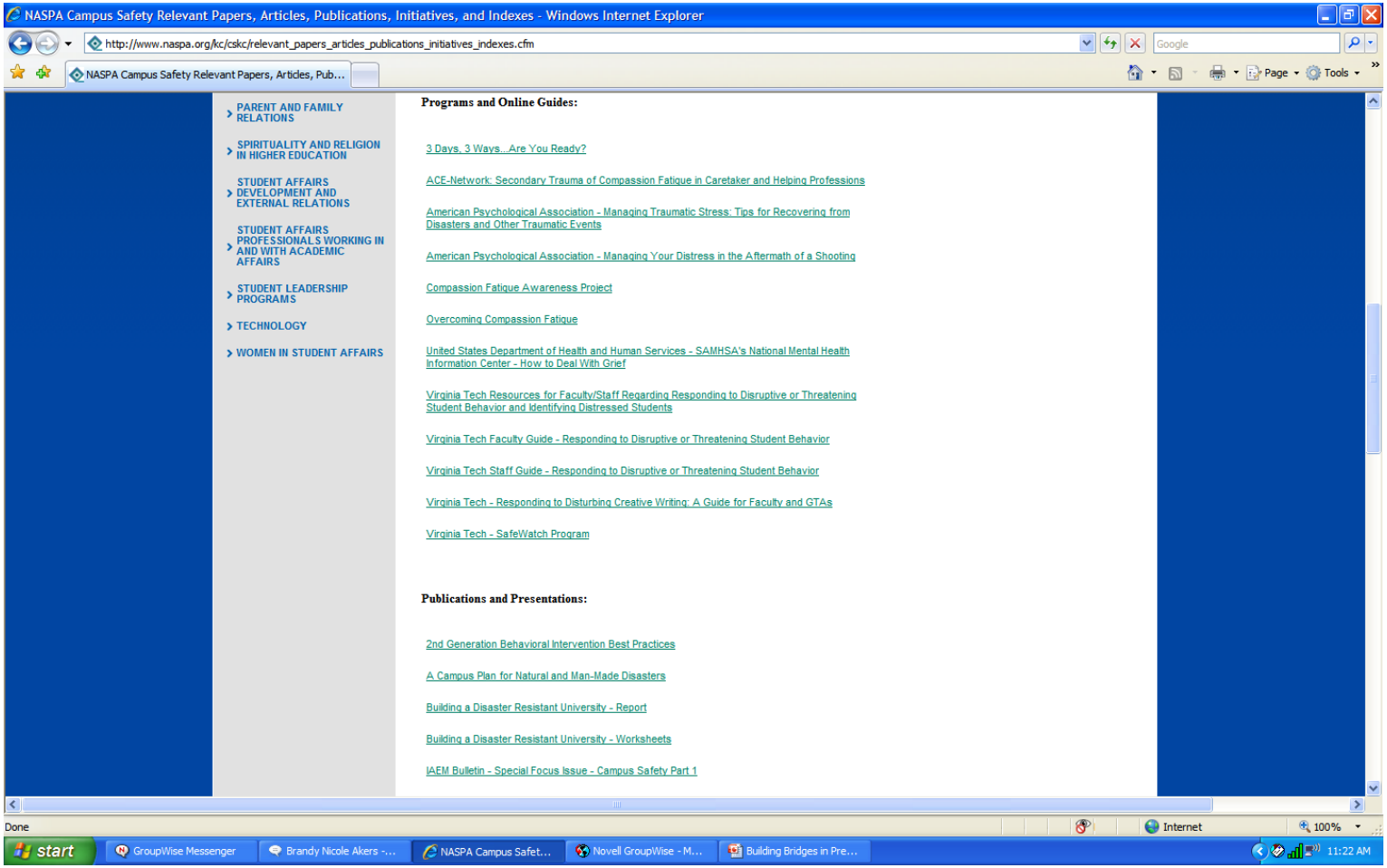

NASPA Campus Safety KC

Beneficial Resources

- **Daily Updates** (Incidents, Legislation, Response)
  - *Chronicle*, FEMA/EMI, CDC, Red Cross, Professional Association Listservs
- **Conference Attendance and Past Presentations**
  - SACSA, NASPA, ACPA, ASJA, ICISF, College Security Central, National Student Safety and Security, Emergency Management Higher Education Conference
- **Certification Programs and Professional Development/Consulting**
  - FEMA EMI ; FEMA/EMI Courses and Independent Study (ex. ICS and IS-100.HE: Introduction to ICS for Higher Education)
  - Higher Education Degree and Certification Programs (ex. UNC-Chapel Hill)
  - Short Term Certification Programs (ex. Harvard University, ICISF)
  - Higher Ed Hero; Paper Clip Communications
- **Annotated Bibliographies and Additional References**
  - Bibliography: *Crisis in Higher Education and Student Affairs* (Elkins & Pasque, 2008)
  - Additional Research Centers: (Harvard University; APA Help Center; National Center for Disaster Preparedness; FEMA HE Articles; National Clearinghouse for Ed. Facilities)

Talking Points on Today's Campus

- Use of Social Networking Sites for Crisis Communication with Stakeholders
- Duty to Warn vs. Student Privacy
- Mental Health Transcripts
- Timely Warning Policy; FERPA and HIPAA
- Crisis Evacuation Plans on Course Syllabi
- Plan, Plan, Plan…Time Management and Limited Resources
- Utilization of Expertise found within NASPA, ACPA, ACHA, ASJA
- Academic Partnerships (graduate students; service learning)
- External Partnerships

Consistent Issues Across Campuses

- Open Access of Campuses and Buildings
- Resource Management of Campus Police and Mental Health Professionals
- Establishing and Maintaining Perimeter Control
- Communication and Coordination with ALL stakeholders
  - All-Inclusive First Responder Communication
- Identification and Clarity of Person in Charge
- Speed at which Events Occur

Key Questions to Consider

- **Adequate Planning**
  - **Does Your Institution Have Effective Plans in Place? Is your Department Included? Is your staff trained?**
    - EOPs and CCPs
      - Communication during crisis is different than under normal situations.
        - People do not hear or process well; more speculation
        - Use timely messages, short sentences, and action verbs
        - Keep it short and simple
    - COOPs
      - Housing, Fuel (gas), Power (generators), Behavior (over a period of days), Financial (payroll, vendors), Employees (family impact)
    - Individual Building Action Plans
      - 10 Bullet Points or Less
      - Building Leader Designee

Key Questions to Consider

- **Adequate Physical Resources and Logistics**
  - **Is Your Institution Sufficiently Staffed and Trained?**
    - Does your institution have Surge Centers?
      - Cots at Coliseum, Football Field
    - Is your Physical Plant trained in Perimeter Control?
    - Does your campus employ contra-flow traffic patterns?
    - Do you have RF radio transmitters, panic buttons, go kits, pushbar doors, voice alert systems in buildings?
    - Do you have contracts for cleaning and reconstruction?
  - **Does your institution:**
    - have DRU status?
    - monitor recruitment of students to suspicious campus organizations and beyond?
    - have a threat assessment team and/or behavioral intervention team?
    - back up key records and store them off campus?

Key Questions to Consider

- **Adequate Physical Resources and Logistics**
  - **When should we evacuate vs. sheltering in place? Lock Down?**
    - Evacuation Issues: Could do more harm than good.
      - Natural Disasters and Chemical/Biological Attacks
        - Evacuations can increase chaos.
      - Campus Shootings
        - Perpetrator could exit with crowd; Crowd could move toward perpetrator.
      - Evacuees must be instructed where to evacuate.
      - If credible risk of fire and explosion, evacuate!
    - Problems with Lockdown:
      - Similar Descriptions of Perpetrator; Students running for cover to locked building

Key Questions to Consider

- **Adequate Physical Resources and Logistics**
  - **Does your Campus Day Care have consistent drills and off-campus evacuation sites?**
    - Family Assistance Centers on and off campus?
    - Hotel, Gym, Parking Lots (space and food provisions)
  - **Do you have plans for extended power outages?**
    - Research Implications, Dining Implications, Security Implications, etc.

Key Questions to Consider

- **Adequate Physical Resources and Logistics**
  - **Are you prepared for a variety of physical crises?**
    - Labs, Chemicals, Natural Gas, Fertilizer
  - **Do you effectively mitigate?**
    - Minimize entrances and exits to campus; card access to all buildings; additional lighting and emergency phones; protection of critical data
  - **Are you prepared for the following:**
    - Active Shooter(s) and Hostage Scenarios?
    - Chemical and Biological Threats?
    - Pandemics?
    - Food-borne Attacks?
    - Hurricanes, Flooding, and Tornados
    - Ice, Extended Power Outages
    - Bombings

Key Questions to Consider

- **Internal and External Communication**
  - **Is your staff familiar and/or fluent with ICS?**
  - **Does your institution maintain a variety of Internal Communication methods?**
    - Email, text (~40% nationally), autodialers/reverse 911, electronic display boards, intercoms, loudspeakers, student media, FM radio transmitters
    - Can't rely on just one
- **Information Sharing**
  - **Is your ENTIRE staff trained and tested in what information can be shared with whom and under what circumstances?**

Key Questions to Consider

- **Internal and External Communication**
  - **Do you have a secondary information site to direct others to after the initial alert?**
    - Pop-ups on every college homepage; Public Affairs blogs; phone centers, etc.
  - **Is your text messaging system hosted on campus and how often/under what circumstances do you send them?**
    - Technology issues
    - Gain some perspective regarding alerts.
      - What question would you rather answer the next day?
        - Why did you alert when it wasn't serious/nothing happened?
        - Why didn't you alert when it was serious/something happened?

Key Questions to Consider

- **Internal and External Communication**
  - **3 Cs Approach: Consistent, Credible, Caring**
    - From the beginning, acknowledge the event with empathy.
    - Not a time to impress people with your vocabulary.
      - Explain and inform in simple and accurate terms.
    - Commit to continued communication
    - Do not send mixed messages; honesty, openness, and accuracy
  - **Do you have plans for communicating the following:**
    - Rescheduled classes and their locations?
    - Continued care of patients and housing of displaced students?
    - Short and long-term counseling services; medical services?
    - Dining alternatives?

Key Questions to Consider

- **Coordination and Collaboration with Other Groups**
  - **Internal Departments and Units**
    - Does the Department A know what Department B is doing in the event of an emergency?
  - **External Agencies and Entities**
    - Do you have efficient coordination with outside agencies?
    - How are they alerted?
    - Can they get to the scene in efficient time?
    - Who is in charge?

Key Questions to Consider

- **Long Term Recovery Questions**
  - **How are you communicating what you are doing and to whom are you communicating?**
  - **How do events affect the image and future enrollment?**
  - **Are you a part of the incident review and improvement implementation processes?**
  - **What are your plans for memorials, crisis anniversaries, and long term counseling for ALL stakeholders?**
  - **Do you have enough mental health professionals?**
    - Do you have plans to hire externally if need be?

Next? Areas of Future Research

- Specific Campus Safety Features; Evacuation, Lockdown, and Sheltering
- Real Time Communication, Technology/Communication Systems, ICS Use
- External Resource Allocation & Partnerships, Resource Management
- Mitigation, Preparation, Response, Recovery, Assessment; Drills
- Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment Teams, Coordination
- Information Disclosure, Media Relations
- Emergency Response Team Role Clarification, Training, Certification
- Student Volunteerism and Service Learning Opportunities
- Faculty Education and Workshops on Student Behavior
- Privacy vs. Duty to Warn – FERPA, HIPAA, College Application Scrutiny

Next? Contributions to the Field

- Dynamic Threat Assessment Profile
  - Campus Grounds
  - Computer Infrastructure
  - Students and Staff
  - Academic Buildings
  - Residence Halls
  - Sporting Venues
- “Ready Campus” or Related Organization
- Certification and Training
- Crisis Management/Service Learning Course Development
- Video Game Training/Virtual Simulation
- Biological and Chemical Threat Assessment
- Campus (CERT) Teams via DHS and Citizen Corps; Red Cross Chapter

Questions or Comments

- Thank You!!!

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