



VCU

Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention

Policy Type: Board of Visitors

Responsible Office: Division of Student Affairs, Human Resources & VCU Police

Initial Policy Approved: 04/06/2004

Current Revision Approved: 07/18/2012

Policy Statement and Purpose

Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to using its best efforts to provide faculty, staff and students with an environment that is safe, secure and free from threats, intimidation and violence. To promote an atmosphere that encourages learning and productive employment, VCU will not tolerate conduct or behavior at the University, including but not limited to:

- Injuring another person physically;
- Engaging in threatening behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person;
- Engaging in threatening behavior that subjects another individual to undue emotional distress;
- Possessing, brandishing, or using a weapon that is not required by the individual's position while on state premises or engaged in state business;
- Intentionally damaging property;
- Threatening to injure an individual or to damage property; or
- Committing injurious acts motivated by, or related to, domestic violence or sexual harassment.

Threats are unacceptable regardless of whether the person communicating the threat has the ability to carry them out, whether the threat is made on a present, conditional or future basis, or whether the threat is made in person, through another person, in writing, over the phone, in the mail or electronically.

For university employees, individuals found to engage in behavior in the workplace in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and criminal prosecution using existing policies and procedures.

For university students, individuals found to engage in behavior in violation of this policy in an educational setting will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and criminal prosecution using existing policies and procedures.

Table of Contents

Who Should Know This Policy.....	#2
Definitions.....	#2
Contacts.....	#3
Procedures.....	#4
Forms.....	#6
Related Documents.....	#6
Revision History.....	#7
FAQs.....	#7

Who Should Know This Policy

All VCU faculty, staff, and students should read this policy.

Definitions

Employee

Any full- or part-time employee of the university including, but not limited to, classified, hourly, faculty, adjunct faculty and student workers.

Presidential Committee on Safety and Student Wellness

This committee develops and executes effective communications that address safety and security issues. The committee also serves as the crisis communications team. Members are appointed by the President.

Safety Action Team

This committee is headed by the VCU Chief of Police, which focuses on safety and wellness issues particularly related to safe behaviors, alcohol and drug abuse and interpersonal violence prevention education. The Safety Action Team identifies issues related to university safety and facilitates implementation of new or ongoing initiatives.

Student

Any person enrolled full-time or part-time in any program of studies at Virginia Commonwealth University and its various schools.

Threat Assessment Team

A team of VCU faculty and staff that assesses campus threats and responds to incidents as appropriate. The team consists of representatives from VCU Police, Human Resources, University Counseling Services, Division of Student Affairs, General Counsel's Office and other units as determined necessary.

Threatening Behavior

Includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical actions short of actual contact/injury (e.g., moving closer aggressively, waving arms or fists, yelling in an aggressive or threatening manner);
- General oral or written threats to people or property (e.g., "you better watch your back" or "I'll get you"), including the use of any electronic means;
- Threats made in a "joking" manner;
- Stalking behavior; or
- Implicit threats (e.g., "you'll be sorry" or "this isn't over yet").

Violent Behavior

Includes, but is not limited to:

- Any physical assault, with or without weapons;
- Behavior that a reasonable person would interpret as being potentially violent (e.g., throwing things, pounding on a desk or door, or destroying property);
- Specific threats to inflict harm (e.g., a threat to shoot a named individual); or
- Use of any object to attack or intimidate another person.

Workplace/Educational Setting

Any location, either permanent or temporary, where faculty, staff or students perform any work-related duty or are involved in educational activities. This includes, but is not limited to, the buildings and the surrounding perimeters, including the parking lots, field locations and alternate work locations.

Contacts

The Division of Student Affairs, Human Resources and VCU Police officially interpret this policy. The Division of Student Affairs, Human Resources and VCU Police are responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by the policy *Creating and Maintaining Policies and Procedures* through the appropriate governance structures. Please direct policy questions to the Division of Student Affairs.

1. Reporting Threats and Violence

Reporting a Student:

Any faculty or staff member who is aware of a threat, intimidating conduct or act of violence made by a student must report the incident to his/her manager or Academic Dean/Vice President or designated contact and to the Associate Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs. Emergencies should be reported to the VCU Police at 828-1234. Faculty and staff working in off-campus locations (e.g., Northern Virginia or other state agencies) should report emergencies to local law enforcement.

Any student who is aware of a threat, intimidating conduct or act of violence made by another student must report the incident to an appropriate university official including the Associate Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs, a faculty member, an academic advisor, a residence hall staff member or a student organization advisor.

Reporting a Faculty Member:

Any faculty member, staff member or student who is aware of a threat, intimidating conduct or act of violence made by a faculty member must report the incident to the faculty member's Academic Dean/Department Head/Vice President. Emergencies should be reported to the VCU Police at 828- 1234. Faculty and staff working in off-campus locations (e.g., Northern Virginia or other state agencies) should report emergencies to local law enforcement.

Reporting a Staff Member:

Any faculty member, staff member or student who is aware of a threat, intimidating conduct or act of violence made by a staff member must report the incident to Human Resources. Emergencies should be reported to the VCU Police at 828-1234. Faculty and staff working in off-campus locations (e.g., Northern Virginia or other state agencies) should report emergencies to local law enforcement.

Domestic Violence in the University Environment:

In an effort to promote a safer work environment, employees who are the victims of domestic violence, or who believe they may be the targets or victims of such violence, are encouraged to promptly notify their supervisor, an appropriate administrator or the VCU Police. Likewise, to promote a safer educational setting, students who are victims of domestic violence, or who believe they may be targets of such violence, are encouraged to promptly notify the Associate Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs. Confidential advocacy services are available to students by contacting the Coordinator for Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Services at the Wellness Resource Center. Faculty, staff, and students who have Protective Orders also should provide copies to the VCU Police so that this office can (1) ensure appropriate law enforcement

actions occur, and (2) assist in maintaining the safety of potential victims. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent allowed by law.

2. University Safety Committee Responsibilities

The Provost's University Safety Committee is responsible for education and prevention of violence on campus. The committee works collaboratively with units on campus to achieve this objective.

3. Threat Assessment Team Responsibilities

As appropriate, VCU Police or other parties will notify the university's Threat Assessment Team to assist with managing a threatening or violent situation. The threat assessment team is responsible for:

- Assessing and managing incidents involving danger or violence;
- Determining appropriate action to assist the departments, faculty, staff and students;
- Conducting an investigation as appropriate; and
- Developing and implementing an action plan to respond to specific incidents.

4. Department Responsibilities

When notified of a threat or violent incident, management should respond in a prompt and effective fashion. Effective response includes a full and prompt investigation, determination of appropriate disciplinary action using existing policies and procedures, and follow-up with any affected faculty or staff, including:

- Notifying the VCU Police regarding any threat or act of violence whether the information is known through firsthand knowledge or report;
- Cooperating with the Threat Assessment Team to implement any recommended action plan; and
- Familiarizing employees with the university threat assessment and violence prevention policy.

Department heads are encouraged to schedule violence prevention training for supervisors and managers and to provide similar training for other staff as appropriate.

5. Faculty, Staff and Student Responsibilities

All faculty, staff and students are encouraged to be alert to the possibility of violence on the part of employees, former employees, students, customers, contractors and strangers. Any report of violence or threats of violence will be handled in a confidential manner, with information released only on a need-to-know basis.

Faculty, staff and students who act in good faith by reporting real or implied violent behavior or violations of this policy will not be retaliated against or subjected to harassment.

Deliberately false or misleading reports of violence under this policy will be handled as incidents of unacceptable personal conduct and individuals making such false or misleading reports will be subject to disciplinary action under the university's disciplinary policy.

Faculty, staff, and student responsibilities include:

- Being familiar with the policy on *Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention*; and
- Reporting violations of the policy to the appropriate university official delineated in this policy and to the VCU Police, including threats or perceived threats.

Forms

There are no forms associated with this policy and procedures.

Related Documents

1. State Policy 1.60, [Standards of Conduct](#)
2. State Policy 1.80, [Workplace Violence](#)
3. [VCU Code of Ethics](#)
4. [University Policy for Administrative and Professional Faculty and Faculty Holding Administrative Appointments](#)
5. VCU [Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures](#)
6. VCU [Computer and Network Resources Use Policy](#)
7. VCU Policy on [Criminal Conviction Investigations](#)
8. [VCU Rules and Procedures](#)
9. [Residence Hall Policies](#)
10. [Code of Virginia Section 23-9.2:10](#)

Revision History

This policy supersedes the following archived policies:

Approval Date: 04/06/2004 *Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention Policy*
Revision Date: 11/01/2006 *Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention Policy*
Revision Date: 11/20/2008 *Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention Policy*

FAQs

There are no FAQs associated with this policy and procedures.