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ROWAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS SAFETY

by
Kristen A. Muscat

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
May 3, 2011

Thesis Chair: Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

ABSTRACT

Kristen A. Muscat
ROWAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS SAFETY
2010/11
Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.
Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration

The primary purpose of this study was to explore students' perceptions of campus

safety, including use of campus safety services and the professionalism of

Department of Public Safety officials. The study examined the perceptions of 1,070

students at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ during Spring semester 2011. The

study also investigated the impact of demographic factors such as gender, race,

semester standing, hometown setting, home distance from Rowan, and crime

victimization history on student perceptions. Data on the perceptions were collected

by a survey using Likert items on a 1-5 scale, open ended, multiple choice questions,

and free response comments. Questions were grouped by demographic information,

campus safety, sense of community, campus environment, use of public safety

services, and overall perceptions. The majority of students respondents reported that

overall, they feel safe on campus and they feel Rowan's Public Safety officials are

professional.

ACKNOWLDGMENTS

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Higher education institutions across the United States spend millions of dollars each year on safety and security measures to protect their campus community. Most universities and colleges campuses are open to the public, which makes them vulnerable targets for crime and violence. University public safety departments must not only protect the campus community from outside threats, but also protect against crimes committed by members of the university. Numerous factors such as alcohol and drug use, age, gender, and limited responsibilities create a unique student population on college campuses that require special consideration when it comes to safety. Students not only go to campus to learn, but a majority of students also call their university's campus home.

Recent incidents of campus violence across the country have placed a spotlight on safety and security in the college environment. The United States Federal Government has stepped in and created regulation under the Clery Act requires that colleges and universities publically report all crimes that occur on campus. If fear of violence or victimization overtakes students' mind while on campus, they will not be able to grow emotionally, socially, or academically. While campus crime statistics may give some insight into the effectiveness of security measures, the question remains how safe students feel while on campus.

Statement of the Problem

Previous studies examining student perceptions of campus safety and fear of victimization have been conducted. The majority of these studies focus on variables and how they relate to a students' fear of victimization such as gender. The most recent study of student perceptions of campus safety was concluded in 2010 by Derek Zuckerman at Fordham University in Bronx, New York.

Zuckerman examined the role of religion on student perceptions of campus safety. He focused on the living-learning community and how that affected students' perceptions of campus safety. The study included a survey of Fordham students as well as three secular colleges. Through his study, Zuckerman found "there was a significant difference in the perceptions of students at the Catholic colleges versus those at the secular institutions" (p. 103). Zuckerman concluded that "religious institutions focus on community or solidarity, where one is concerned with the greater good and not just their own needs…This study reveals the importance of the charism that is present on the campus to the feeling of a sense of safety" (p. 104). Rowan University has no religious affiliation and thus, according to Zuckerman's research, lacks a sense of community through shared beliefs.

Abraham Maslow's (1970) Hierarchy of Needs in relation to human motivation states that in order for students to reach the highest stages of self actualization and self transcendence, they must first have physiological and safety needs met. Safety needs consists of "security, freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos; need for structure, order, law, and limits" (Maslow, p.18). In his study, Zuckerman stated that a sense of community is a major deterrent to violence. Thus, on a campus where there is an overall feeling of community, students will likely feel safer.

Technology now plays a significant role in campus safety and security. Campus safety is two-fold with prevention and intervention as tactics. With millions of dollars allocated to on-campus police forces and technological enhancements, it is important to know that these measures keep crime down and help students feel safe. Even if incidents of crime on campus are low, students must feel safe and secure while on campus in order to make the most of their college experience.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of Rowan University students regarding campus safety. In order to measure student perceptions of campus safety, this study evaluated students' sense of community on campus, fear of crime, and the overall attitudes involving Rowan's Department of Public Safety.

Significance of the Study

This study examined how safe Rowan University students feel on campus. The findings of this study may provide insight to public safety officials on what safety and security measures are effective. The study might also identify areas of improvement on how to make students feel safer on campus.

Assumptions and Limitations

The scope of this survey was limited to students at Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ. It was assumed that all students who answered the survey were currently enrolled in classes at the University. It is also assumed that all answers reported by students are truthful and accurate. Student perceptions may be influenced by background, prior experiences, and behaviors. Students answered the survey voluntarily and represent only a portion of Rowan University's student body. Though generalizations can be made

based on this study, the findings may not be applicable to other institutions. Also, there is potential for researcher bias, as the researcher is an intern at Rowan University's Department of Public Safety and has a personal interest in this study.

Operational Definitions

1. Campus: Any part of Rowan University's campus including residence halls, academic buildings, open spaces, sidewalks, parking lots, etc.

2. Perception (of students): Students' awareness, feeling, or sense based on environment.

3. Safe: Free from hurt, injury, danger, or risk.

4. Student: Any person currently enrolled in classes at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ including undergraduate and graduate students during the Spring 2011 semester.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of selected Rowan University students according to the factors of campus safety, sense of community, campus environment, and overall perceptions?

2. Is there a significant relationship between the demographic variables of gender, semester standing, race, hometown setting, home distance from Rowan, crime victimization history, and perceptions of Rowan University campus safety?

3. How do students' use of public safety services and interactions with Rowan University's Department of Public Safety impact their perceptions of campus safety?

4. What comments or suggestions do students have to help improve campus safety at
   Rowan University?

Overview of the Study

Chapter II provides a review of scholarly literature relevant to this study. This includes a brief history of safety and security on college campuses, as well as background information on policies, procedures, tactics, and programs used by public safety departments at higher education institutions.

Chapter III describes the methodology and procedures used to collect data in this study. The following are provided in the chapter: the context of the study, the population, sample selection, demographics, data collection methods, and how the data were analyzed.

Chapter IV presents and examines the results of the study. The focus of this chapter is to address the research questions posed in the introduction of the study. Narrative and statistical analysis is used to summarize the data in this section.

Chapter V summarizes and discusses the major findings of the study and provides conclusions and recommendations for practice and further research.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction to the Literature Review

This thesis focuses on student perceptions of safety on Rowan University's campus; therefore it is important to first understand the literature and research on campus safety and security. It is also important to examine the effectiveness of campus safety and security methods and educational programming for students on how to prevent campus crime. Due to an increase in campus crime and violence nationally, researchers now focus on campus safety and security more than ever before. This chapter begins with a brief overview of the history of campus safety and security; then moves on to focus on federal regulation and The Jeanne Clery Act. The chapter then discusses Rowan University's safety and security methods and Rowan's crime statistics. Next, student alcohol and drug use and its impact on campus crime is examined. The chapter reviews Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, student perceptions of campus safety, and the link between gender and campus safety. This chapter concludes with current methods and techniques used in campus safety and security. At the conclusion of this literature review, it should be understood the importance and effectiveness of campus safety and security at higher education institutions across the United States.

Brief History of College Campus Safety and Security

Higher education institutions are known for producing knowledge, educating students, and encouraging the overall advancement of society. Unfortunately crime is also commonplace on college campuses in the form of theft, vandalism, burglary, hazing, and rioting. Threats to the campus environment include students' high-risk drinking, mental illness, suicide, and various forms of violence against women (U.S. House of Representatives, 2007). Higher education institutions have a responsibility to keep their students safe. Controlling campus crime is not only important to protect students, but also the reputation of the institution. Many college campuses have an Office of Public Safety and some larger institutions even have their own Police Departments with arresting powers on campus. In addition to professional safety officers, colleges and universities often hire student officers to help patrol campus buildings. Drug and alcohol awareness programs, safe partying campaigns, and self-defense classes are staples on college campuses to help educate and protect students against preventable crimes.

Campus safety is twofold: prevention and intervention. Prevention involves education and communication of possible risks on campus. Policies and procedures are in place to prevent crime and also include plans of action once an incident occurs. An all-hazards emergency response plan (ERP) involves an institution's procedures and designated responsibilities during an on-campus emergency. Currently, 90% of colleges surveyed by *Reader's Digest* said they had ERPs in place at their institution (Fox & Savage, 2009). It is imperative to have an emergency response plan, because in the midst of an emergency there is no efficient method to delegate roles and responsibilities. In addition to action plans after an incident occurs, campuses create policies in order to reduce the risk of crime on campus. The key to campus safety is "not to create fear or

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diminish freedom, but rather to keep resources available, raise awareness that threats

exist and maintain open lines of communication" (Franzosa, 2009, p. 21). Students

should be made aware of possible risks and how to get help if they need it.

According to Nicoletti, Spencer-Thomas, and Bollinger (2001), college campuses

are relatively easy targets for crime for several reasons. One unique characteristic that

makes them an easy target is the "open" campus policy. College campuses also provide a

protective veil of anonymity; there is no such thing as an outsider and a stranger's

presence is rarely questioned. The average college campus is in operation 24 hours a day,

365 days a year. College campuses are vulnerable to crimes committed by outsiders, but

crimes are more often committed by students themselves.

The impact of crime on college campuses goes beyond the victim and incident.

Crimes require investigations which involve the use of resources. Crime also brings

media attention, often negative, to college campuses. Campus safety and security is

important to ensure students feel safe and have a positive college experience. Campus

safety is so imperative that the Federal Government created legislation that requires

institutions to track crime on their campus and report statistics to the public.

Federal Regulation and the Clery Act

The *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime*

Statistics Act was created in response to the rape, torture, and murder of Lehigh

University student Jeanne Clery. It was revealed after her murder that Lehigh University

"had no security patrols, the perpetrator was a fellow student with a history of violence,

and that there were 38 violent incidents on campus in the previous three years- more than

half committed by Lehigh students" (Kingsbury, Brush, Green, & Schulte, 2007, p. 48).

This incident in particular brought out the idea that students and parents have a right to know about campus crime statistics. The Clery Act was developed to give the public more information about college campus crime and safety.

The Clery Act requires higher education institutions to report campus crime statistics to the public. The Act also requires that institutions provide "timely warnings" to employees and students when dangerous crimes occur on campus. The Act is intended to help potential students and their parents evaluate an institution's campus environment, which may have an influence on students' college choice. The published crime statistics also help students and employees so they can better protect themselves against risks in their campus environment, and to reduce crime (Janosik & Gregory, 2009). If an institution fails to meet the terms of the Act, they risk losing federal funding.

The impact of the Clery Act is unknown however; reports show that very few students actually look at crime reports published by higher education institutions (Lipka, 2009). On the other hand, the same study shows that the Clery Act has improved campuses' discussion of safety and allowed for bigger security budgets and more education programs on college campuses. The Act provides institutions with a quantitative evaluation of how safety and security methods are working on their campus. Rowan University in particular has made an effort in ensuring the safety of the campus community.

Rowan University Safety and Security

Rowan University's Office of Public Safety is responsible for services such as police, patrol, crime prevention, parking, safety, and medical services. Rowan also employs students to work in the Student Community Policing Program. These students

provide services such as residence hall proctors, Safe Walk and Ride escorts, and patrol academic buildings and campus grounds. All Rowan University residence halls have key-card access, in which students must swipe their ID card to gain entry into their assigned dorm. Rowan also provides front-desk proctors in certain residence halls from 7:00 P.M. to 3:00 A.M. to ensure students gaining entry in the building have authorized to do so (RU Office of Public Safety, 2010).

The Rowan Alert system acts as a communication tool that notifies students and faculty in the event of an emergency via text message, email, voicemail, and media such as internet, radio, television, and newspaper. Rowan provides a campus shuttle and escort services for students between 8:00 P.M. and 4:00 A.M. The Blue Light system on Rowan's campus is a system of blue light stations with phones that connect anyone on campus to police services, so they can report an emergency. Rowan University also began a service known as "Safe Walk and Ride" in 2009 which transports students via shuttle or walking escort on and around campus between the hours of 8:00 P.M. and 4:00 A.M. (RU Office of Public Safety, 2010). A new technological advancement made by the Rowan Department of Public Safety is the addition of scanners on patrol cars. These scanners are used to systematically run license plates numbers during high volume events, such as homecoming, graduation, and athletic events.

In addition to these security measures and programs, Rowan University has allocated a great deal of resources to educating students outside the classroom about potential campus risks. The Rape Aggression Defense System (R.A.D.) is a program that teaches women self-defense tactics (RU Office of Public Safety, 2010). The Rowan Office of Public Safety also publishes brochures related to dating violence and finding a

safe apartment. Residence Life also works with the Office of Public Safety and has policies in place related to alcohol, weapons, and theft to help educate students and prevent crime. Rowan's Department of Public Safety submits a daily crime and fire log to the student newspaper *The Whit* which is published weekly.

Rowan University Department of Public Safety earned accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) in March 2011. Accreditation from CALEA ensures that Rowan University's Department of Public Safety upholds a body of standards and recognizes professional excellence (CALEA, 2010). In order to receive accreditation from CALEA, Rowan compiled evidence for a 464 standards then completed a self-assessment and an on-site assessment from national assessors. The accreditation process required resources such as time and money. Rowan University spends resources on campus safety and security in an effort to educate students on how to protect themselves and prevent campus crime.

Rowan University Crime Statistics

Rowan University and the surrounding town of Glassboro have earned some notoriety in the media for a rough campus environment. Alcohol and drug offenses are common on any campus. According to Rowan University's Clery Offenses Report (2009) with a enrollment of 11,392 students, 11 cases of burglary, one incident of robbery, and two cases of aggravated assault were reported to have occurred on campus grounds. No incidents of on campus sexual assaults were reported to Rowan's Department of Public Safety in 2009. In 2007, the murder of Rowan University sophomore, Donald Farrell brought negative media attention to the campus. Donald Farrell was beaten to death by a group of males outside a convenience store a few feet from the Triad Apartment Complex

(Alexander & Henry, 2007). The perpetrators in Farrell's death have not been apprehended.

Overall Rowan's crime statistics reflect the national average of on campus incidents in 2008. There were nine murders, 2,457 forcible sexual assaults, and 25,331 burglaries on college and university campuses across the United States (Campus Security Data, 2010). The good news is violent crimes are not the norm on college campuses and are very rare. Crimes related to alcohol and drugs are more prevalent on college campuses. At Rowan there were 375 alcohol and 40 drug related offenses in 2008 on campus.

Rowan's Office of Public Safety website is a high-quality resource for students, parents, and the University community. The website has safety policies and procedures, three years of Clery Reports, a monthly crime log, and links to important campus resources such as counseling, crime prevention, and victim assistance for sexual assaults (RU Office of Public Safety, 2010). Though Rowan University tries to combat crime through educating students on how to protect themselves; students often become vulnerable to crime when they choose to use alcohol and drugs.

Crime and Students' Alcohol and Drug Use

Criminal victimization on college campuses is most closely related to students' alcohol and drug use. In most cases of sexual assaults against women, alcohol can even be used as a predictor of victimization (Dowdall, 2007). It is estimated that alcohol is involved in "two-thirds of college student suicides, in 90 percent of campus rapes, and 95 percent of violent crime on campus" (Dowdall, 2007, p. 169). When students drink they are more likely to commit crimes, they are less likely to be able to identify dangerous

situations, and they are less likely to be able to resist victimization attempts (Dowdall, 2007). Binge drinking occurs on almost every college campus and therefore puts students at risk for victimization. Students who use drugs have similar victimization rates to those who use alcohol. Students under the influence of alcohol or drugs are more likely to participate in acts of vandalism or destructive behaviors (Dowdall, 2007). Education and consistent enforcement of campus policies related to alcohol and drugs can help mitigate some of the risks involved with these student behaviors.

It is because of the disturbing link between campus crime and student alcohol and drug use that institutions devote resources to educating students on how to protect themselves. It is not feasible to try to stop all college students from drinking alcohol or using drugs; however if they learn to do so in a safe and responsible way, both the students and the institution benefit. Institutions should also invest resources to measure how comfortable students feel on campus when it comes to safety and security. Public Safety officials can use student perceptions as a way to measure the effectiveness of current campus safety and security methods. Students need to feel safe in their environment in order to achieve academic success and develop emotionally and socially.

Theory and Student Perceptions of Campus Safety

In 1954 Abraham Maslow synthesized research related to human motivation and then identified a Hierarchy of Needs (See Figure 2.1). Maslow listed needs in categories such as physiological, safety, belongingness and love, and esteem (Maslow, 1970). Humans' primary needs are physiological. These needs sustain human life and include the ability to breathe and the need for water, food, and sleep. Second to physiological needs is humans' need for safety, which includes safety of body, health, and resources.

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Maslow identifies self-actualization and self-transcendence at the top of the needs

hierarchy, but these advanced needs are met only after basic human needs are satisfied

and secure. Students are only motivated and able to move onto higher levels of thinking

when they feel comfortable and safe in their environment.

Transcendence

Self-Actualization

Aesthetic Needs

Need to Know and Understand

Esteem Needs

Belongingness and Love Needs

Safety Needs

Physiological Needs
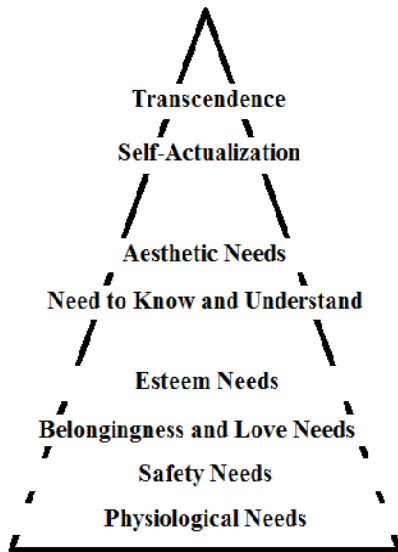
Figure 2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1990)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs relates directly to student development and growth.

In order for students to develop mentally and emotionally, they must first have the

necessary resources for survival. Institutions strive to create a campus environment in

which students' fear violent crime does not hinder them academically or socially.

Colleges use campus safety and security methods in an effort to create an environment in

which students can concentrate on their education. Threats to student safety have

negative consequences on their health and well-being; this relates to physical and

emotional trauma, erosion of self esteem, and lack of concentration (Fletcher & Bryden,

2002). Only when students' safety needs are met will they be able to develop mentally

and emotionally.

Student perceptions of the campus environment are also influential when it comes to campus safety and security. Perception is defined in this study as awareness, feeling, or sense based on environment. Perception can be measured through the use of a series of questions measuring agreement or disagreement towards a specific statement. It is important to measure student perceptions of safety on campus so that institutions know whether they are meeting the needs of their students.

Many students have the misconception that they are safe among their peers and are immune from crime while at college. That idea is not correct, thus theft occurs most often in student residence halls (Robinson & Roh, 2007). Students may feel safe on campus until they or someone they know are a victim of a crime. Students should know the risks of their campus environment and make daily decisions based on their own comfort level. While safety is important for all students, college campuses are especially dangerous for female students; therefore it is important that institutions take measures in order to make them feel safe and secure on campus.

Gender and Safety

Researchers pay particular attention to crimes against women and their perceptions of campus safety. Most crimes against women that occur on college campuses are sexual assaults. While rape remains grossly underreported on college campuses, a survey indicated that "out of 1,000 female students, 4.9% indicated they were victims of attempted or completed rapes" (Shafer, 2007, p. 87). Women on college campuses face more of a risk for rape than those not on a college campus (Shafer, 2007). Education is one way colleges and universities try to combat sexual assaults on their campuses. On many campuses, women are often given the opportunity to take self-

defense classes. Alcohol awareness programs also aim to teach students about the dangers of binge drinking.

Alcohol use and sexual assault are often linked to Greek Life on college campuses. Belknap and Erez (2007) claim that fraternities are often the source of many sexual assaults because they "commodify women," "use them [women] to attract new members," and "provide sexual access to them as a presumed 'benefit' to fraternity membership" (p. 198). While some rapes never occur at certain fraternities, there is a high-risk of rape in others. Universities and colleges should keep a close eye on Greek Life and create policies in order to limit events that promote dangerous drinking habits. Educational programming is just one method of campus safety; others methods rely on communication, technology, and personal intervention.

Methods in Campus Safety

Communication has become one of the most widely used methods in campus safety. An emergency mass notification and communication system is not only helpful in the event of a campus emergency, but also for any other reason the campus community needs to be alerted. With technology as advanced as it is, some institutions created text-message alert systems, email mailing lists, and digital message boards (Fox & Savage, 2009). Other lower-tech methods include the use of sirens or signals that indicate an emergency on campus. The text-message alert system is limited in that often students do not wish to provide their personal cell-phone numbers to the university notification system. Students might also fail to get important text messages due to poor network service. In order for mass notification systems to work effectively, information relayed must be accurate and timely to avoid unnecessary panic. Technology is great until it fails.

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Institutions that rely on technology to notify the campus community must also have backup methods of communication or use several methods at once.

Montclair State University in New Jersey recently began a program that allows students to carry special cell phones that signal campus police if something is wrong (Murr, 2007). Students set a code for a certain amount of time, if they do not turn off the code within an allotted time alarms go off and police can track student's whereabouts using the phone's GPS locator. This unique program requires resources that many schools do not have; special phones and the manpower to respond to alarms. Some campuses prefer a more intrusive use of technology, such as screening faculty and student applicants before welcoming them on campus.

Screening potential students and faculty is the recent use of criminal background checks (CBCs) on the incoming student population and faculty hires (Hughes, White, & Hertz, 2008). While criminal background checks may help colleges avoid enrolling students and hiring faculty with criminal records, they do not prevent students from committing crimes after they are enrolled. One prominent obstacle in the use of CBCs at many campuses is faculty opposition. While the background checks can be used as a preventative measure, this method of security cannot be used on its own. Other universities have installed cameras to keep eyes on their campuses 24/7.

John Hopkins University recently installed 101 surveillance cameras to combat burglaries on a street where most student dormitories are located. The security cameras are hooked up to computer software that can recognize a person with their arms in the air, or a vehicle moving suspiciously slowly, and send an alert to campus security (Van Der Werf, Fischman, & Foster, 2007). These cameras can not only catch a criminal after a

crime is committed, but also recognize suspicious activity as it happens. Campus dormitories are also protected from crime through restricted access practices.

Student ID cards are often also used to gain access to campus buildings. The swipe card not only provides security through restricting access to buildings, but when an incident does occur, the system can also show who entered the building at what time. Rowan University along with many other institutions uses this method of passive security in order to ensure buildings are only accessible to authorized residents. While technology has advanced campus security in great ways, person-to-person contact is also used in preventing campus crime and violence.

Such person-to-person contact includes counseling and other mental health services, which are valuable in giving help to students who may be at risk for committing violent acts on campus. Many students who commit crimes against their peers show a history of mental illness. Training residence hall staff, faculty, and other university personnel to recognize signs of emotional distress could aid in preventing a rampage shooting or other act of violence. Communication lines between mental-health professionals and campus safety officials have been created to identify troubled students early (Murr, 2007). Student affairs professionals should also work closely with campus safety officials to help adjust to the changing nature of the student population (Rund, 2002). Monitoring student behavior is an important tool in intervening in possible threats to campus safety and security. Counseling and technology are both tools in which public safety officials at higher education institutions use in the education of students and prevention of campus crime.

Summary of the Literature Review

The literature and research on campus safety and security shows that it is an important aspect of higher education. Higher education institutions are responsible for the safety and welfare of the campus community. The Federal Government created The Jeanne Clery Act stating that higher education institutions who receive funding must report crimes statistics on campus to the public (Janosik & Gregory, 2009). Rowan University's public safety seems to be doing a good job of using technology and educational programming to lower crime against the campus community, because Rowan's campus crime statistics fall in line with the national average. Student alcohol and drug use is a contributing factor to campus crime and violence; thus it should be closely monitored at all higher education institutions. Gender also plays a role in victimization and campuses pay particular attention in educating female students on how to protect themselves against sexual assaults. Student perceptions of campus safety are particularly important when measuring the effectiveness of public safety. If students do not feel safe in their collegiate environment, they will not be successful academically. Methods used in campus safety and security efforts have become more advanced with technology. Campus safety officials rely on communication tools, technology, and personal intervention with counseling officials to combat crime.

While the literature and research on campus safety and security suggests that higher education institutions are taking steps to combat crime, officials need to listen to students in order to judge the true effectiveness of their campus safety and security efforts. Rowan University officials must be aware of perceptions of campus safety in

order to utilize the most effective safety measures and programs and foster best academic

experiences possible for students of the institution.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Context of the Study

The study was conducted at Rowan University. The Rowan University campus is located about 20 minutes south-east of Philadelphia in Southern New Jersey surrounded by the town of Glassboro. According to its website, Rowan University was established in 1923 as a normal school and is currently a comprehensive public university that has an enrollment of 9,784 undergraduate students and 1,126 graduate students; approximately 400 students are enrolled in a doctoral or certificate programs. There are 5,190 (45.47%) males enrolled and 6,212 (54.53%) females enrolled in the university. Most students come from within the state, as 82% of Rowan University students are New Jersey residents (Rowan Fast Facts, 2010). The minority student enrollment at Rowan is 22% (Rowan Fast Facts, 2010). Approximately 3,000 students live in Rowan's on-campus housing.

The town of Glassboro that surrounds Rowan University's campus is home to over 19,000 residents (Glassboro Online, 2010). Glassboro and Rowan's campus is easily accessible via Routes 55, 322, and 47. Glassboro is currently in the process of undergoing a major town revitalization project that officials hope will foster the first and only town gown community in Southern New Jersey. The Glassboro Police Department works in conjunction with Rowan's Department of Public Safety to ensure that students living on and off campus are secure.

The University has its own Department of Public Safety. The department is comprised of 22 police officers, two full time detectives, and two K9 officers. All officers are sworn, have attended the police academy, and are armed on campus. Rowan's Department of Public Safety is first university police department in New Jersey to receive national accreditation from Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). This is a significant distinction because it ensures that the Rowan University Department of Public Safety is achieving the highest possible professional standards while protecting the campus community.

Population and Sample Selection

The target population of this study was all students at Rowan University. The available population was students, undergraduate and graduate, enrolled during the Spring 2011 semester at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. Students who have a valid email address or accessed Rowan's Department of Public Safety, Facebook, or Twitter pages were able to access links to the survey. The survey was posted on the aforementioned websites, sent through students' major list serves on three occasions, and also sent out through the Rowan Announcer (university-wide daily email) on two occasions. There were roughly 10,000 surveys sent to subjects (as some email addresses were no longer valid), 1,070 completed surveys were returned.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation used to assess Rowan students' perceptions of campus safety was a survey (Appendix A). The survey was created and distributed by through the online service SurveyMonkey. The survey was six screens in length and collected information on demographics, campus safety, sense of community, campus environment, use of

public safety services, and overall perceptions. The background and demographic information on students was collected through six multiple choice questions. Campus safety was measured through four Likert scale statements. Sense of community was measured by three Likert scale statements. Five Likert scale and one open ended question measured student perceptions of campus environment. Student use of Rowan public safety services was measured four multiple choice questions. Finally, four questions measured students overall perception of Rowan's campus crime, campus safety, and satisfaction with Rowan's Department of Public Safety and employees. There was a final comments section where students were prompted to list any comments/suggestions to help make Rowan's campus community safer.

The instrumentation was modeled loosely after Derek Zuckerman's *2010 Perceptions of College Safety and Security Scale* (PCSSS). The questions regarding residence halls were removed from the instrumentation. Following approval from the Institutional Review Board of Rowan University (Appendix B), a pilot test of the survey was conducted. In Rowan's student center, 10 randomly selected students were given a paper copy of the survey in order to test its readability and validity. A few students mentioned spelling or grammatical errors, and the errors were fixed before the survey went live online through SurveyMonkey. The validity of the instrumentation, through readability and efficacy, was determined by Zuckerman. The reliability of the 16 Likert scale items measuring Rowan students' perceptions of campus safety is .805 according to Chrombach's Alpha, indicating the survey instrument is stable and internally consistent.

Data Collection

Data were collected after surveys were distributed to Rowan University students via their school email addresses and posted on multiple Rowan websites. Email addresses were compiled using students' major list serves and emails were sent with a short explanation of the survey with a link to SurveyMonkey (An example of the email is seen in Appendix C). The survey was available to students online through SurveyMonkey from January 25 to February 18, 2011. Surveys were collected through SurveyMonkey's online system and no identifying information was collected in the survey.

Data Analysis

The independent variables in this study included gender, semester standing, race, hometown setting, hometown location from campus, and crime victimization history. Information regarding these variables was collected at the beginning of the survey under demographic information. The dependent variables were perceptions of campus safety, sense of community, campus environment, use of Rowan public safety services and programs, and overall perceptions. Variations in students' perceptions of campus safety were examined using Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) based on gender, semester standing, and race. Data were analyzed using frequencies and tables. The impact of the independent variables on the dependent variables was studied using cross-tabular analysis obtained through PASW. Correlations (Pearson product-moment calculations) and descriptive statistics (frequency distributions, percentages, and measures of central tendency and dispersion) were used to examine data in regards to the research questions.

Student comments and suggestions in open ended items on the survey were analyzed using Sisco's (1981) Rules and Procedures for Logical Analysis of Written Data

(Appendix D). This analysis searched for common and divergent themes among student

responses.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

Profile of the Sample

The subjects for this study were students at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ, during Spring semester 2011. Electronic surveys were distributed through email sent via Rowan's major list serves and links to public Rowan University websites. Approximately 10,000 surveys were distributed and 1,070 completed surveys were returned, yielding a return rate of 10.7%. All respondents accessed and completed the survey using a computer. There were 679 females respondents (63%) and 379 males (35%), 12 respondents preferred not to identify their gender (1%). The ratio of females to male respondents is skewed in relation to the actual Rowan University population.

Table 4.1 contains demographic data on the self-identified race of student respondents. The majority of respondents identified their race as white which reflects Rowan's actual student population. Most students who indicated their race as "other" identified themselves as Latino/a or Hispanic. Table 4.2 contains demographic information on the semester standing of student respondents. The majority of student respondents were seniors and juniors.

Seventy percent of student respondents indicated their hometown setting was suburban, while 20% of students were from rural areas, and 9% were from urban areas. Fifty-eight percent of student respondents lived within 50 miles of campus, while 39 indicated their home location was 51-200 miles from campus, and 3% were from areas

more than 200 miles from campus. Eighty-two percent of student respondents indicated

they were never a victim of a crime that required police interaction, while 18% indicated

they had been a victim of a crime that required police interaction.

Table 4.1

Race of Student Respondents (N=1,070)

Race	f	%
White	870	81
Other	70	6.5
Black	64	6
Multiracial	37	3.5
Asian	24	2
Native American or Alaskan Native	3	.3
Native Hawaiian	2	.2

Table 4.2

Semester Standing of Student Respondents (N=1,070)

Semester Standing	f	%
Freshman	153	14
Sophomore	192	18
Junior	285	27
Senior	331	31
Graduate	108	10

Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of selected Rowan University

students according to the factors of campus safety, sense of community, campus

environment, and overall perceptions?

In regards to student perceptions of campus safety (Table 4.3) a review of the

responses indicated the majority of students feel safe on Rowan's Campus. Sixty-one

percent of students strongly agreed or agreed that they felt safe and secure on campus while 15% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement.

More than half of all respondents said they would recommend Rowan University to a friend and that they were satisfied with their campus environment. Only 7% of respondents felt that the presence of police and security was inadequate. When asked what crime they were most worried about on campus, 21.7% of students said they were not worried about crime on campus. The majority of students who do fear crime on campus said they were most worried about assault (21%) (Table 4.4).

Concerning Rowan's campus environment, generally students' perceptions were positive. The majority of students agreed or strongly agreed that the University keeps them notified of potential safety issues, the University has taken necessary measures to keep them safe, and Rowan's Department of Public Safety provides a comfortable and safe environment within the campus community (Table 4.5).

When students were asked about sense of community on Rowan's Campus (Table 4.6), 74.8% indicated they felt comfortable being themselves on campus while 52% said they felt a part of the campus community. Thirty-eight percent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "I feel comfortable walking around campus at night without fear of being accosted by strangers."

Fifty-four percent of students said that overall at any given time they feel safe on campus; while 10% of student respondents said they feel very safe. Approximately 9% of survey respondents indicated they felt unsafe or very unsafe while on Rowan's Campus. Eighty-three percent of student respondents indicated they felt the performance of Rowan Public Safety employees was either very professional or professional, while

18% felt the performance of Rowan Public Safety employees was unprofessional.

Overall, 57% of survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with Rowan's Public

Safety department, while 15.7% were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.

Table 4.3

Campus Safety

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
I would recommend this university to a friend *n*=1069, *SD*=1.041, *M*=3.92 Missing=1	337	31.5	465	43.5	167	15.6	48	4.5	52	4.9
I am satisfied with my campus environment *n*=1066, *SD*=.938, *M*=3.65 Missing= 4	157	14.7	535	50.0	248	23.2	94	8.8	32	3.0
I feel safe and secure on campus *n*=1068, *SD*= .964, *M*=3.57 Missing= 2	44	13.5	508	47.5	255	23.8	131	12.2	30	2.8
The presence of campus police and security is adequate *n*=1068, *SD*=1.028, *M*=3.52 Missing= 2	159	14.9	467	43.6	247	23.1	157	14.7	38	3.6

Table 4.4

Fear of Crime on Campus (n=1,058)

"The crime I am most worried about on Rowan's campus is:"

Crime	*f*	*%*
I am not worried about crime on campus	232	21.9
Assault	225	21.2
Theft	172	16.2
Robbery	143	13.5
Sexual Assault	108	10.2
Harassment	88	8.3
Other	55	5.1
All crimes	35	3.3

Table 4.5

Campus Environment

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
The University keeps me notified about potential safety issues on campus *n*=1066, *SD*= 1.080, *M*=3.54 Missing= 4	188	17.6	445	41.6	238	22.2	142	13.3	53	5.0
I can easily access assistance from Rowan Police or Emergency Personnel if needed *n*=1068, *SD*=1.013, *M*=3.57 Missing= 2	182	17.0	437	40.8	302	28.2	103	9.6	44	4.1
Rowan's Department of Public Safety provides a comfortable and safe environment within the campus community *n*=1062, *SD*=1.025, *M*=3.45 Missing=8	119	11.1	487	45.5	269	25.1	127	11.9	60	5.6
The University has taken the necessary steps to make campus safe *n*=1064, *SD*=1.022, *M*=3.47 Missing= 6	139	13.0	460	43.0	282	26.4	133	12.4	50	4.7
At night Rowan's campus is well lit *n*=1062, *SD*=1.087, *M*=3.05 Missing=8	72	6.7	341	31.9	316	29.5	235	22.0	98	9.2

Table 4.6

Sense of Community

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
I feel comfortable being myself on campus *n*=1069, *SD*=.952, *M*=3.85 Missing=1	245	22.9	555	51.9	170	15.9	63	5.9	36	3.4
I feel a part of my campus community *n*=1064, *SD*=.997, *M*=3.42 Missing= 6	119	11.1	439	41.0	333	31.1	120	11.2	53	5.0
I feel comfortable walking around campus at night without fear of being accosted by strangers *n*=1067, *SD*=1.191, *M*=2.94 Missing= 3	103	9.6	275	25.7	279	26.1	270	25.2	140	13.1

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between the demographic variables of gender, semester standing, race, hometown setting, home location distance from Rowan, crime victimization history, and perceptions of Rowan University campus safety?

There were many significant relationships between the demographic factors of gender, semester standing, hometown setting, home location distance from Rowan, crime victimization history, and student perceptions of campus safety. Most correlations were negative which indicates an inverse relationship. Though the correlations were statistically significant, all relationships between demographic variables and student perceptions are considered weak. The correlations significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) signify that one can be 99% confident the findings will hold true for the same statement if

applied to the entire community. The correlations significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) signify that one can be 95% confident the findings will hold true for the same statement if applied to the entire population.

Table 4.7 contains data between the demographic variable of gender and student perceptions. The strongest (though it is still considered weak) of the correlations between gender and student perceptions was the statement: "I feel comfortable walking around campus at night without fear of being accosted by strangers" (r= -.233). Of student respondents, women were more likely to disagree with this statement than men.

The correlations between semester standing and student perceptions are located in Table 4.8. Again, all of the correlations were negative which indicates an inverse relationship. The strongest of correlations was the statement "The presence of police and security is adequate" (r= -.222).

Table 4.9 contains information on home distance from Rowan and its relationship with student perceptions. The only direct relationship in the correlations was the statement "I feel a part of my campus community" (r= .063). Table 4.10 shows the only correlation between hometown setting and student perceptions involved the statement "I feel safe and secure on campus" (r= -.062).

Correlations between demographic factors and student perceptions are found in Crime Victimization History, Table 4.11. While all correlations were positive between this demographic factor and student perceptions, they were very weak relationships.

There were no statistically significant relationships between the demographic factor of race and its impact on perceptions of campus safety.

Table 4.7

Correlation between Gender and Student Perceptions

Statement	r	p
I feel safe and secure on campus	-.109**	.000
The presence of police and security is adequate	-.103**	.001
I feel comfortable walking around campus at night without fear of being accosted by strangers	-.233**	.000
I feel comfortable being myself on campus	-.102**	.001
I can easily access assistance from Rowan Police or Emergency Personnel if needed	-.082**	.007
At night, Rowan's campus is well lit	-.111**	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.8

Correlation between Semester Standing and Student Perceptions

Statement	r	p
I feel safe and secure on campus	-.111**	.000
The presence of police and security is adequate	-.222**	.000
I am satisfied with my campus environment	-.168**	.000
I would recommend this university to a friend	-.182**	.000
I feel comfortable walking around campus at night without fear of being accosted by strangers	--.165**	.000
I feel a part of my campus community	-.148**	.000
The university has taken necessary steps to make campus safe	-.133**	.000
I can easily access assistance from Rowan Police or Emergency Personnel if needed	-.116**	.000
Rowan's Department of Public Safety provides a comfortable and safe environment within the campus community	-.134**	.000
At night, Rowan's campus is well lit	-.210**	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.9

Correlation between Home Distance from Rowan and Student Perceptions

Statement	r	p
I feel safe and secure on campus	-.104**	.001
I would recommend this university to a friend	-.070*	.022
I feel a part of my campus community	.063*	.041
The University keeps me notified about potential safety issues on campus	-.150**	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.10

Correlation between Hometown Setting and Student Perceptions

Statement	r	p
I feel safe and secure on campus	-.062*	.044

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.11

Correlation between Crime Victimization History and Student Perceptions

Statement	*r*	*p*
I feel safe and secure on campus	.152**	.000
The presence of police and security is adequate	.105**	.001
I am satisfied with my campus environment	.169**	.000
I would recommend this university to a friend	.161**	.000
I feel comfortable walking around campus at night without fear of being accosted by strangers	.116**	.000
I feel a part of my campus community	.116**	.000
I feel comfortable being myself on campus	.092**	.003
The University keeps me notified about potential safety issues on campus	.080**	.009
The University has taken the necessary steps to make campus safe	.150**	.000
I can easily access assistance from Rowan Police or Emergency Personnel if needed	.105*	.001
Rowan's Department of Public Safety provides a comfortable and safe environment within in the campus community	.188**	.000
At night, Rowan's campus is well lit	.092*	.003

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 3: How do students' use of public safety services and interactions with Rowan University's Department of Public Safety impact their perceptions of campus safety?

When questioned if the subjects had interaction with Rowan Police Officers, 58% of students said they had not, while 42% indicated they interacted with Rowan police on some level. For those students who interacted with police, the nature of their interaction is presented in Table 4.12. The majority of interactions involved an alcohol/drug incident or being stopped for a traffic violation/ticket.

Forty-five percent of students said the attitudes and behavior of Rowan Police led them to believe Rowan Police are well trained and professional, while 17% felt Rowan Police need more training. Student respondents were asked to indicate all (if any) public safety services they have utilized on campus. Table 4.13 shows there were 1,331 responses, the majority having never used Rowan Public Safety services. Safe Walk and Ride was the most used service, with 431 student users.

Table 4.12

Student Interactions with Rowan Police (n=449)

Interaction	*f*
I called them for assistance	107
I was stopped for a Traffic Violation/ Traffic Ticket	109
I was involved in an Alcohol/Drug related incident	114
I gave police information about a crime/incident	36
Other	83

Table 4.13

Student Use of Public Safety Services (n= 1,331)

Service	f
I have not used any Public Safety services	496
Safe Walk and Ride	431
Emergency Text Message Notifications	339
Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) Women Only	39
Blue Light Emergency Boxes	26
Student Patrol Walking Escorts	0

Most student complaints concerning Rowan's Department of Public Safety involved the Department's approach to students' alcohol consumption. Rowan's Department of Public Safety tries to avoid criminal activity in order to keep students safe by enforcing alcohol policies; however, students commented that they felt the Rowan Police specifically target students looking to get them in trouble.

Some students' comments and suggestions contradicted the current practices of Rowan's Department Public Safety. Close to 10 students referred to Rowan Police as untrained " Rent-A-Cops." One student suggested that Public Safety should " possibly build a police station on campus." Finally, nearly 20 students stated that Rowan Police have no business in off-campus affairs (in reference to breaking up parties).

Research Question 4: What comments or suggestions do students have to help improve campus safety at Rowan University?

Lighting was a large concern mentioned by 440 respondents in the open-ended section of the survey. Students felt more lighting is needed on campus to increase safety and visibility at night. Though lighting may be in place in certain areas, students commented the lights are not bright enough to illuminate walkways at night.

Students' main concern with Public Safety services involved Public Safety's Safe Walk and Ride Program. All 57 comments were negative concerning the service and some suggestions for improvement were included. Student complaints involved wait time, attitude and professionalism of drivers, as well as discrepancies between who can ride and who cannot (mainly based on visible intoxication of students). Students suggested an increase in Safe Walk and Ride drivers and cars. A few students stated they thought the service was unsafe, as it requires students to wait outside for their safe walk and ride, most times in the dark. One student suggested the Safe Walk and Ride driver call students' cell phones when they arrive, so students do not have to wait outside for the driver.

Other suggestions called for an increase in police foot patrols or Segway usage during night classes. More than 10 students commented they felt that police officers in cars were not able to effectively serve those walking between academic buildings away from a roadway.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary of the Study

This study investigated student perceptions of campus safety on Rowan University's campus, Glassboro, NJ in Spring semester 2011. The study was also designed to assess the impact of demographic factors (gender, semester standing, race, hometown setting, home distance from Rowan, and crime victimization history) on students' perceptions of campus safety. The subjects in this study were students at Rowan University.

A six screen survey through the online service, SurveyMonkey, was emailed to approximately 10,000 Rowan students via the Rowan major list serve on three occasions and Rowan Announcer (university-wide daily email) on two occasions. The survey link was also available on public Rowan University sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and the Department of Public Safety website. The survey was broken into six sections including demographics, campus safety, sense of community, campus environment, use of public safety services, and overall perceptions. A total of 1,070 surveys were anonymously completed, yielding a return rate of 10.7%.

Descriptive statistics and correlations were used to analyze the data from the completed surveys. Variations in student perceptions' were explored using Predictive Analytic Software (PASW). Significant statistical data were determined using Pearson product-moment calculations.

Discussion of the Findings

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of selected Rowan University students according to the factors of campus safety, sense of community, campus environment, and overall perceptions?

In regards to campus safety the majority of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe and secure on campus, the presence of campus police and security is adequate, they are satisfied with their campus environment, and they would recommend this University to a friend. The findings show that students are generally satisfied with safety and feel safe on Rowan's Campus.

The majority of students indicated they feel a part of Rowan's campus community and they feel comfortable being themselves on campus. Derek Zuckerman's study (2010) found that a sense of community is a deterrent to violence. Unlike Zuckerman's institution of study Rowan does not have a religious affiliation, thus Rowan lacks a sense of community based on shared understandings or beliefs. However, the majority of students indicated through Likert items there is a sense of community on Rowan's Campus. The sense of community felt on Rowan's Campus could indicate a decrease in students' fear of crime.

When questioned about campus environment, the general consensus among students was that Rowan's Department of Public Safety provides a comfortable and safe environment within the campus community, the University keeps them notified about potential safety issues on campus, the University has taken the necessary steps to make campus safe, they can easily access assistance from Rowan Police or Emergency Personnel if needed, and Rowan's Department of Public Safety provides a comfortable

and safe environment within the campus community. A large portion of student respondents did comment that lighting was in need of improvement on campus, because at night some areas are especially dark.

Overall, the study found that students' perceptions were that Rowan's campus is safe and Rowan's Department of Public Safety officials are professional. Students' perception that Rowan's campus is safe is corroborated by the fact that the majority of students reported that they are "not worried about crime on campus."

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between the demographic variables of gender, semester standing, race, hometown setting, home distance from Rowan, crime victimization history, and perceptions of Rowan University campus safety?

There were significant relationships found between the demographic variables of gender, semester standing, hometown setting, home distance from Rowan, crime victimization history, and student perceptions of campus safety. There were no statistically significant correlations between race and student perceptions. All correlations between demographic variables and student perceptions were considered weak.

The correlations between the demographic variable of gender contained all negative correlations. This relationship indicates that women felt less safe than men on campus. Shafer (2007) stated that women on college campuses face more of a risk for rape than those not on a college campus. It is highly probable that the increased risk of crime against women on college campuses is the direct cause for their lessened perception of safety.

Regarding the negative correlations between semester standing and student perceptions, senior students may feel more or less safe because they have had more

experience on Rowan's campus. Current seniors at Rowan were freshman when the murder of fellow Rowan student, Donald Farrell, occurred in 2007. The murder undoubtedly had an effect on students' perceptions of campus safety at the time and likely stayed with students through their time at Rowan. The inverse relationship could also be the result of freshman students feeling safe or less safe because they have had less experience on campus.

An explanation for the correlation between home distance from Rowan and student perceptions and the statement " I feel a part of my campus community" may be that students who live closer to Rowan's Campus commute or go home more often than those who live further away. Therefore, they spend less time on campus, less time interacting with peers, and less time on involvement in the campus community.

Crime victimization history had the largest impact on student perceptions of campus safety. The crime victimization variable had a direct correlation with student perceptions, though all were weak. People who are past victims of crime likely have a heightened sense of awareness of crime and their surroundings.

Research Question 3: How do students' use of public safety services and interactions with Rowan University's Department of Public Safety impact their perceptions of campus safety?

Interactions and experiences with Rowan University's Department of Public Safety affected students' perceptions of campus safety. Most students (82%) indicated they felt Rowan public safety employees are either professional or very professional. Fifty-six percent of students indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with Rowan's Department of Public Safety. The majority of students surveyed (58%) had not interacted

with Rowan Police. For those students who did interact with Rowan Police, the majority were involved in an alcohol/drug incident or stopped for a traffic violation/ticket, both of which usually require financial penalties. Students who had negative interaction with police are more likely to hold a negative perception of Rowan's Department of Public Safety.

It is evident through student comments that there are many misperceptions of Rowan's Department of Public Safety. These misperceptions involved the training and authority of Rowan Police, location of the on-campus police station, and jurisdiction of Rowan police officers. These misperceptions can lead to students' decreased respect for Rowan Police and the Department of Public Safety as a whole.

Research Question 4: What comments or suggestions do students have to help improve campus safety at Rowan University?

While students generally have a high regard for Rowan's Department of Public Safety, they also made several suggestions to improve campus safety. Students indicated they would feel safer if certain changes were made on campus, including an increase in police foot patrols, better lighting on campus, and a revision of the Safe Walk and Ride program. Over 30 students commented that they felt Rowan Police targeted them concerning alcohol violations. Every weekend negative interactions (mainly involving alcohol) occur and put a strain on student and police relationship. In the future, the Department of Public Safety must pay particular attention to students' perceptions and interactions in order to maintain a positive campus environment.

Conclusions

       The results of this study support the general literature pertaining to campus safety. A specific study on safety has not been conducted on Rowan University, thus results cannot be compared to establish a norm. This study indicates that Rowan's Department of Public Safety is adequately serving its student body. The recent accreditation of Rowan's Department of Public Safety shows it is consistently fulfilling standards determined to create an effective police department. One area of improvement identified in this study involves the interactions between Rowan Police the student population.

       While Rowan Police have a duty to uphold the law, they also must understand that college campuses have a unique population which requires some understanding and balance. The majority of students interacting with Rowan Police on a weekend night have likely consumed some amount of alcohol. Dowdall (2007) stated that students are more likely to commit crimes when they drink; therefore officers are trained to look for signs of trouble when alcohol is involved. It is the responsibility of the Rowan Police to determine who poses a true threat to safety and what action is appropriate for every individual situation. In addition, Rowan's Department of Public Safety should continue to make enhancements to better serve the campus community.

Recommendations for Practice

       Based on the findings and conclusions of the researcher, the following suggestions are presented:

1. The Department of Public Safety should make a concerted effort to increase positive interactions with the student body in order to compensate for negative

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interactions involving fine-producing incidents such as traffic stops, parking tickets, and alcohol citations.

2. Rowan's Department of Public Safety should take steps to improve lighting on campus.

3. The Department of Public Safety should increase officer's foot patrols during night classes and in academic buildings, rather than patrolling in their vehicles.

4. Public Safety officials should take time to revise the current Safe Walk and Ride program, either consolidating the cars and drivers into a campus shuttle service or increasing man power and efficiency of the Safe Walk and Ride program.

5. The Department of Public Safety should create a communication campaign to combat students' misperceptions concerning the staff, jurisdiction, and duties of the Rowan Police.

6. Rowan University should spend time advertising the Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) program or team up with sororities and/or female student groups to help make female students feel safer on campus.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings and conclusions of the researcher, the following suggestions are presented:

1. Further studies should be conducted at Rowan University each year to confirm the findings of this study and measure the perceptions of incoming students.

2. A study could be done to also include perceptions of staff and faculty at Rowan University in addition to students' perceptions of campus safety.

3. Studies could be conducted at similar universities to Rowan in order to compare student perceptions and the tactics used at those Universities to keep their campus community safe.

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APPENDIX A

Survey Instrumentation

Student Perceptions of Campus Safety Survey

I am conducting a study for my graduate thesis measuring perceptions of Rowan University's campus safety. The results of this study will also be used by Rowan's Department of Public Safety to gauge its effectiveness. <u>You must be at least 18 years of age or older to participate in this study.</u> If wish to participate, please complete the following survey.

All responses will be kept anonymous and your participation in this study is voluntary.

You may choose not to respond to any question or to not participate in the study as a whole with no penalty to you. Your class standing will not be affected in any way based on participation. If you have any questions, my name and contact information appear below:

Principal Investigator: Kristen Muscat, <u>muscat79@rowan.students.edu</u>
Faculty Sponsor: Burton Sisco, <u>Sisco@rowan.edu</u>

Thank you for your participation!

<u>**Demographic Information:**</u>

1. What is your semester standing?
- ☐ Freshman
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior
- ☐ Graduate

2. Gender:
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ I prefer not to answer

3. Hometown setting:
- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Suburban

4. Home location distance from campus (approximately):
- ☐ Less than 50 miles
- ☐ 51-200 miles
- ☐ More than 200 miles

5. Race:
- ☐ Black
- ☐ Native American or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Multiracial
- ☐ White
- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Other

6. Have you ever been the victim of a crime that required interaction with police?
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please read each statement and mark the number that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement as it relates to your experience on Rowan University's campus.

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree   3= Neutral   4= Agree   5= Strongly Agree

Campus Safety:

7. I feel safe and secure on campus: 1   2   3   4   5

**8. The presence of campus police and
security is adequate:**   1   2   3   4   5

9. I am satisfied with my campus environment: 1   2   3   4   5

**10. I would recommend this University
to a friend:**   1   2   3   4   5

Sense of Community:

**11. I feel comfortable walking around campus
at night without fear of being accosted
by strangers:**   1   2   3   4   5

12. I feel a part of my campus community: 1   2   3   4   5

13. I feel comfortable being myself on campus: 1   2   3   4   5

Campus Environment:

14. The University keeps me notified about
potential safety issues on campus: **1   2   3   4   5**

15. The University has taken necessary steps to
make campus safe: **1   2   3   4   5**

16. I can easily access assistance from Rowan
Police or Emergency Personnel if needed: **1   2   3   4   5**

17. Rowan's Department of Public Safety
Provides a comfortable and safe environment
within the campus community: **1   2   3   4   5**

18. At night, Rowan's Campus is well lit: **1   2   3   4   5**

19. List any areas on campus you think needs more lighting (be as specific as possible):

Use of Public Safety Services:

20. In my time at Rowan I have used the following (more than one item can be checked):
- ☐ Safe Walk and Ride
- ☐ Student Patrol- Walking Escorts
- ☐ Blue Light Emergency Boxes
- ☐ Emergency Text Message Notifications
- ☐ Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D) (women only)
- ☐ I have not used any Rowan Safety Services

21. Have you had interaction with Rowan Police Officers?
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

22. If so, what was the nature of your interaction?
- ☐ I called them for assistance.
- ☐ I was stopped for a Traffic violation/Traffic ticket.
- ☐ I was involved in a Alcohol/Drug related incident (ex. cited at a party).
- ☐ I gave the police information about a crime/incident.
- ☐ Other, please explain. _____

23. The attitudes and behavior of Rowan Police lead me to believe:
- ☐ Rowan Police are well trained and professional
- ☐ Rowan Police need more training
- ☐ Other, please comment _____

Overall Perceptions:

24. While on campus, I am most worried about:
- ☐ Theft
- ☐ Assault
- ☐ Sexual Assault
- ☐ Harassment
- ☐ Robbery
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ I am not worried about crime on campus.

25. Overall, at any given time, how safe do you feel on Rowan's Campus?

Very Safe   Safe   Neutral   Unsafe   Very Unsafe

26. Overall, I feel the performance of Rowan Public Safety Employees is:

Very Professional   Professional   Unprofessional

27. Overall, How satisfied are you with Rowan's Public Safety Department?

Very Satisfied   Satisfied   Neutral   Unsatisfied   Very Unsatisfied

28. Please list any comments/suggestions to help make Rowan's campus community safer:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

APPENDIX B

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

December 15, 2010

Kristen A. Muscat
1235 Black Baron Drive
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Dear Kristen A. Muscat:

In accordance with the University's IRB policies and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to inform you that the Rowan University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your project:

IRB application number: 2011-060

Project Title: Rowan University Students' Perceptions of Campus Safety

In accordance with federal law, this approval is effective for **one calendar year** from the date of this letter. If your research project extends beyond that date or if you need to make significant modifications to your study, you must notify the IRB immediately. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Please retain copies of consent forms for this research for three years after completion of the research.

If, during your research, you encounter any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, you must report this immediately to Dr. Harriet Hartman (hartman@rowan.edu or call 856-256-4500, ext. 3787) or contact Dr. Gautam Pillay, Associate Provost for Research (pillay@rowan.edu or call 856-256-5150).

If you have any administrative questions, please contact Karen Heiser (heiser@rowan.edu or 856-256-5150).

Sincerely,

Harriet Hartman, Ph.D.
Chair, Rowan University IRB

c: Burton Sisco, Educational Leadership, Education Hall

APPENDIX C

Email Sent with Survey Instrumentation

Rowan Public Safety Survey- Tell Us How We're Doing

Sent: Friday, January 28, 2011 11:54 AM
To:

Rowan University Campus Safety Survey

How Safe do you Feel on Campus?
This is your opportunity to tell Rowan Public Safety what you think!

The Rowan University Department of Public Safety is conducting a survey on Perceptions of Campus Safety and needs your help. Results of this survey will be used by the Department of Public Safety to analyze the effectiveness of current services and programs. Please follow the link provided to complete the quick and easy survey. Thank you in advance for your participation!

www.rowan.edu/safety/

APPENDIX D

Sisco's Rules and Procedures for Logical Analysis of Written Data

APPENDIX E: RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR LOGICAL
ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN DATA

The following decisions were made regarding what was to be the unit of data analysis (Sisco, 1981):

1. A phrase or clause will be the basic unit of analysis.

2. Verbiage not considered essential to the phrase or clause will be edited out-- e.g., articles of speech, possessives, some adjectives, elaborative examples.

3. Where there is a violation of convention syntax in the data, it will be corrected.

4. Where there are compound thoughts in a phrase or clause, each unit of thought will be represented separately (unless one was an elaboration of the other).

5. Where information seems important to add to the statement in order to clarify it in a context, this information will be added to the unit by using parentheses.

The following decisions were made regarding the procedures for categorization of content units:

1. After several units are listed on a sheet of paper, they will be scanned in order to determine differences and similarities.

2. From this tentative analysis, logical categories will derive for the units.

3. When additional units of data suggest further categories, they will be added to the classification scheme.

4. After all units from a particular question responses are thus classified, the categories are further reduced to broad clusters (collapsing of categories).

5. Frequencies of units in each cluster category are determined and further analysis steps are undertaken, depending on the nature of the data-- i.e., ranking of categories with verbatim quotes which represent the range of ideas or opinions.