

## Incidents in the Classroom

High school and college campuses nationwide share in current and ongoing concerns regarding classroom violence and disturbances. WSU Vancouver is no exception to these concerns or to the recent focus on campus safety.

WSU Vancouver works hard to maintain an environment that is free from acts or threats of violence perpetrated by or against employees, students, or members of the public (BPPM 50.30). In light of this, and to insure greater awareness of personal safety for all campus stakeholders, it is critically important that students, faculty, and staff become familiar with policies for violence prevention, as well as with strategies for handling a possible encounter with verbally or even physically violent individuals on this or any other campus.

While on University property or while conducting University business at other locations, each employee, student, or individual is prohibited from subjecting any other employee, student, or individual to violence or threat of violence.

Violent action on University property or facilities, or while on University business, will not be tolerated or ignored. Individuals who engage in violent or threatening behavior may be:

- Removed from the premises;
- Subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or expulsion; and/or
- Subject to arrest and criminal prosecution.

In classrooms the instructor is responsible for classroom control. If a student or individual is simply upset, raises their voice, or is involved in a “passionate debate,” the instructor can usually control and end the confrontation. If a confrontation involves strange or disturbing behavior or threats of violence, students should strongly consider calling 911 to report the behavior.

For situations on campus that involve a violent confrontation including use of hands/fists through the use of a weapon, consider the “Fight or Flight” response in which you have a choice to disengage and leave the area or fight to protect yourself.

If you are made uncomfortable, or concerned for your safety, or the safety of others by the actions or behavior of another, move to a safe location and call 911 to report the issue and get help. This action is always an appropriate response to danger or perceived danger and includes classroom situations.

*(Continued on page 2)*

*(“Incidents in the Classroom” continued)*

If a situation is physically violent and “flight” is not an acceptable option, the last resort is a “fight” response. In this case students and stakeholders involved take direct physical action together “in mass” to overwhelm and control the violent individual until police can arrive. Calling 911 is definitely required in this situation. All area law enforcement officers including WSU Vancouver police receive ongoing training specific to school violence and response.

Washington State University Vancouver continues to improve our ability to provide warning and notification of immediate situational and environmental emergency situations affecting the campus. During the 2008-2009 academic year the Campus Outdoor Warning System was installed. This system consists of public address (PA) units mounted on the exterior of campus buildings and on selected Emergency Telephone Stanchions that will provide warnings and voice announcements and information regarding what people should do as an emergency situation develops. This system is primarily focused on those outdoors, moving about the campus.

The second key portion of our emergency warning and notification capability is the Emergency Notification System (ENS) that will connect directly to students, faculty, and staff via land line or cell phones, using voice messaging, text messaging, and e-mail to provide warnings in emergencies and basic instructions regarding steps people should take in response. While institutional phones and e-mail will be automatically included in the system, to receive emergency warnings on personal cell phones, personal land lines, and non-university e-mail will require registration. Registration can be easily accomplished on the “zzusis” portal site from the home page.

In addition to the Campus Outdoor Warning System and ENS the WSU Vancouver Campus utilizes an Interior Loudhailer (PA) System and a telephone PA system that allows direct verbal notification to individuals located inside campus buildings during an emergency.

WSU Vancouver Department of Public Safety offers training and information regarding campus safety and response upon request.

Visit the campus police website below to get further information about the campus safety plan, Clery campus crime reporting, safety and enforcement issues and campus alerts.

[www.vancouver.wsu.edu/police](http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/police)