

DISSERTATION

KANSAS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES SAFETY AND SECURITY  
DIRECTORS PREPARATION FOR CAMPUS ACTIVE SHOOTERS: A THEMATIC  
ANALYSIS STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

### KANSAS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES SAFETY AND SECURITY DIRECTORS PREPARATION FOR CAMPUS ACTIVE SHOOTERS: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS STUDY

The concern over firearms violence and active shooters on campus is unfortunately not a new concept. The violence with firearms on higher education campuses continues killing and injuring student's faculty and staff (International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, 2008). Even with the continuation and at times escalation of these active shooter events on campuses the focus of enhancing the campus security and training falls on the shoulders of the campus safety and security directors and the administration of the institutions. The Kansas Legislature passed a law in 2013 allowing conceal carry on college campuses. In 2006, the Kansas Legislature passed a law requiring conceal carry training for all Kansas citizens; however, in 2013, the Kansas Legislature passed the constitutional carry law where no one aged 21 or older needs training, they can simply carry a concealed weapon (Kansas Legislature, 2013). The purpose of this qualitative thematic analysis study was to explore the experiences, attitudes, and understandings of campus safety and security directors concerning their preparedness for active shooters at Kansas community and technical colleges.

Qualitative thematic analysis approach was selected for this study from Gibson and Brown (2009). In accordance with the analysis of interpretative phenomenological approach patterns, trends and themes that emerged from safety and security directors' responses. These responses were drawn from in-depth detailed interviews from individual safety and security director's experiences, attitudes and understandings of the participants. The analysis of the data

presented four super ordinate themes and thirteen subthemes. The themes ranged from training officers and personnel in general to state mandated training so that all campuses would have the same training. The four themes are as follows: Extensive Concerns Raised Regarding Kansas Conceal Carry and Constitutional Carry, The Need to Improve Essential Training for All Campus Personnel, The Training Challenge: Dealing with Limitations, and Best Practices for Campus Security and Active Shooter Prevention, Access to training through the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center is the most common request. Safety and Security Directors have concerns over allowing conceal carry on college campuses and preparing for the ripple effect across campus with classrooms and interaction with personnel on the campus.

Campuses must adopt a proactive stance by creating student organizations to address concerns or create a sounding board for students. Enhanced capabilities to protect students, faculty, staff or community anonymity to enhance the information flow throughout campus. Campus safety and security departments must be visible as a deterrent to an active shooter and an integral part of any campus.

Campus safety and security directors must take initiative, but more importantly, they must be allowed to enhance their officers' training opportunities. Rather than simply answering questions of "why and how something like this could happen," campus safety and security directors must educate their campuses as to active shooter situations: who to speak to, what to do if it happens, and where to go for assistance or give information.

## DEDICATION

This project culminates a fantastic voyage. Countless individuals shared this journey with me. There are many that stood by me throughout and I will not be able to name all individually.

Thanking a few I want to thank my committee members for whom I will be eternally grateful, and especially my advisor. Without his guidance, patience, and wisdom this journey would have been next to impossible. Finally, I am deeply appreciative to my wife, family, and friends for their uncomplaining support and dedication.

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To the many victims of active shooters,

“May There Never Be Another!”

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Background.....	2
Federal and State Government Actions.....	4
Presidential Executive Actions to Reduce Gun Violence.....	5
Kansas Government Actions.....	7
Summary.....	8
Purpose Statement.....	9
Significance of the Study.....	9
Research Questions.....	10
Researcher Perspective.....	10
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Campus Procedures and Communication.....	12
Virginia Tech.....	14
Government Intervention for Campuses.....	17
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Need to Know.....	19
Kansas Legislature and Statutory Language.....	20
IACLEA Position Statement.....	21
Threat Assessment as a Violence Prevention Strategy.....	22
Assessing Threat.....	24
Threat Assessment Effectiveness.....	27
Department of Homeland Security.....	28
Financial Considerations for Campuses.....	28
Summary.....	30
<b>CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>31</b>
Thematic Analysis.....	31
Research Questions.....	32
Participants.....	32
Data Collection.....	33
Data Analysis.....	35
Trustworthiness.....	37

Summary .....	40
<b>CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>43</b>
Theme 1: Extensive Concerns Raised Regarding Kansas Conceal Constitutional Carry Law .....	44
Subtheme 1.1: Any Student Aged 21 or Older May Have a Concealed Gun in Class .....	46
Subtheme 1.2: The Conceal Carry Debate Generates Strong Opinions .....	50
Subtheme 1.3: Preparing for the Inevitability of Guns on Campus .....	53
Subtheme 1.4: Current, Updated Information will be Crucial for a Safe Campus	56
Summary .....	60
Theme 2: The Need to Improve Essential Training for All Campus Personnel .....	60
Subtheme 2.1: The Role of the State of Kansas to Provide Formalized Security Training .....	62
Subtheme 2.2: Train Officers to Train Others .....	67
Subtheme 2.3: Arm and Train Security Correctly .....	71
Subtheme 2.4: Using the Best Available Resources .....	75
Summary .....	79
Theme 3: The Training Challenge: Dealing with Limitations .....	80
Subtheme 3.1: Fiscal Limitations .....	81
Subtheme 3.2: Location and Department Size Limitations .....	85
Subtheme 3.3: Using Resources to Overcome Current Training Limitations .....	89
Summary .....	91
Theme 4: Best Practices for Campus Security and Active Shooter Prevention .....	92
Subtheme 4.1: Campus Security or Police Department .....	92
Subtheme 4.2: Using Early Intervention Teams for Active Shooter Prevention ..	97
Summary .....	102
Conclusion .....	103
<b>CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>105</b>
Analysis of Theme 1: Extensive Concerns Raised Regarding Kansas Conceal and Constitutional Carry Law .....	107
Analysis of Subtheme 1.1: Any Student Aged 21 or Older May Have a Concealed Gun in Class .....	109
Analysis of Subtheme 1.2: The Conceal Carry Debate Generates Strong Opinions .....	110
Analysis of Subtheme 1.3: Preparing for the Inevitability of Guns on Campus.	111
Analysis of Subtheme 1.4: Current, Updated Information will be Crucial for a Safe Campus .....	111
Analysis of Theme 2: The Need to Improve Essential Training for All Campus Personnel	112
Analysis of Subtheme 2.1: The Role of the State of Kansas to Provide Formalized Security Training .....	112
Analysis of Subtheme 2.2: Train Officers to Train Others .....	113
Analysis of Subtheme 2.3: Arm and Train Security Correctly .....	114
Analysis of Subtheme 2.4: Using the Best Available Resources .....	114

Analysis of Theme 3: The Training Challenge: Dealing with Limitations .....	115
Analysis of Subtheme 3.1: Fiscal Limitations .....	115
Analysis of Subtheme 3.2: Location and Department Size Limitations .....	116
Analysis of Subtheme 3.3: Using Resources to Overcome Current Training Limitations .....	117
Analysis of Theme 4: Best Practices for Campus Security and Active Shooter Prevention	117
Subtheme 4.1: Campus Security or Police Department.....	117
Subtheme 4.2: Using Early Intervention Teams for Active Shooter Prevention	118
Research Findings .....	118
Conceal Carry .....	119
Response to Incidents .....	120
Training .....	120
Discussion .....	123
A Call to Action .....	126
Recommendation for Further Research .....	128
Conclusion .....	129
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	132
<b>APPENDIX A</b> .....	135

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Active shooter incidents have underscored the need for a coordinated response by law enforcement and others to save lives. In today's world, few weeks go by without an active shooter event occurrence or attempt on a college campus. Campus violence is not new to the United States, but it was not until after the Columbine tragedy in 1999 that law enforcement training changed and the need for campus security was highlighted. Although Columbine was a high school rather than a college campus, the tragedy resulted in changes to law enforcement training at all levels, putting more emphasis on a "first on scene" rather than "wait for others" approach.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and others have identified certain "conditions" that make America susceptible to crime and violence (O'Toole, 1999). These potential "condition characteristics" could and do exist on college campuses (O'Toole, 1999). College campuses are diverse environments where students, community, professors, administrators, and staff hold diverse beliefs, habits, morals, ideas, and motivations. The public access nature of campuses increases the need for access control and monitoring. Traditional college-age students are often exploring and experiencing life's trials related to their own personal growth sometimes, which sometimes creates an unsafe environment. Sometimes this exploration of life creates an environment for the criminals to succeed and for students to become victimized (Bennett-Johnson, 2004).

It is essential for campus safety and security directors to gain knowledge of the college campus population, to assess stress-causing situations, to have more services available for various types of scenarios, to provide more security and more visibility in high-risk areas, to include plans for situations with various scenarios, and to have a "no-tolerance" rule for violence

(Bennett-Johnson, 2004). This research will look at safety and security concerns as related to training and preparedness for an active shooter incident at community and technical colleges in Kansas.

## **Background**

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> the United States suffered high-profile school attacks perpetrated by students: Columbine High School (1999) and Virginia Tech (2007). Thirty-two students, faculty, and the perpetrators were killed in these two separate attacks. Both events caused turmoil for secondary and postsecondary institutions as they struggled to create and implement policies for safely handling school shooters (Giduck, 2011). Since Virginia Tech, the nation has experienced additional school shootings with significant casualties at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb (2008) and Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut (2012).

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing, or attempting to kill, people in a confined and populated area (Giduck, 2011). As experience with these events has grown, the standards of training for local emergency agencies and campus security agencies need to be better aligned with the optimum survival of the victims of a shooting event. Now is the time to learn from past events and experiences to improve the “survivability” by raising awareness of such incidents (Giduck, 2011).

A 2014 FBI report (Blair, Martindale, & Nichols, 2014) reflected various statistics related to active shooters. The report showed that in 49% of active shooter incidents, the incident was over by the time police arrived, and in 67% of the incidents, the shooter died by suicide or had left the scene (Blair et al., 2014). In response to these tragic incidents, many campuses across the country have amended the role of campus safety and security directors. The days of checking for

locked doors and providing a safety escort service, though still important functions, have given way to a broader role of serving as the first line of defense with the protection of campus communities in the forefront.

Since the 1990s, efforts to improve campus safety have been on the rise in the state of Kansas. Due to the request of parents, along with the enactment of the Clery Act, many security departments were established during that decade. Many of the early security department officers were certified law enforcement officers ready for a new and different challenge, which campuses provided. Prior to 1990, there were no qualifications within the state for campus officers. College personnel were not trained for emergency response nor were they equipped to respond to an active shooter event. Many campus officers were part-time and worked under the direction of the maintenance department. Today, safety and security directors are responsible for numerous critical incident responses such as an active shooter event, medical response, federal reporting, and safety education on campus (i.e., Clery and Campus Sexual Violence Act, SaVE Act); however, response training for active shooters has become the main priority of college campus safety and security divisions, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and communities (Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010).

College campuses have been thrust into the limelight and held by the public, parents of students, and communities as the parties responsible for preparing for an active shooter event. As such, there is a need to understand the experiences of campus safety and security directors in preparing for an active shooter event.

Campus violence has continued to increase, most noticeably in the active shooter area (Drysdale et al., 2010). Public expectations are high when it comes to protecting children, even into their college years. By exploring the background and knowledge of Kansas community and

technical college safety and security directors through descriptions of their experiences, the researcher hopes to better understand how well-trained and prepared campus safety and security directors feel they are to handle an active shooter event by engaging in an open dialog with these individuals. This will be discovered through their experiences and their perceptions about their training and preparation to handle an active shooter event.

### **Federal and State Government Actions**

In response to the escalation of campus violent crime including campus shootings, congress enacted two major federal laws: The Student Right-to-Know or Clery Act (1990) and the Sexual Assault Violence Elimination Act (SaVE; 2012). These laws were designed to address the tragedies that occurred as a result of active shooters and violent crime. They were also enacted in response to the lack of accurate reporting from college campuses in an effort to develop better statistics to help campus safety and security personnel understand the activity on their campus. Because of these laws, security personnel are better able to track potential active shooters or violent crimes that could lead to active shooting events on their campus.

The initial Clery Act, also known as the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act of 1990 (20 U.S.C. § 1092), required schools to annually disclose information about crime, including specific sexual crime categories in and around campus. An amendment to the Clery Act, also known as the Campus Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights of 1992, required schools to develop prevention policies and provide certain assurances to victims. The Act was amended again in 1998 to expand the requirements, including the crime categories that must be reported (National Institute of Justice, 2008).

In 1990, campus crime was formally recognized as a concern when Public Law 101-542 was signed into law as the Student Right-To-Know Act (Bennett-Johnson, 2004, p. 23).

Campuses that participated in student financial programs under the 1965 Title IV of the Higher Education Act were required to disclose campus policies, procedures, and statistics about crimes that took place on campus. Under the Crime Awareness and Security Act of 1990, campuses were also directed to distribute an annual crime and security policy report to prospective students and employees (Bennett-Johnson, 2004). The focus of these regulations was to elicit more cooperation through reporting and monitoring of campuses. Since 1990, active shooters have been the focus of new campus and state regulations to engage in better preparation of safety and security departments.

Both the Clery Act and the Crime Awareness and Security Act mandate annual reporting by educational institutions as a condition of maintaining federal funding. Safety and security directors at community colleges, technical colleges, and universities are required to annually report on-campus crimes, which allow prospective students to examine the crime rate for that institution. The laws allow the federal Clery examiners to evaluate college crime and assess if there is any deviation from one year to the next. Reporting is tied to federal financial aid and any violations found during an examination could result in fines or reduction in financial aid for institutions. This crucial data collection allows security departments, administration, and boards of trustees to analyze the criminal happenings within their campus communities and the communities in which their campuses are located. Collecting these data allows for budgeting increases, personnel increases, or adjustment of personnel to different sectors of the campuses.

### **Presidential Executive Actions to Reduce Gun Violence**

On January 16, 2013, the White House released a memorandum from President Barack Obama addressing his plan to reduce gun violence. In this memorandum, access to the federal background check system for doctors was established within the Health Insurance Portability and

Accountability Act (HIPAA) to reduce the possibility that states would withhold background information. This presidential memorandum allowed states to share critically needed background check information. The memorandum directed the Attorney General to review categories of individuals banned from having guns in an attempt to prevent dangerous people from procuring guns. Law enforcement officers are allowed to run full background checks on individuals before returning seized guns. A letter distributed by the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) Agency to the federal firearms dealers explained how to accomplish background checks on firearm consumers (White House Press Release, 2013). These included:

- Allow federal agencies to trace all firearms recovered in a criminal investigation.
- Make available to all law enforcement agencies the Department of Justice reports analyzing information on lost or stolen guns.
- Provide proper training for campus law enforcement, police, school officials, and first responders for active shooters.
- Maximize enforcement through federal background checks and communication efforts to prevent firearm violence and prosecute gun crime.

The White House release was developed to enhance the ability of the state and federal officials to prevent another shooting like Virginia Tech. The Virginia Tech shooting uncovered the need for change in policy, procedure, and preparedness on issues surrounding students, records, and communication among agencies. The incident at Virginia Tech has, and will continue to, changed laws and methods of handling gun purchasing and mental health records. Changing laws and a focus on school shootings, the next step for prevention will be assessing issues prior to the problem surfacing (White House Press Release, 2013).

## **Kansas Government Actions**

On July 1, 2013, the Kansas governor and legislature enacted the Kansas Personal and Family Protection Act (K.S.A. 75-7c01), which allows individuals to carry concealed weapons on educational institution properties. This legislation also allows educational institutions to arm trained employees for the protection of all, potentially reducing the threat of an active shooter.

The Kansas Legislature wrote into law that citizens have the right to carry a concealed handgun on a community or technical college campus. The law took effect July 1, 2013 and created a tremendous amount of controversy among community and technical college administrations and Boards of Trustees. The Board of Trustees had the option to request in writing to the Attorney General's office an exemption from the law for up to four years. All 25 Kansas community and technical colleges requested an exemption, hoping to learn more about the consequences of the law from legal counsel and insurance carriers. Most institutions were threatened with cancellation of insurance if they chose to implement the new concealed carry law (Kansas Senate/Legislature, 2013).

As the community and technical colleges in Kansas chose the exemption through July 2017, they now must take action according to the law and create "adequate security measures," meaning, for example, the use of electronic equipment and personnel at public entrances to detect and restrict the carrying of any weapons into campus buildings. Beginning July 1, 2017 all four year and two-year public colleges started allowing conceal carry on their campuses. Any individual 21 years or older who is otherwise legally allowed to possess a concealed handgun may do so in any public facility, or on any public grounds unless proper security measures are in place. Adequate storage measures for lawfully carried weapons, including, but not limited to, the

use of gun lockers or other similar storage options, may be provided at public entrances (Kansas Senate/Legislature, 2013).

The significant changes in conceal carry laws in the state of Kansas presents a new set of issues for the campuses and their safety and security directors. Boards of Trustees are being faced with the decision of whether to allow faculty and staff to carry a firearm on campus. Insurance liability and adequate faculty and staff tactical weapons training will also be issues that will need to be investigated. Under Kansas' new law, if campuses do not allow conceal carry they have until July 2017 to implement a method of protecting each building entrance with electronic protection and/or personnel.

The fact that Kansas campus safety and security directors must develop conceal carry laws for Kansas campuses will force safety and security personnel, administrations, and Boards of Trustees to work together to provide better security measures for Kansas campuses, thus reducing the threat of an active shooter event on their campuses. Many campuses have chosen to develop better safety and security measures since the legislature enacted the Kansas Personal and Family Protection Act (K.S.A. 75-7c01) in 2013. Each campus will have until 2017 to provide an approved security plan to the Attorney General's office.

### **Summary**

Federal and state laws have been enacted with the intent of making campuses more accountable for the enforcement, education, and prevention of crimes on campus. As a result, Clery, Title IV, SaVE Act, and the Kansas Conceal Carry Law were created. To ensure that campuses are taking these laws seriously, penalties for lack of attention to them have been tied to federal funding, or in Kansas case to the state Attorney General for monitoring.

## **Purpose Statement**

By exploring the background and knowledge of Kansas community and technical colleges' safety and security directors through descriptions of their experiences, the researcher hoped to better understand how trained and prepared campus safety and security directors feel they are to handle an active shooter event. This is an impartial study to focus on college safety and security directors' perceptions of their training by specifically asking about their preparation for an active shooter event on a college campus in Kansas. The intent is to elicit the experience of the participants as they engage in implementing procedures and ensuring preparedness of the safety and security departments of these institutions.

This study consisted of interviews with the directors, examination of state and federal laws related to campus safety, and an assessment of the how training preparedness procedures have been developed to ensure campus safety. The study focus was to explore the background and knowledge of Kansas community and technical college safety and security directors through descriptions of their experiences. The researcher hoped to better understand how well trained and prepared campus safety and security directors feel they are to handle an active shooter event.

## **Significance of the Study**

Active shootings on campuses are not new (Bennett-Johnson 2004). This research is necessary for understanding, developing, and maintaining a safe learning environment for the students, faculty, staff, and community. This study hopes to examine the experiences of safety and security directors and their training perception to active shooter preparation. The findings of this study will be published to enhance security professionals' knowledge base and assist other institutions enhance their officer and campus training or assess their status with regard to what is needed to protect their campus population and communities.

## **Research Questions**

1. What are the experiences, attitudes, and understanding of campus safety and security directors concerning their preparedness for active shooters at Kansas community and technical colleges?
2. How do these experiences, attitudes, and understandings create the foundation for practices, policies, and procedures at Kansas community colleges and technical colleges?

## **Researcher Perspective**

The researcher believes that campus security personnel are increasingly faced with making ‘life or death’ decisions on campuses and are not prepared for the ultimate encounter of an active shooter. While many believe that conceal carry is a “quick fix,” referring to Second Amendment rights to support their position, very little preparation for an active shooter event is occurring. It is the researcher’s belief that colleges are still simply reacting to the violence despite the “warning” that Virginia Tech provided. Mental health professionals on campuses will be a significant assistance to the campus population, but not without support and communication.

As a former sheriff’s deputy and campus chief of police, it is my belief that proper and constant affordable training at the highest level the campus can afford is important for all personnel. Much training can be obtained through local agencies for little or no cost. Convincing leadership of the need for tactical professional training has been a struggle for campus security due to attitudes and perceptions. In 1999, when the Columbine tragedy struck, along with a paradigm shift in the training and response of law enforcement, college administration began to pay closer attention to the potential of an active shooter on campus. This tragedy was the impetus for safety and security directors to access funds to ensure better training.

Gaining the perspective of community and technical college directors of current training and preparation will be crucial to future research and procedure development for training and safety. Will higher education administration embrace the realities of today's world and the potential attacks that threaten their campuses? The researcher hopes to answer this through my research questions. As the type of attacks change the methods of delivery training must somehow be innovative enough to attempt to prevent or neutralize as many eminent attacks as possible. Thus, from the researcher's professional perspective, developing and enhancing procedures of training and campus preparedness is crucial for assisting higher education administration, faculty, staff, and students gain a clearer understanding of what to do in the event of a tragedy.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

College and university campus safety and security departments have increasingly been pressured to develop policies and procedures that address active shooters and related hostile activities (Scalora, Simons, & VanSlyke, 2010). Campus safety and security departments are similar to small law enforcement agencies, often serving very large, active communities. Campus safety and security departments serve many stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, administration, community members, visitors, and local law enforcement agencies. Balancing the expectations of multiple stakeholders often results in a debate of values, free expression, and creativity. Accomplishing balance is sometimes complicated by academic principles, and when viewed through an adversarial lens, campus safety and security measures may clash (Scalora et al., 2010).

This literature review is compiled from peer review of journal articles, books, and government reports. The goal is to address specific areas of this research, placing the researcher's proposed research within the existing body of knowledge, thus providing "stackable knowledge," addressing campus procedures and communication, lessons learned, government intervention, federal laws, threat assessments, force continuum, and financial considerations. The literature review will also address the training and knowledge-base that a safety and security director needs to acquire to develop an active shooter prevention methodology.

### **Campus Procedures and Communication**

Campus safety and security departments developing new policies or procedures must respect the campus environments. Communication must flow through students, faculty, staff, administration, and community members, which can become an overwhelming task. Once these stakeholders understand the mission of the safety and security department, cooperation begins to

flow. With challenging work and communication campus safety and security measures can be implemented without disturbing academia and professionals (Cornell & Allen, 2010).

According to a New York City Police Department (NYPD) study there are three categories on which campus safety and security departments need to focus their energy and time when mitigating risk factors for their campuses. These include areas that are vulnerable to an active shooter as well as pre-and post-evacuation routes that were also important to mitigate loss of life. It is essential to identify shelter in areas that could be used and floor plans identifying each of them. Culminating each of these identified areas with a campuses active shooter drill so the campus understands the issues involved with such an event is also essential. The training should include evacuate, hide and or act including dialing 911 as soon as safely possible. Systems may include credential-based access control systems, video systems with means of communications, and messaging to reach the campus (Daddario & Waters, 2012).

Very few law enforcement officers or agencies solve crimes without gathering information. A Threat Assessment Team (TAT), is often used to expedite communication. When developing a TAT, a combination of many stakeholders from the campus is needed. Some of the departments that should be involved are student services, faculty, administration, mental health care providers, and law enforcement, possibly from both on and off-campus due to the off-campus venues and crossover of responsibilities. No safety and security agency can singlehandedly handle the range of threats that could potentially happen on a campus (Scalora et al., 2010). According to an FBI bulletin report, threat assessment teams should conduct a holistic assessment and management strategy concerning all aspects of the student's life, such as academics, residence halls, work, and social lives (Scalora et al., 2010).

In the months following the Virginia Tech tragedy, one threat assessment team on a university campus found that a student had engaged in what was determined to be bizarre behavior including torturing animals. This individual had collected photos of friends and had drawn targets around the face of one of them. The student had made statements around campus that “he would be the next Virginia Tech.” A shooting range had also been discovered on his property where he had been practicing (Scalora et al., 2010).

After activating the TAT, the decision was made to have campus and local law enforcement agencies interview this student. Upon interviewing him, they discovered he had recently purchased a semiautomatic handgun and a rifle. By communicating and working together following the TAT’s policy and procedure, the intervention worked, and the student agreed to be committed for an evaluation (Scalora et al., 2010).

### **Virginia Tech**

The Virginia Tech tragedy is highlighted in the literature review because the incident is the basis of many changes that colleges are facing. Training for safety and security departments, campus in-service education, communication flow, adjustment of policies and procedures, development of threat assessment teams on campuses, and counselor involvement are just a few things that have been changing since Virginia Tech (Midwestern Higher Education Compact [MHEC], 2008).

The Virginia Tech mass killings from an “active shooter” have also changed the thought process of those in charge of handling campus safety and security (Giduck, 2011), thus creating the need to further investigate safety and security departments at community and technical colleges to see where they stand on their active shooter preparation since Virginia Tech.

Through review of literature, the researcher found that policy recommendations of researchers and specialists focus on several factors, with one being vitally important: that educational institution personnel need training to recognize a threat, when that threat is real and who and when to notify. History has shown that potential shooters will talk about what they are going to do prior to doing it (O'Toole, 1999).

The following exemplifies the need for training that appeared in the literature. Sueng-Hui Cho, the Virginia Tech shooter came to Virginia Tech with an individual educational plan (IEP) due to past psychological problems. Refusing the request of his therapist, Cho began his studies at Virginia Tech in 2003. During his four years at Virginia Tech, Cho displayed multiple behaviors that were signs of a potential problem including, a stabbing the floor of a girl's room during a party he was attending, writing heavy metal lyrics on the walls of the dorm he was living in, and writing a violent poem in a creative writing class for which he was subsequently removed. Additionally, he would speak to and act like he had a twin brother, Question Mark, a fictitious individual, and send emails accusing his classmates of genocide and cannibalism (Giduck, 2007).

In 2005, Cho told his roommate he wanted to kill himself. The roommate reported this, and Cho was taken to the hospital for evaluation by local law enforcement. However, he was discharged with the request that he go to counseling, with no communication to campus security for follow-up. Although one professor noticed his bizarre behavior and tried to intervene, the campus did not have the communication structure in place, nor the policies set, to require intervention without student consent. Unfortunately, with this lack of communication, and an error on his discharge papers, Cho could purchase the weapons that he would use in his active shooter attack on the Virginia Tech campus. If the system had been in sync with what had been

going on with Cho and all lines of communication between all venues were intact, this tragedy could potentially have been averted. Instead it resulted in the actions of killing of 33 faculty and students, including the shooter Cho, at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007 (Giduck, 2007).

Researchers often find that the motivations for attacks on higher educational institution are different from the motivation for attacks on secondary schools (Giduck, 2007). Being bullied or picked on seem to be the driving forces in secondary school settings while higher educational institution attackers seem to lean toward the need to succeed. For example, foreign graduate students are concerned about their visa status and their culturally-induced intense need for academic achievement. The major change from high school for college students is the loss of faculty members' sensitivity and the perception that faculty members are the gatekeepers to the student's academic success. Because of the Aurora, Colorado, theater shooting, a system of investigating a graduate student's background in mental health is becoming more and more prevalent along with the need for a better understanding of the methodologies of identifying these types of issues that may arise (Bonanno & Levenson, 2014).

College students experience increased stress from living away from home for the first time and the lack of balance in their lives. The struggle to succeed at college leaves college students particularly vulnerable to mental health problems, thus concerns of not being able to properly address issues begin to surface (Bonanno & Levenson, 2014). Some struggle to succeed in class: life was much easier when they were at the top of their class in high school. Without financial support from parents, many students must work to pay for education and their social lives come to a halt. Frequently a student's entire sense of worth revolves around success in school (Bonanno & Levenson, 2014).

For these reasons, mental health concerns have surfaced in the college admissions process and admissions officers increasingly look beyond grades or disciplinary problems in the backgrounds of recruits. Issues such as a student attending multiple institutions without completing a degree may warrant further follow-up. Faculty advisors have become wary of maintaining marginal students when their completion seems remote at best. Mentors and advisors must be alerted to situations in which a student's dignity and entire self-worth are at risk, and a student may feel that there's nothing left to lose (Fox & Savage, 2009).

In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech shooting, with concern for increased access to guns, President George W. Bush signed into federal law the first major federal gun control since the Brady Bill and President Clinton's federal assault weapons ban. The new law required states to enter into the FBI database the names of people declared by a court as mentally ill, which would prohibit the sale of guns to these individuals (Hong, Cho, & Lee, 2010). As this law was not in effect at the time, Virginia did not send the mental health records of Cho to the FBI. If they had been sent, it is possible that Cho would not have been able to purchase weapons (Hong et al., 2010).

### **Government Intervention for Campuses**

In 1999, the United States Supreme Court issued a stern warning to educational institutions when commenting on school authorities' duty to address school violence (Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 1999). The Court explained that educational personnel are on notice that they could be held responsible for failing to protect students from student-on-student violence. Even though this United States Supreme Court decision dealt with secondary education, recent legal events show that it is a relevant issue for post-secondary institutions as well, due to the lawsuits filed against Virginia Tech (Hermann & Finn, 2013).

Officials following the orders of President George Bush White House representatives Leavitt, Spellings and Gonzales across the country to collect recommendations of how the federal government can serve better during these tragedies. The experts that were sought were educators, mental health, law enforcement, and state and local officials (Leavitt, Gonzales, & Spellings, 2007)

The action that the report covered was not how to address the Virginia Tech but how to develop a frame work as to how to take tangible steps in preventing tragedies like Virginia Tech from happening. Findings and recommendations that were identified were areas of sharing information, accurate and complete record keeping on individuals possessing firearms, improved awareness, create mental illness services needed and get them involved (Leavitt et al., 2007).

Policies and procedures protecting campuses changed again on September 11, 2001. Since September 11, 2001, a much broader discussion has taken place on college campuses in regard to concerns of terrorism. Shortly after September 11, 2001, FBI Director Robert Mueller referred to college and university campuses as soft and vulnerable targets of terror. Although violence happens daily across college and university campuses, Virginia Tech's mass casualty shootings put safety and security to the forefront of campus issues. The leading topics of discussions on many campuses, in government, at law enforcement agencies, and with the media are: firearms access, gun violence prevention, gun control, availability of mental health services to college students, public safety responses to active shooter situations, and reactions to "active shooter" situations (Thompson, Price, Mrdjenovich, & Khubchandani, 2009).

Violence is one of a parent's first concerns when sending their children off to college (Thompson et al., 2009). Violence is also a top concern of college and university administration. Despite the major concerns, very little is known about the circumstances preceding violent

events, the number of violent acts involving college students, and the role that a firearm played in those acts (Thompson et al., 2009). Thompson et al. (2009) identified two disconcerting perceptions regarding firearms issues. The first perception was that campus safety officers had not been adequately trained to handle an “active shooter” situation. Second was the perception that there was no long-term financial commitment from school administrations for preventing firearm violence on their campuses (Thompson et al., 2009).

Campus security and police chiefs have the inherent responsibility of ensuring student safety on campuses and assessing any impending threats to the campus population. These law enforcement officials are to implement security activities involving the development of ongoing mitigation plans for the campuses and its activities, continuous assessment of their department’s program and its effectiveness within the campus and community, and direct criminal investigations of violent incidents occurring on campus or at their activities. (Thompson et al., 2009).

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Need to Know**

Virginia Tech underscored the delicate balance between a student’s right to privacy and the need to communicate a student’s disturbing or threatening behavior to authorities. Colleges and universities can communicate with the appropriate officials in the case of a health or safety emergency; however, identifying an appropriate official or an actual emergency is open to interpretation, and colleges and universities have inherently erred on the side of nondisclosure of information to third parties (MHEC, 2008).

A survey created by MHEC was emailed to all individuals with the titles of chief student life officer or security/safety director listed in the 2006 edition of the Higher Education Directory. The institutions had to be accredited by the Council for Higher Education

Accreditation or another accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education. Three hundred and thirty-one (56%) of respondents acknowledged that their college or university had reviewed policies and procedures under FERPA after the events of Virginia Tech. Of those institutions, 75% indicated the FERPA audit was part of a much larger campus safety audit, 20% of which are completed by external legal advisors or counsel. Repeatedly, institutions acknowledged many changes by expanding and more clearly defining circumstances in which an institution would initiate contact with parents and appropriate authorities (MHEC, 2008).

The tragedy of Virginia Tech was a catalyst across U.S. colleges and universities to initiate proactive action to attempt to reduce the probability of these incidents from happening. Campus police and security departments responded quickly to alter their responses to campus violence in the event that an active shooter event should occur.

After the attack at Virginia Tech, many campuses across the country evaluated and upgraded their ability to communicate with students and members of the institutional community. Emergency notification was one area of high criticism at Virginia Tech. Today, students register for campus emergency notification systems. Students rely heavily upon their smart phones and social media instead of landline phones to receive emergency notifications (Drysdale et al., 2010).

### **Kansas Legislature and Statutory Language**

Concerned with active shooter and other violent situations on campuses, the Kansas Legislature amended the school and security officer and campus police officer laws of Kansas Statutes Annotated (K.S.A.) 72-8222. The law allows Boards of Trustees of any community college to employ “noncertified” school security officers. This law states that these officers are to protect students, faculty, employees, and property of the community college or adjacent

property thereto, when there is a college sponsored event. While engaged in duties of a community college officer, each officer shall possess and exercise all general law enforcement powers, rights, privileges, protections, and immunities in every county where the community college resides. Campus police officers have all the rights and privileges, power and authority of law enforcement officers (K.S.A 72-8222).

Mutual aid pacts and agreements to extend jurisdiction may be allowed once an agreement is established by the counties and board of trustees, extending the boundaries of jurisdiction. All the above indicated that officers should enforce rules and regulation as well as rules and policies of the Board of Trustees whether violation, thereof, constitutes a criminal offense (K.S.A., 2012).

### **IACLEA Position Statement**

Concerns raised from association members about conceal carry laws or policies from the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA) were raised in 2008 following the Virginia Tech tragedy. The possibility of accidental discharging a handgun on campus is very real. Handguns at college parties where many students are gathered and where alcohol may be used. The IACLEA also is very concern and have had concerns from campus police responding to an active shooter event identifying who is the active shooter and who is the conceal carry individual (IACLEA, 2008).

The requested action of how campuses should respond from the IACLEA is to carefully examine policies about conceal carry. Work closely with IACLEA with the local authorities, campus police and the IACLEA in developing better prevention programs and training, develop strategies that will assist all involved in knowing how to respond to an emergency and how to be prepared (IACLEA, 2008).

## **Threat Assessment as a Violence Prevention Strategy**

Studies on school shootings completed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the United States Secret Service both conclude that threat assessment offers an important prevention component to comprehensive safety planning. In a well-designed plan for colleges to have for first responders, campus safety should not be limited to the standard security measures, warning systems, or a crisis-response plan that is reactionary in nature. The preferred approach to prevent violence is a threat assessment before the active shooter appears, assessing a campus and its occupants. In many of all active shooter events, prior warnings were given, such as statements and/or behavior, weeks in advance in some cases (Cornell & Allen, 2010, p. 10).

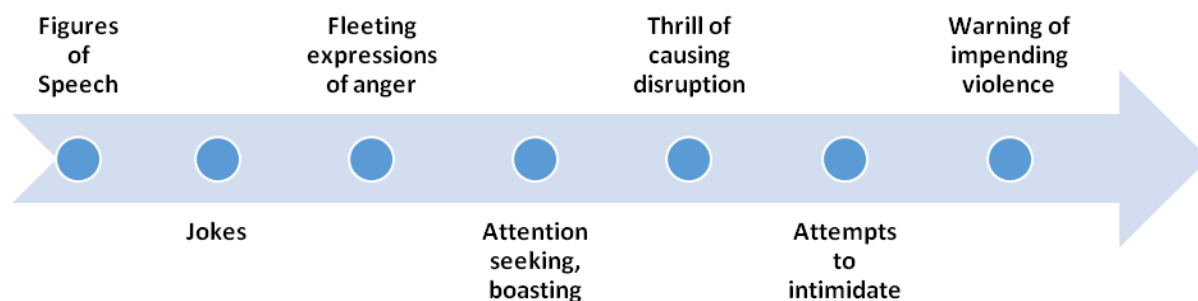
“Threat assessment” is the investigation of an individual (or group) that has communicated a threat or engaged in threatening behavior. Threats may be expressed directly to an intended victim or, more often, communicated indirectly to friends or associates. Threatening behavior can range from angry outbursts that arouse fear and concern to the acquisition of weapons for an attack (Cornell & Allen, 2010, p. 10).

Criminal profiling is the attempt to identify the perpetrator(s) through a set of characteristics, theorizing that they may be a potential threat. According to both the FBI’s profiling unit and the Secret Service’s special agents, a profile of a potential shooter cannot be determined prior to the incident (Cornell & Allen, 2011). The two reasons given are: (a) shootings are statistically so rare that the possibility of detecting the few cases among thousands of schools and millions of students is unrealistic; (b) the characteristics shared by many attackers, such as feelings of persecution or mistreatment, suicidal depression, and preoccupied with violent video games or other violent forms of entertainment are not specific to violent individuals (Cornell, 2010, p. 10).

The focus of a threat assessment is on a narrower group of individuals who have, in some way been identified, communicated a threat, or exhibited violent behavior arousing concerns from faculty, students, staff, or the community. Nearly all the studies completed by the FBI and the Secret Service have shown that individuals or groups have clearly expressed their intentions and how they will carry them out. Some had even given the time and place where the incident was going to happen (Cornell, 2010).

Once the threat has been identified, the TAT activates and determines how to handle the threat and whether it is credible or not. According to the FBI many individuals who make threats are not a real concern, but a determination must be made by the team (O'Toole, 2006). Proper examination is necessary to understand and determine the context in which the threat was made and what factors motivated the individual to make it. Then a determination regarding whether the threat is credible and if it could be carried out must be made. Evidence must be thoroughly examined to decide whether engagement in this type of behavior to carry out the threat is possible (O'Toole, 2006). After each piece of evidence has been examined the TAT will provide a response plan of action. These plans can include a determination that it was a misunderstanding or a dispute that needs to be resolved or that administrative legal action must be taken. Each case must be examined individually without prejudice. The levels of threat are indicated along the continuum in the figure below (Cornell, 2010, p. 11).

As shown in Figure 1, the level of threat that an individual demonstrates runs the gamut of less to more severe. This can assist in determining if an individual is escalating to potential violence.



*Figure 1. Continuum of threats: O'Toole, M. (1999). FBI: The school shooter: A threat assessment perspective (pp. 2-52). Quantico, VA: FBI Academy).*

### **Assessing Threat**

The basic function of a college TAT is to provide consultation and assistance to other functioning units within the higher education institution when dealing with a potentially dangerous or violent situation. The state of Virginia recommends that these teams include representatives from across the college setting; mental health professionals, legal counsel, law enforcement, housing personnel and college administration. It is recommended that the selected college administrator be the one who covers the largest cross-section of faculty, students, and staff (Cornell, 2010).

The four basic steps in threat assessment are: identify the threat, evaluate the seriousness, intervene, and monitor the safety plan. Identifying the threat could potentially be the most important and dangerous step. TAT's should take a holistic assessment considering many aspects of student life including academic, residential, work, and social. No situation must be overlooked, and any threatening communication must be evaluated. The evaluation will be to determine whether this person intends to do harm to someone and to whom the intent to do harm

was communicated. Other threat indicators are brandishing weapon(s), dangerous intentions, angry outbursts, and planning or preparations communicated (Scalora et al., 2010).

In the second step of evaluating the situation and seriousness of the threat, the assessment team must gather all evidence as quickly as possible. This stage may involve interviewing witnesses to determine whether a law enforcement investigation is warranted. An extensive background check by law enforcement may be necessary and warranted, depending upon the seriousness of the case. The Secret Service noted in many of their reports that anyone can make threats, but few carry them out (Cornell & Allen, 2011).

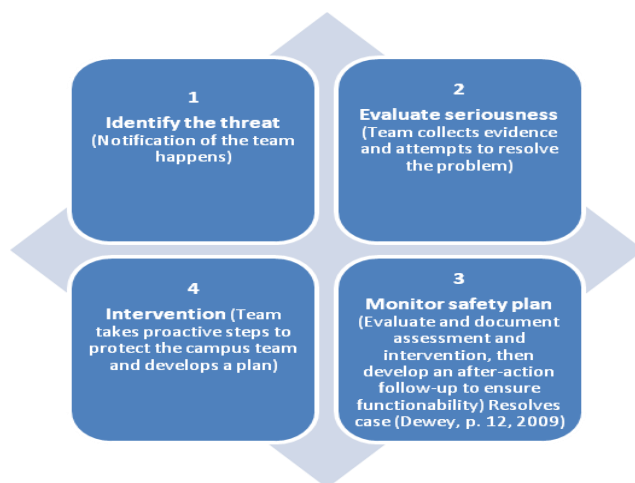
Third is the intervention stage. No single protocol can cover all cases or threats. Many cases of threats involve frustrated students, faculty, staff, administration, or the public. A conflict resolution plan may be warranted, or it may be at a level where a mental health professional must be involved. All actions must be carefully orchestrated due to the ever-present potential of the institution needing to take legal action (Cornell & Allen, 2011).

The fourth stage is when the review of the safety plan takes place and the team determines whether their actions are working or if changes need to be made. Additionally, the team ensures that all documents involving the case have been collected and secured for the protection of evidence. In Virginia they have determined that only the TAT will be able to have access to the files. According to the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), threat assessments do not become a part of an academic record of any student and should not be considered (Cornell & Allen, 2011).

The success of a Threat Assessment Team is based upon education, support, and teamwork throughout a college campus.

- Administrative support – The upper echelon of an institution must clearly express support and willingness to work with a TAT. It must set clear policies and procedures that establish the team’s authority and scope of action.
- Campus-wide support and education – Students, faculty, staff, and the community should be educated as to the importance of a team such as this. Who, what, where, when, and why are the primary training elements that are needed so that useful information flow happens.
- Cross-disciplinary teamwork – It is critical to form a TAT and to draw from the expertise of the individuals that work at the institution. This is where the background of law enforcement, administration, mental health, housing, and legal counsel, among other is crucial to the success of this team (Scalora et al., 2010).

The following decision matrix (Figure 2) illustrates the process of decisions that a TAT will collectively make. This is to ensure all avenues have been evaluated and covered prior to engaging in an intervention or action strategy.



*Figure 2. Decision Matrix (Threat Assessment Team): Figure 2. Decision Matrix: Cornell, D., & Allen, K. (2011). Development, Evaluation, and Furture Directions of the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Guidelines. Journal of School Violence, 10:88-106, Taylor & Francis Group, LLC Routledge.*

Without a plan of action formulated from a threat assessment team, responders will have to rely on the observations they can readily make and will be forced to orient themselves to the situation, and assess the resources that can be brought to bear, during a time of extreme stress or shock (Critical Incident Response Group [CIRG], 1999, p. 5).

TATs are the focus for community and technical colleges and higher education institutions throughout the country. These innovative teams enable the flow of information and facilitate the decision-making process to assist the academic judicial process. Threat assessment teams make decisions about the threat of violence. These decisions must be made with facts and informed by an understanding of the crime rate within a community according to the most recent studies available about campus crimes (Cornell, 2010, p. 11).

### **Threat Assessment Effectiveness**

Studies have proposed that the most effective way of reducing campus violence may be through conducting threat assessments to evaluate persons of concern on campus and intervening before they can act out their intentions against others. Although this concept has been used in school settings, it may be of less value in colleges because of the larger amount of buildings, uncontrolled access, irregular student schedules, and the numerous developmental and environmental changes that can introduce higher levels of stress (Drysdale et al., 2010).

The problem of intervention is the inability to predict campus murders or manslaughter, even though we can learn from after action reports and from our past people are likely to determine that 'it was inevitable and only a matter of time'. From our past and after action reporting we can determine that the active shooter had mental issue and likely a potential cause. Every college counselor and administrator have knowledge of personnel on college campuses

that have mental disorders. Attending to the numbers of such persons on some campuses are too large to make it practical to attending to each of them (Birnbaum, 2012).

### **Department of Homeland Security**

The Department of Homeland Security in conjunction with the Federal Bureau of Investigation has researched and developed considerations for campus personnel. This portion of the document was developed to enhance the understanding of an active shooter situation and what to do if it happens:

Active Shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, individuals must prepare both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation. The three recommended options in dealing with an active shooter situation. (Department of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 3)

Run (Evacuate)  
Hide (in locked area/out of site)  
Fight (Last resort)

### **Financial Considerations for Campuses**

Once policies and procedures have been implemented, preparedness does not come without a burden for educational institutions. A campus may commit financial, technological, and human resources, but cannot guarantee the complete safety of a university, community college, or technical college community from violent crime. The public expects institutions to foresee violence and provide protective measures to eliminate violence on their campuses (MHEC, 2008).

When convenience and ease of access to facilities are compromised to enhance campus safety and security, tensions often rise. Faculty, students, staff, and community resist what they see as unreasonable impositions of authority and control. The campus family and community

members ultimately express concerns about privacy and the intrusiveness of measures such as background checks and surveillance cameras (MHEC, 2008, p. 7). The cost-benefit analysis and law of diminishing returns are usually the tools used to evaluate the measures to improve campus safety (MHEC, 2008). Most people would argue that community colleges and universities should receive carte blanche when it comes to protecting their campus communities, but the realities force administrators to acknowledge when a marginal rate of return on investments fails to justify the continued expense of human resources and finances (MHEC, 2008).

Three principles of underlying responsibility and liability for institutions are found in case law. The first is referred to as special relationship, in which institutions are expected to commit to the safety, security, and general welfare of their students and are obligated to provide appropriate levels of security (MHEC, 2008, p. 7). This is referred to as the “duty of care” doctrine. The courts have aligned both in loco parentis or landlord-business invitee and landlord-tenant relationships. The second is “foreseeable risk,” in which community colleges and universities have a duty to provide protection from foreseeable risks or criminal acts (Stamatakos, 1990). The third is “contractual obligation,” in which institutions are expected to abide by all their commitments, explicit and implicit, promised to members of the campus community in regard to their protection (Stamatakos, 1990).

While some measures may not be as expensive as others, such as campus preventive patrol making visible campus police and security officers, the technology costs could run into hundreds of thousands of dollars. This in turn forces administrators of community colleges and universities to look at the bottom line and the return on their investments (Violino, 2010). The expectations and increased needs of safety and security at each institution have forced many to pursue external funding due to dwindling budgets (MHEC, 2008).

## **Summary**

No campus can ever make the promise of being 100% safe. The objective for each college and university is to provide as safe and crime free of an environment for the campus community as possible considering the realities of the external influences and the impossibility of controlling the actions of all personnel all the time. In 1985, the American Council on Education suggested that institutions should “marshal those forces within its control to provide that its students and employees on campus have at least that average degree of security enjoyed by similar situated citizens of the surrounding community” (MHEC, 2008, p. 7).

The campus tragedies since 1999, including Virginia Tech, Okios University, and Northern Illinois University, have forced many technical colleges, community colleges, and universities to review all emergency policies, procedures and preparedness plans. The tragedies have renewed discussions and debates about gun safety and control, mental health counseling and the “need to know,” which is a difficult balance between parents, students and communities.

In July 2013, Kansas enacted a law allowing personnel, students, faculty, and staff to carry concealed weapons on campuses and government buildings thus renewing the debate over a student’s right to carry concealed weapons on campuses. Proponents argue that such incidents as Virginia Tech could have been prevented if faculty, staff and students had been allowed to carry guns. It has also enhanced groups and spirited the debate of tracking and doing a better job of screening people who buy weapons, preventing the mentally ill from purchasing or accessing guns in the future (Leavitt et al., 2007).

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **Thematic Analysis**

The purpose of this qualitative thematic analysis study was to explore the perceptions, attitudes, and understandings of Kansas campus safety and security directors and their preparedness for an active shooter event. Thematic analysis focuses on everyday life and experiences. Using thematic analysis, the researcher examined the preparedness of the safety and security directors at community and technical colleges in Kansas for an active shooter event. Thematic analysis was selected because it uses human experiences, lived experiences, and the study of smaller groups (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006.). The importance of using thematic analysis is to explore the genuine experience of what it takes for safety and security directors to prepare themselves, their departments, and their campuses for an active shooter encounter. Gibson and Brown (2009) wrote that thematic analysis is not a top down theory, but merely offers some methods and procedures for data organization. Willig (2013) referred to Joffe (2012) and pointed out meanings captured by a theme can be manifest or latent depending on how the researcher approaches the interpretative task. Campus safety and security directors are responsible for making sure that information of training and safety procedures are shared so their campus communities are better prepared (Bennett-Johnson, 2004). Thematic analysis is most appropriate for the research to understand numerous individuals with a “commonly shared experience” (Creswell, 2009, p. 60).

## **Research Questions**

The study was guided by two research questions:

1. What are the experiences, attitudes, and understanding of campus safety and security directors concerning their preparedness for active shooters at the Kansas community and technical colleges?
2. How do these experiences, attitudes, and understandings create the foundation for practices, policies, and procedures at Kansas community colleges and technical colleges (Gibson & Brown, 2009)?

The thematic analysis continually ties the data back into the research questions allowing the themes to emerge. The research questions provided a focus for developing a research plan of the directors' experiences and/or understandings of their campus preparedness for an active shooter. A research plan is a strategy for gathering data to help address a particular research issue (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Relevant data is critical to assist the researcher in answering the questions and addressing the issues that they pose.

## **Participants**

The state of Kansas has 25 community and technical colleges. The researcher focused on the community and technical colleges with 7,000 or fewer unduplicated head count students, targeting the small and mid-size community and technical colleges; 20 of the 25 targeted institutions fit into this category. Twelve of the 20 institutions that met the criteria of 7,000 unduplicated head count or less were selected for interviews. Of the eight not selected, one institution had a contracted security department and would not allow them to be interviewed, and seven institutions did not have a security department.

The safety and security directors of these small and mid-size institutions were identified through the institutional website and contacted for a face-to-face meeting. Once permission was obtained, the consent to participate form was hand carried to the interviewee, gaining permission from each director prior to the interview. The anticipated timeframe for the interview process was two months. Each safety and security director were interviewed in their office on their respective campus or in a designated area of their choosing to develop a relaxed atmosphere and a conversational environment. Each interview was designed in a semi structured format with 12 open-ended questions asked in no predetermined order.

To keep all participants anonymous, and information confidential to the extent appropriate, numbers were randomly assigned to each of the participants. The alphabetic designation of SC (Security Contact) was assigned to each participant. The 11 participants were each assigned a number between 1-11 as an identifier. To maintain anonymity; participant demographic information is provided in the aggregate as well.

### **Data Collection**

According to Merriam (2009), "... the thematic analysis interview is the primary method of data collection" (p. 25) for thematic analysis research. The primary data collection method for this study was interviews with safety and security directors at small and mid-size community or technical colleges in Kansas.

The experiences of the campus safety and security directors were collected using in-depth interviews. Each participant was asked to describe their experience of trying to prepare their departments and campuses for an active shooter event. These directors are personally involved in writing, reporting, and presenting the procedures. They are also responsible for departmental

preparedness for active shooters. The data reflects the perception of preparedness of the departments through the safety and security directors' subjective experiences.

Interviewing allowed the directors to share their personal experience of preparing their campuses for an active shooter event within the Kansas higher education system thus providing historical information. The directors' perceptions were essential for the researcher to understand the preparedness of the community or technical college. The researcher relied on the safety and security directors' experience within the areas of training, policies, and procedures of a Kansas community and technical college campus and their preparation for an active shooter encounter. The use of interviews also allowed the researcher to control the line of questioning and to keep the conversation on task (Creswell, 2009).

The campus safety and security directors were interviewed for approximately 60 to 90 minutes during the primary interview. An interview protocol was used to guide the questions and record answers during a qualitative interview. Each interview guide consisted of a heading with the date, time, and place. It also included the name and position of the interviewer and interviewee. Consistent instruction was used so no interview varied. Questioning also consistently followed the ice-breaker questions at the beginning and then followed by at least 6 to 10 questions focusing on the primary research (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The interview questions that were used in the data collection were semi structured in nature and followed a set protocol.

- The interview guide included a mix of more and less structured interview questions.
- All questions were flexible, so directors could expand on their answer if they deemed necessary.
- Specific data were required from all respondents.

- Most of the interview was guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored.
- There was no predetermined wording or order.

This format allowed the researcher to respond to the direction that the interviewee took, to the respondents' views as they emerged, and to innovative ideas on the topic as they arose. Follow-up questions allowed interviewees to further explain their ideas or elaborate on what they had already stated. A thank you note for the interview opportunity and findings from the data were forwarded after the research was completed. To ensure the accuracy of the study, a peer review of the material collected was conducted and a specific process for data collection used.

### **Data Analysis**

A critical component of qualitative data analysis is coding; coding can direct the researcher toward exploring issues (Gibson & Brown, 2009). A code is determining a category that describes a general feature of the data, identifying how to range or what the range may be in data examples. The code helps the researcher focus on the commonality within the data set. Through coding, the researcher looked for emerging themes, managing the data changes, while simultaneously attempting to reduce the volume of detail and maintain the complexity (Smith et al., 2009).

There are two types of codes: a priori and empirical. A priori codes serve as broad categories derived from research interests and from the initial categorization framework in order to begin the exploration of the data. Empirical codes can emerge from a priori categories, or from something that was not expected in the original collection of data (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Gibson and Brown (2009) suggested the researcher begin identifying the areas of interests that motivated the researcher in the first place. For example:

- Motivations of why someone would be interested in the job of a safety and security director at a community or technical college.
- Qualifications and work experience, one needs to have to become a safety and security director at a community or technical college.
- Expectations from the Board of Trustees and administration compared to the expectations of the officers that work for director of safety and security.
- Policies that are currently established, and policies that directors would like to see implemented.
- Personality types for campus security positions.

The researcher followed the thematic analysis elements of examining commonalities, examining differences, and examining relationships of the themes that emerged from the data collected. Both a priori and empirical codes were developed after examining the review of the interview transcripts of the participants. Using thematic analysis, determining factors were brought forward from the perceptions and experiences of these community and technical college safety and security directors following the interviews about policies, procedures, and department preparedness for the active shooter.

Thematic analysis is one of the significant areas recognized within the qualitative research approach. Once the recordings of the interviews were transcribed, the interview transcripts were analyzed using the thematic analysis method. The raw data of the transcripts have been coded by examining the three basic concepts of commonality, differences, and relationships as described by Gibson and Brown (2009).

After developing the emergent themes throughout the transcript, the researcher then repeated the process across each interview transcript. Once the data was collected, it was reviewed for the following:

- **Examining commonality** – The researcher examined ways to gather together all the examples across the data set categorizing “example of x” for further analysis and subdivisions.
- **Examining differences** – The researcher looked at the distinctive features across a data set. This is where peculiarities and contrasts were found and analyzed, identifying the relevance of the issues being examined.
- **Examining relationships** – The researcher examined the relationships between the various elements of the analysis occurred. Different items were examined here by looking at ways different code categories related to one another, or how individual characteristics or differences related to general themes (Gibson & Brown, 2009).

The two important implications that Gibson and Brown (2009) discussed are the relevance of context and sampling. “Thematic” relates to searching for aggregated themes within the data (Gibson & Brown, 2009). A theme is a way of generalizing a data set. The important part of “working” the theme is finding its relevance within the context and giving it a place within the research. Themes began to materialize through the analysis of Kansas community and technical college safety and security directors’ interviews.

### **Trustworthiness**

An important part of qualitative research is the continual evaluation of the researcher’s content trustworthiness. Is it valid or reliable? Has it been obtained and reported ethically? Creswell wrote of qualitative validity as being “the means in which the researcher checks for

accuracy of the findings” (Creswell, 2009, p. 190). Qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Creswell, 2009). Reliability and validity are conceptualized as trustworthiness, rigor and quality in qualitative paradigm. It is also through this association that the way to achieve validity and reliability of a research get affected from the qualitative researches perspective which are to eliminate bias and increase the researcher’s truthfulness of proposition about some social phenomenon using triangulation (Golafshani, 2003, p. 604). Then triangulation is defined to be “a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and various sources, of information to form themes or categories in a study” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 126). Trustworthiness of each part of the interview was examined, peer reviewed, and audited. Creswell (2009) recommended using multiple strategies to establish trustworthiness, enabling the researcher to have a stronger ability to access and convince readers of the accuracy of the study.

Following Creswell’s (2009) suggestion of strategies, the trustworthy strategy consisted of peer reviewed by an auditor. Participants also had the opportunity to review the transcripts during a second meeting to ensure they feel that everything stated is accurate. Holding a second meeting might have delayed the process, but trustworthiness of reported research far outweighs the potential of errors due to hastiness. Using the open-ended questioning method during interviews allowed for the opportunity for follow-ups and with the ability for the directors to expand upon each question asked. The goal was to convey the data using rich descriptions of the discussions (Creswell, 2009).

The areas of trustworthiness, validity and reliability that the auditor examined were accuracy of transcription, relationship between the research question and the data, and the level of data analysis from the raw data through interpretation. The level of accuracy determined the

overall trustworthiness of the qualitative study (Creswell, 2009; Smith et al., 2012). Each step taken was to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the findings such as checking transcripts ensure no obvious mistakes exist during transcription.

Thematic Analysis qualitative research involves human relationships and documentation of events or statements involving ethical behavior. The greatest ethical commitment is to those who are participating in the study (Jones et al., 2006). Anticipation of ethical sensitivity along with where and when it may come up during the research process is imperative. The potential is vast considering all areas where ethical issues may arise: research design, statement of purpose and research questions, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, presentation of results, and the role of the researcher (Jones et al., 2006)

Ethics in qualitative research involves conducting the research correctly, not just avoiding concerns or risks. It is also important for the researcher to understand the ethical principles at stake in qualitative research while conducting it. The researcher must also consider confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, avoidance of deception, respect, privacy, and commitment to “do no harm” (Jones et al., 2006).

Ethical issues such as proper identification, notification, permission, and release forms were addressed prior to or during each interview from the institution and everyone. Anonymity concerns within the campus safety and security directors will be considered and addressed. Each of these directors has a right to privacy, which has been addressed through the informed consent. Interview questions were provided to the participants prior to the interview so that they could be reviewed. Each interview question was open-ended to allow the safety and security directors to expound upon their answers, which led to proper follow-up questioning. Once the transcription

was completed, all the safety and security directors were given opportunity to address any discrepancies (Jones et al., 2006).

All ethical issues were addressed with the intent of mitigating potential harm to the participants. Each participating institution will receive a copy of the research and the research findings concerning the Kansas community and technical college campus safety and security directors' perceptions of policies, procedures, and preparedness for the active shooter.

### **Summary**

This research was designed to determine what safety and security directors' perceptions are about community and technical college preparedness for active shooters. This study was designed to determine essential elements in active shooter preparedness and its role in everyday life.

A qualitative approach was the most appropriate methodology to obtain the perceptions of the directors of safety and security at the Kansas community and technical colleges. The paradigm chosen for the overall philosophical framework for the research study was a constructivist view. Thematic analysis was the strategy selected for examination of the data. A thematic analysis was used to most accurately emphasize the rich qualitative, detailed descriptions so that those interested in transferability will have a solid framework for comparison (Creswell, 2009).

The data were collected through personal interviews of Kansas safety and security directors at community and technical colleges. Throughout this study, great care was taken so that credibility, trustworthiness, and rigor was maintained. Fairness was emphasized to ensure all participants' views, perceptions, values, and concerns were apparent within the transcription.

Also, the researcher ensured that credibility, trustworthiness, and authenticity were closely monitored throughout the study.

Credibility was the author conducting each of the interviews personally ensuring each question was asked and notes were accurate. Member checking was used to receive a checking through data, analyses, interpretations and credibility of account (Creswell, 2007, p. 208).

Trustworthiness was employed, ensuring detail was taken before, during, and after the collection of all forms of data. Accuracy was crucial during all phases of this research study, so extra care was taken with all forms of communication throughout the collection phase of this research study. The author identifying and interviewing the specific individuals involved with the security department at each institution visited during the research. Author went word by word on each transcript confirming authenticity.

As the study focused on small and medium size institutions, to determine inclusion in the sample, comprehensive community colleges as well as technical colleges were categorized according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education's Basic Classification of associate-level colleges. Two distinct criteria of institutional classification were evaluated: Institutions that meet the small category (less than 2,500) or the medium category (2,500 through 7,500) based on full-year, unduplicated headcount.

Taking into consideration that the Carnegie Classification's Basic Classification used a snapshot of 2008-2009 IPEDS data, further analysis was conducted to determine if the institutions would remain in the same categories using 2012-2013 IPEDS data, which was the most recent available when the sample was conducted. Only three colleges would have changed in size classification based on that data. However, each of these institutions would remain in the small or medium categories institutions and were, therefore, included in the sample. While the

rural classification was not a factor in selection, it was evaluated as it was a factor in the data analysis. Since the participants are a subset of the original sample, the Carnegie Classification of all Kansas community and technical colleges is included to protect the anonymity of the participants.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS**

Educational institutions across the nation vary greatly in their campus security departments. Institutional security officers range from non-deputized not a certified officer, part-time personnel to fully commissioned and armed university police departments (Drysdale et al., 2010).

Chapter 4 explores the data collected using four themes that build upon each other as the concerns, challenges, and options that are perceived by Kansas community and technical college safety and security directors regarding preparation for active shooters on their campuses. Each overarching theme is explored in depth through specific subthemes that will guide the reader through the intricate and overlapping qualitative data collected through individual participant interviews.

As seen by these aggregate demographics participants were diverse. They represented a variety of campus security models.

- Length of job at current institution: 2.5 to 31 years
- Gender: 10 males and 1 female
- Professional Background: Eight of the 11 participants had a law enforcement background; three had no law enforcement training at all, just a passion for protecting their campuses and some training in active shooter prevention.
- Campus Security Model: Two departments were designated as sworn campus police and the others were all security. Three departments carried firearms, the other were not allowed to carry firearms on their campus. Officer numbers were from seven full-time officers to one full-time officer.

The data will be introduced in Theme 1 with the concerns that are prevalent among safety and security directors with the implementation of a law that allows both concealed and openly carried weapons on campuses. After introducing the concerns, Theme 2 discusses the training that needs to occur for safety and security department personnel as well as the entire campus. Theme 3 explores the difficulty with receiving and conducting training that safety and security directors are currently encountering and anticipate facing in the future. Finally, Theme 4 discusses the best practices that campus safety and security directors are using and planning to implement to best prepare their campuses for a potential active shooter event.

### **Theme 1: Extensive Concerns Raised Regarding Kansas Conceal Constitutional Carry Law**

Theme 1 addresses the topic of a Kansas law that is causing concern among safety and security directors regarding the ability to keep their campus communities safe, informed, and protected. During the interviews with the 11 safety and security directors, a prevalent concern emerged stemming from the conceal and carry law that passed in 2013, allowing persons of age to carry concealed weapons on campus. Although the initial law gave educational institutions a four-year exemption, that exemption is set to expire in July 2017, allowing all persons, age 21 or over, to carry a concealed weapon on campus. Most participants indicated that their perception was that the potential danger this creates due to the easy accessibility of a firearm in any given situation causes the most turmoil among the community and technical college security directors, students, faculty, and public. Once the exemption is removed, each institution must either allow concealed weapons on their campus or enhance electronic and personal security to diminish the risk of concealed weapons.

Chapter 75: Kansas Statute Annotated, 75-7c20 Concealed handgun in public building; when prohibited; public buildings exempted (1) “Adequate security measures” means the

use of electronic equipment and *armed* personnel at public entrances to detect and restrict the carrying of any weapons into the state or municipal building, *or any public area thereof*, including, but not limited to, metal detectors, metal detector wands or any other equipment used for similar purposes to ensure that weapons are not permitted to be carried into such building by members of the public. Adequate security measures for storing and securing lawfully carried weapons, including, but not limited to, the use of gun lockers or other similar storage options may be provided at public entrances. (Kansas Senate/Legislature, 2013)

As indicated in the statute, electronic devices may be used to eliminate concealed weapons on campus buildings. However, the initial cost of the devices, along with the additional requirements of personnel are potentially cost-prohibitive to many institutions. Electronic devices such as those made by “View Systems,” a non-evasive detection system, are \$9,500.00 per unit. An analysis of the cost for a small, rural college with 17 buildings on the main campus, revealed an initial cost of at least \$598,500 to purchase and install the system in accordance with the law. According to the Kansas Law 75-7c20, the detection system would have to be placed at all public access points in the 17 buildings on campus. Additionally, armed personnel would be required to be stationed at each specific public building entrance. The “View Systems” model was selected for the cost analysis because it is medically safe and non-evasive. It is structured to take a photograph of each person as he or she walks through it and identify the existence and location of a metal object on the person. It does not require removal of any clothing item or emptying of pockets. It is not harmful to internal pacemakers or defibrillators, which is essential if it will be used for college personnel, students, and public access to all buildings, including games, activities, and events.

Finally, when considering costs to restrict concealed weapon access, additional personnel would be required to search the area on the person identified as having a metal object before the person moves on. Pertinent to the decision-making process for an institution is the reality that even if a college would elect to use this method, it does not address public access to the campus

at-large. There is a vast amount of public access areas on a college campus that are not accessed through building entrances, so there would always be areas where direct access would be unenforceable for restricting a concealed weapon.

The subthemes address more fully the specific concerns of the impact of students aged 21 or older carrying concealed weapons into the classroom, preparing for guns in campus buildings as required in July 2017, and providing timely, accurate, and up-to-date information to the campus community.

### **Subtheme 1.1: Any Student Aged 21 or Older May Have a Concealed Gun in Class**

Concerns over non-traditionally aged students and carrying concealed handguns in the classroom seem to inundate the conversations. Kansas 2013 allows conceal carry on campuses and a four-year exemption had been allowed but as of July 2017 the law goes into effect.

**Introduction.** The safety and security directors indicated their concerns for a person aged 21 or older having the right to carry a handgun on the campus and within the buildings and classrooms. As presented in Chapter 2 and above, the Kansas law allows an institution to prohibit this ability to carry weapons on campuses; however, it will prove to be financially difficult for this to happen for many campuses. The alternative is allowing concealed weapons on campuses, which the participants of the study are anticipating will be the reality on their campuses. This means that concealed weapons will likely be in the classrooms daily. Working with instructors to understand the significance of any student possessing a firearm in their classroom and the threat of potential violence at any given time adds a layer of apprehension to instructors and students.

**Data.** Participants reflected on the impact of concealed weapons in the classroom.

If students can conceal carry, then one thing we are going to have to address is our security, obviously. They don't carry firearms right now. I know there is a lot of expense

that will go into training for that, but we are going to start talking about that this spring. With students carrying you never know what can happen. Whether they are carrying for their own safety or they are carrying for other reasons it's scary. I don't know exactly where I fall. (SC4)

During his interview, SC4 reflected on the cost of having the proper equipment and personnel to protect his campus. He also has some personal struggles about the necessity of having to contend with guns on campus and the reason for allowing them in the first place. These appear to be among the prime concerns of most of security directors. Knowing they will be responsible for working within the confines of the law as the exemption is lifted July 1, 2017, is additionally concerning for SC4 as his officers currently do not carry handguns. SC4's work with his administration is essential in deciding whether to have his officers carry handguns or not beginning July 2017. That is a decision that many of the community and technical colleges Boards of Trustees will have to make.

I have had some people say "well I am going to get a gun. If there is a shooter on campus, then I am going to fight back." My question is, "are you going to actually be able to shoot the bad guy?" "What does the bad guy look like?" Then the concern goes over to law enforcement reaction. Law enforcement is trained to shoot the person in the building with the gun if they don't drop it. (SC5)

SC5 is also concerned with the potential ramifications stemming from the lack of training received by conceal carry users. All individuals over the age of 21 have the option to take the Kansas Attorney General's conceal carry training course. The reality is that this 8-hour training course covers the minimal training required within Kansas law. It is a mostly didactic course, reviewing the law, the psychological reactions, and potential effects of confrontation and shooting, gun safety and firearms qualification.

The course is designed to touch on subjects such as: what to do if law enforcement approaches you; how to react if a shooting situation is in front of you; how the police respond to a school shooting, and what they are trained to do. Common sense would dictate that a person

not have a handgun in his or her possession when law enforcement approaches; however, common sense is not always present when faced with a split-second decision. Additionally, most people believe that if someone is shooting at them, they would respond accordingly, but no one really knows until they are faced with that situation. Law enforcement is trained to enter the building and eliminate the threat. If someone is a legal conceal carry individual and has a handgun in his or her hand, that individual could be in grave danger. Law enforcement is responding to an active shooter in the building and will not inherently know which person the active shooter is and which is a law-abiding citizen with a gun.

To pass the shooting requirement of the course, a person must only shoot his or her handgun from 10, 7, and 3 yards from the target. Only 18 of 25 rounds must hit the center mass of the target, which is not a challenging task from those ranges.

Once a person successfully completes the course, he or she gets a passport picture taken, completes paperwork for the Kansas Attorney General's office, and gets fingerprinted at the local sheriff's office. The conceal carry paperwork is submitted by the sheriff's office for a background check. Once the individual clears the background check he or she receives a permit to carry a concealed weapon that is valid for four years.

Bearing in mind the relative ease of completing the conceal carry course and the nominal training that occurs, SC5's concern is understandable and widespread among the participants of the study, in and of itself. However, the 2013 law also provided for *Constitutional Carry*. Constitutional Carry allows anyone who is a resident of the state of Kansas, aged 21 or older, to carry a concealed handgun without a background check or training. This is the primary concern of SC4 and SC5, as exemplified above, and was predominant throughout all of the interviews. There is already a concern with the nominal training available, and the reality is that many

students, staff, and general public will have the right to carry concealed firearms on campus with absolutely no training or background check.

Just because they are licensed doesn't mean they know how they will react if they are being shot at. (SC3)

Law enforcement completes many hours of training to prepare for a "shoot, don't shoot situation." This includes interactive videos that are designed for high stress decision making. The decisions are based on individuals in the videos pulling something from their jacket pockets, coat pockets, or under their shirts. Sometimes it is a cell phone or badge. Other times it is a gun or knife. These are designed to assist the officer in making split second decisions. In addition, there are many hours spent on the range for marksmanship training.

To be a properly trained, handgun-carrying security/police, each officer must go through approximately a week-long training and approximately 1,000 rounds of ammunition during training. Following the initial training, they are required to pass the Police Officers Standard Training (POST) firearms test.

SC3's perception expands the theme that many participants shared. Even if an individual has chosen to receive training, he or she may react poorly to an active shooter situation and cause more harm than good. Even with required training for a police or security officer, the actual threat of an active shooter forebodes an element of unknown. One would expect a police or security officer to respond appropriately but adding the element of minimally or non-trained people with legally carried handguns into the mix creates a situation that has more potential to end badly on campuses.

**Analysis.** The new conceal carry law of 2013, coupled with the lifting of the exemption for college campuses in July 2017, is creating a multitude of issues for college administration and security directors. The safety of their students, employees, and visitors to campus is

paramount to each institution and was prevalent throughout each interview. However, making the best decision for safety, while working within fiscal limitations and with poorly, or non-trained people with weapons has become a reality.

Currently, campuses are responding to what could be considered a national epidemic of active shooters. The upcoming requirement to allow weapons on campus has exacerbated the need for training and campuses are reacting as quickly as possible, but most are so far in arrears in this area that they are simply not able to have systematic processes in place by July 2017.

Campuses are using antiquated systems of notification that are not nearly robust enough. The participants understand the need for proper resources including training and personnel. However, those without law enforcement backgrounds, as well as administrators, often do not understand the chasm that exists between the level of resources in terms of personnel and training currently on these campuses to the level of resources that will be needed after July 2017, and the fiscal liability this will create.

### **Subtheme 1.2: The Conceal Carry Debate Generates Strong Opinions**

Concerns from participants over conceal carry on campus creates strong opinions.

**Introduction.** Participants expressed strong opinions about both conceal carry and open carry, including who should be allowed to carry weapons on campuses. On July 1, 2017, the state of Kansas will lift the exemption, which restricted conceal carry and open carry on community and technical colleges campuses. As the time draws near for the exemption to be lifted and it does not appear that new legislation will be created to block it, the dilemma has created some interesting conversations among faculty and staff. The directors of safety and security will be the ones to deal with this new issue and are having discussions across their campuses to help generate knowledge and gather input.

**Data:** Participants reflected on their opinions and what they are hearing on their campuses.

Politics have replaced common sense. (SC2)

I don't feel that a student should carry a weapon. The state should have required training. (SC3)

With students carrying you can never know what can happen. Our security would obviously have to be armed right away if that is the case. (SC4)

The above comments are indicative of the concerns expressed throughout the interviews.

Most do not see the value in allowing weapons on campus, especially with students, and cannot condone the negative consequences that may arise from it.

By the way, when we survey our students and employees, the employees are very strongly on both ends. But they said they wouldn't mind a few key employees carrying a gun on campus. But the students said we don't want students to be able to carry but they want security to carry to protect the students. (SC6)

As campuses move toward the reality of the effects of the new law, they are gathering information and opinions from employees and students. By utilizing a survey, SC6 knows how to provide training and potentially what questions may be asked. Obviously, his campus is concerned about who is going to be able to carry weapons on campus, but the reality is, it will be difficult, if not financially impossible to control.

We have a somewhat of an advantage being a 2-year institution instead of a 4-year institution. Because a traditional student to us they are not of legal age to fall into that carry conceal classification. (SC7)

SC7 is hopeful that his campus will not realize an enormous impact after July 1, 2017. His perception is that most of traditional-age students at a community college are not of age to carry a handgun as they under 21 years of age. It does not go unnoticed by SC7, however, that nontraditional students who are at least 21 are going to be the focus of discussion by faculty and staff. And the reality is that all it takes is one wrong person possessing a firearm on campus.

I think it will complicate things where you've got people who are sitting in your classroom with guns and you don't know it and I think that opens up a huge issue. (SC8)

With conceal carry, a very real concern is an enclosed classroom full of students and one or more of those students having a gun in his or her possession. Faculty continue to express concerns about this to these security directors. It will be a key training issue for all directors to make sure that faculty are prepared for this change.

Constitutional Carry I am not for. I do believe it will cause a problem for most campuses including ours. (SC10)

With constitutional carry requiring no training and no background check, anyone simply needs to be at least 21 years of age to carry concealed or open handgun. This is a major concern for directors and it opens the doors to whoever is of age to walk onto campus with a handgun. Continuous, realistic training for campuses at-large becomes more and more logical and important. SC11 noted that, "you see what guns in the wrong hands do."

SC11 has experience as a law enforcement officer on the street and has seen, firsthand, the negative effects of guns. Guns in untrained hands have the potential to cause more damage than good and are a concern to directors.

**Analysis.** The participants are concerned about the impact of guns on campus, with their main concern being the lack of background checks and training. Although anyone aged 21 or older will be able to legally carry a gun on campus, an individual instructor has the right to know who has a gun in his or her classroom. Police and security directors can request that someone who has a weapon show evidence that he or she is legal to have the weapon by producing either a conceal carry permit or a driver's license to document his or her age. This scenario adds a new dimension to the workload of a campus security department if they will be expected to stop and check everyone an instructor or staff member has a concern about. These situations also have the

potential to escalate to a shooting event. It is understandable that participants have strong opinions about the ability for weapons on campus, not only for the potential active shooter, but also for the sheer impact of the change in their workload and scope of their jobs.

### **Subtheme 1.3: Preparing for the Inevitability of Guns on Campus**

The four-year exemption was to allow campuses to get ready for conceal carry. Campuses are doing their best to get ready and develop policies and procedures as to how to handle guns on campus.

**Introduction.** In 2017, the four-year exemption will be lifted from all higher educational institutions in the state of Kansas, allowing both concealed and visible weapons on educational campuses. This has created an urgency among the participants to prepare for the seemingly unavoidable future. Little has created more angst than the constitutional carry law that is set to affect college campuses. With constitutional carry brings individuals who will be allowed to carry a weapon without a background check. It also means that individuals may purchase a handgun and carry it with no training or understanding of the operation of it. With growing fear of safety due to the constant active shootings around the country, even those with the right intentions may cause negative consequences.

**Data.** Each participant reflected on whether or not students should carry weapons on campus. SC1's statement sets the stage for concerns among the participants.

The different things I saw in Afghanistan has molded the way I think about things. That's some of the issues with friendly fire, even with conceal carry in Kansas. I think we need to be responsible and make sure that everyone is prepared, and we are ready for what's coming down the road. (SC1)

SC1's concerns are not only getting his campus ready for the potential malevolent active shooter, but also preparing his staff and himself for the potential occurrence of untrained individuals having and using a handgun on a crowded college campus, which could lead to an

impromptu active shooting event. SC1 reflected on his friendly fire experience in Afghanistan working as a government contractor. He continued his thoughts with,

I am extremely concerned about friendly fire situations ... You put a gun in someone's hand that has never been trained and doesn't know the laws, doesn't know when to fire, even if it is a situation when you can shoot, what about the people around them. People using force when it is not appropriate to use force, then innocent people get hurt. (SC1)

SC1 does not want the occurrence of friendly fire to be the case on his campus or anyone else's.

As an officer on the street, you see what stupid people do. You see what guns in the wrong hands do. (SC11)

SC11 expresses concerns from his experience as a police officer. Not everyone has criminal intentions when carrying a gun, but without proper training and background checks, most anyone can purchase and carry a concealed weapon. The potential for lack of common sense causing accidents or harm is exacerbated.

My greatest concern is that they did away with background checks and the training. If they wouldn't have done that I would have been comfortable with it...Here is a non-traditional student that thinks something may or may not happen. So, she goes to a pawn shop and gets a pistol of her choice, sticks it in her purse and has absolutely no familiarity with the weapon and doesn't know how to use it but now she is fully armed, and the state of Kansas has given their blessing to her to do this. (SC5)

SC5 expresses a similar concern of someone simply purchasing a handgun with no prior training and carrying it, concealed, onto campus. Each handgun handles differently. Someone without experience or knowledge of handgun safety can inadvertently cause an incident that would not have been a possibility without the new conceal carry law. Specifically, therefore law enforcement officers spend so many hours on the gun range. Without the repetition of using a specific gun, there is the concern that the muscle memory will be lost for that handgun. Muscle memory is the training of the muscles with constant repetitions so when the time comes to call

on the muscle to react, it will know what to do more quickly and accurately than without training.

Well like almost everybody else in the state we did the exemption and have the signs up 'til 2017. Unless something changes in Topeka the signs will come down here in 2017, because financially we cannot provide the type of coverage they are insisting you have. (SC9)

SC9 sums up the consensus of the participants that, unfortunately, the state law has placed community and technical colleges in a position where most will have no choice but to allow concealed weapons on their campuses. State law requires that to prohibit concealed firearms in campus buildings, electronic devices and personnel must be placed at each public entrance. Participants overwhelmingly indicated the fiscal impracticality of this, so they are placed in the position of allowing faculty, staff, students, and the public to carry concealed weapons at their institutions.

**Analysis.** Community and technical college security directors from across the state of Kansas are not only attempting to prepare their campuses for the active shooter event, they are also preparing to deal with unintentional, or friendly fire, shootings. Students and visitors to campus may be carrying a concealed handgun in classrooms, the cafeteria, the financial aid office, or the residence halls, among the multitude of other places on campus. While the obvious preparation is for an active shooter as the potential occurrence of an active shooter will increase dramatically, the participants anticipate that they may have even more accidental or irresponsible shootings without the malevolent intent.

The reality is that security directors and administrators will have very little control over concealed weapons on their campuses. Educators became educators to impart knowledge, not deal with weapons and fear of shootings on a daily basis. This change in regulation has placed educators in what they may perceive as a potential war zone at any given time. Each instructor

will need to fully understand the situation he or she has been placed in and determine his or her own comfort level with how to approach guns in the classroom. The participants have a whole new era of training and security concerns for which to prepare each campus. They will need to build a foundation of understanding and trust with every campus employee and reach within the intellect of the educational community to create solutions.

#### **Subtheme 1.4: Current, Updated Information will be Crucial for a Safe Campus**

Training the campus population and preparing for active shooter is in the forefront of the minds of the participants.

**Introduction.** For many years, education and training for an active shooter event used the guidelines of “hide in place.” Today, many trainings focus on either ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) or the FBI’s run, hide, and fight. If trained with the ALICE techniques, people learn a five-step program, any combination of which should be used as a situation dictates. In a very high-level overview: ALERT includes informing as many others of the situation as possible, using plain language and available technology; LOCKDOWN includes barricading a room or campus and silencing cell phones; INFORM includes communicating with authorities with real time information, as possible, generally cell phones; COUNTER includes using distraction tactics to reduce a shooter’s accuracy. It only endorses active confrontation when in a life-or-death situation; EVACUATE includes vacating the danger zone when safe to do so. Those who receive the FBI’s method learn a three-step process including: run from the event if they can safely do so; hide if need be but do so strategically by having a formulated plan for the area; and fight with everything they have, using anything available to them, if the shooter comes through the door. Both methods are a far cry from the

trainings done years ago, but it has become a necessity to provide more and better information to stay safe.

**Data.** Each participant reflected on information as the best defense against an active shooter.

One of the things from the news accounts that I am hearing from across the country is it sounds like folks are not prepared. When they hear a gunshot or the initial alarm system, as with ALICE, it sounds like folks are stopping and trying to think through a situation. That may be shock. “This isn’t happening,” and they are losing precious seconds. I think we need to educate and that is where ALICE is outstanding. I believe in ALICE 100% because it gives us a plan. And just from the training I went through, I know that if you are a moving target and if you counter even with small objects, just throw something just disrupt that is your chances for survival are enhanced. (SC1)

SC1 is referring to ALICE training that several of the participants conduct themselves or work with local law enforcement to conduct for them. He believes, like many, that you must reinforce, through training, the reality of an active shooter event and truly be prepared. Plan, train, and execute if an active shooter comes to campus.

I think ALICE hits it right on the head because it is so simple, and I am getting a lot of positive feedback from our faculty and staff about the training. (SC7)

SC7 ensures that he takes every opportunity to train and inform employees with ALICE, including in-service and new employee orientations to make sure as many campus employees know what to do in the event of an active shooter as possible. Ensuring that a campus is well-trained and working together to reduce confusion will ideally give the faculty and staff the confidence to respond and take action.

We need to prepare people for it. It is my understanding in all the shootings that the individuals have had mental problems. We must do something about that. We can’t release the information since they do have mental problems. The issue is not the guns it is with mental health. The only way we can stop this is if we are armed. (We have) limited security on our campus, there is no security here during the day. Again, it is a money issue. We need to have more training in this area, so people can feel more confident in their security. (SC3)

SC3's comments regarding the need for information and training with the campus to gain confidence is very important. Mental health issues have been shown to be a major contributor to campus shootings. Early recognition training for signs of potential emotional or stress-related issues a student, faculty, or staff member may be having is extremely important for early intervention to deter a campus active shooter event. This topic was covered in Chapter 2 with the case of the Virginia Tech shooter.

Everybody is going to know the procedure and how to react. It could just take one employee, one student that could ruin it for a lot. With our procedure with the run, hide, and fight I think it's up to kind of the adult in the room to decide whether you are going to run, going to hide, or going to fight. (SC4)

SC4 reiterates the sentiments of the participants regarding the practicality of making sure everyone on campus receives the same training. The responsibility of who makes the decision of the appropriate response to an active shooter is crucial, when, the situation occurs. People need to be prepared and understand the magnitude of a split-second decision involving the lives of many people. While SC4 references an adult in the room, there are likely to be many adults in any given setting, thus the inference is that the person in authority (i.e., instructor) would be who would be expected to decide. Therefore he is working to ensure that everyone on campus receives the same training.

I think everybody is going to be involved in that (the training). I rely on the maintenance staff a lot because, for the most part, they are "furniture" to the students. Meaning students will say stuff in front of them that they won't say anywhere else. (SC5)

SC5 speaks to the importance of every individual on campus and how vital he or she is for gaining and relaying information. Being aware of conversations and changes in behaviors could create an early intervention possibility and prevent a tragedy from happening. Again, training everyone on campus for signs to look for and what to do if changes are noticed is essential to providing the information that may prevent an occurrence.

I think changes coming down the pipe are that fluid with regards to legislation. Of course, legislation and regulation drive our world in regards to whether it's conceal carry, open carry, all those things impact our training and what we training. Even in ALICE and how people perceive safety. How they perceive safety is the things that we try to address. We survey mainly our staff every couple of years about our safety and their perceptions about our safety. We use that to impact what we train. (SC6)

SC6 takes a proactive approach to gather input from his campus community on their perception of the safety of their campus and their ability to function in an active shooter situation. Although he may have already conducted training in a certain area, if the employees do not feel comfortable with something yet, he can continue to work on those areas. Surveys are a way to collect information from campus employees, giving them a voice regarding needs.

SC7 speaks of how ALICE has enhanced the standard training format used by many educational institutions today.

We basically had a lock down procedure in place before and like many others across the nation thought that one tool in our toolbox might not be the best approach. ALICE allowed for us to adapt to situations as they arise. It is a very empowering program. It allows them to make their own choice based off the information they have. Prior to ALICE I investigated the run, hide, fight program. ALICE has basically the same components, the run, hide, fight. The difference for me was the informed piece (SC7).

**Analysis.** The participants consistently spoke of the need for useful information flow across all areas of campus to help get to a level of empowerment. Educators generally do not come from a background of responding to emergencies, especially a shooting event. As they are placed into a learning environment that includes concealed weapons, it will be crucial for campuses to provide the necessary trainings for each employee on a continual basis. These trainings must become systematic and pervasive. As employee's ebb and flow, trainings must be available at key points including new employee orientations, professional development, and in-service. Providing opportunities for educators and the staff at colleges to understand what to look for and what to do prior to an event can be every bit as important as what to do during a shooting

event. Information is essential at all stages and on any given day. Allowing employees opportunities to practice what is learned is fundamental to safety.

### **Summary**

Theme 1 served to underscore the reality of what institutions of higher education are preparing to deal with by highlighting the multitude of concerns that the participants have themselves and are hearing from their campus communities. Campus safety is paramount to each institution. However, making the best decision for safety, while working within fiscal limitations, with local boards, and administrators has proven to be difficult for many. Communication and training will be crucial as campuses begin to work within the reality of the situation in which they have been placed.

Because of the new constitutional carry law, it is not only preparation for malevolent situations that raise their concerns, but also unintended consequences of accidental shootings, friendly fire, and heat-of-the-moment occurrences. The participants unfailingly indicated the need for useful information flow across all areas of campus and providing opportunities for all employees to understand what to look for and what to do prior to an event. All agreed that training will be fundamental to addressing the upcoming reality. They continue to focus on expanding their ability to promote and conduct continual active shooter training for employees, so their campuses are as ready as possible.

### **Theme 2: The Need to Improve Essential Training for All Campus Personnel**

Standardized training for campuses and preparing each of them for an active shooter as well as handling conceal carry.

Community and technical college safety and security directors are now at the forefront of discussions across the state of Kansas considering the active shooter concern, the protection of

campus personnel, and the new conceal carry law and open carry law beginning for colleges that went into effect on July 1, 2017. The definition of conceal carry is that a pistol cannot be visible to a person's sight. Open carry means that the pistol is in a holster of some style in plain view on the person.

The participants in this study are all in charge of safety and security on their campuses and are responsible for providing active shooter training for their campus. Many have law enforcement education in their background, but this is not the case for all. Chapter Three included an overview of the participants in this study, including education and experience.

Currently, there is no formal, mandated, or prescriptive training for safety and security directors, creating frustration and a sense of inefficiency for some participants. The safety and security directors would welcome a more formalized training program created by the state, much like the law enforcement training center creates for law enforcement certification. This would allow the directors to determine documented training as they consider candidates for security officers.

This theme focuses on the need to improve essential training for all full- and part-time security personnel on campus. Each subtheme is described below and supported by representative direct quotes from the directors interviewed. The content of each interview was evaluated to extract the data that supported each subtheme. Throughout the four subthemes, training will be explored in the context of lack of state-supported training for campus security departments to train their campuses, the need to train the trainers, appropriate training specific to armed security, and using the best available resources.

## **Subtheme 2.1: The Role of the State of Kansas to Provide Formalized Security Training**

There is no formalized training in the state of Kansas for campus security officers thus leaving it up to the individual campus to train each officer.

**Introduction.** The participants indicated that preparation training for active shooters, such as Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate (ALICE) training and the similar FBI training of run, hide, and fight are actively taught by personnel on campuses. A statewide foundation of training should be established for students, faculty, staff, and public with the knowledge of what to do during an active shooter event. Four of the 11 subjects in the study conduct ALICE training themselves, three conduct the FBI run, hide, fight training, and the remaining four have some training they created or local law enforcement does the training for their campus using ALICE or their own version. This has contributed to the frustration among the safety and security director community; the training is inconsistent among departments and most would like to see the state create a more formalized training format.

The participants are working to prepare their faculty and staff to defend themselves if an active shooting happens on their campus. They believe they have reached a limit to what they can do with restricted time, funding and training. A state-operated training format, including a facility where they can send their security personnel to receive an initial professional certification as well as continuing education training following graduation would provide a well-rounded, well-prepared security officer who can provide the training and protection each campus deserves.

**Data.** Supporting data from the participants demonstrates that it has become a concern to safety and security directors to ensure that proper training can be provided to their officers, along with affordable and accessible updated training and refresher courses. To date, Kansas only

provides professional training for sworn law enforcement officers for the state. Sworn officers are unique from security officers as they have been hired by a law enforcement agency from state police, sheriffs, wildlife and parks, and college police departments. Security officers are not considered by the state of Kansas as professionals that can attend the law enforcement academy.

I believe we need to start education even as far as including it in the curriculum or including it with fire drills. We do fire drills in elementary schools, junior highs and high schools. We have a handful of fires a year; that is about it. We are having more shootings than fires. We need to move in that direction and start to train folks with age-appropriate training, and I think that will enhance survival. (SC1)

SC1's concept is to create an atmosphere throughout elementary, secondary, and higher education for active shooter drills that mirrors the regular, expected fire and tornado drills that have been routine for decades and continue to occur at schools. Adjusting trainings to age-appropriate scenarios and tactics to provide active shooter training for all audiences must be considered if they are developed. As this topic is much more sensitive and potentially frightening to younger audiences, developing trainings that are real enough to be meaningful, yet not upsetting is fundamental to success. For example, using blanks in a real gun during a live exercise on a college campus may be appropriate. However, a trainer may want to create a loud sound that emulates the sound of a gun without actually using a gun for younger audiences.

SC1's focus is to establish a better training foundation for his campus, using material that is developed for an adult population. If it is the first exposure to this type of training, the material, though sensitive, is realistic and impactful. Ideally, through statewide trainings beginning as early as elementary and secondary schools, this would not be the first exposure to the concept of defending against an active shooter. Consistent trainings throughout one's educational experience with increasing intensity of the trainings and tools used as the trainees mature would provide a much better foundation for preparing for an active shooter.

SC1 stated that he would like to see his campus community exposed to age-appropriate trainings that are more realistic for the ages that the security office serves. The training would be developed to prepare the campus for today's needs. Unfortunately, the mandatory fire and tornado drills of the past no longer address the most dangerous threats that students and employees may face and for which they need to need to be prepared. Active shooter drills have become a real need. The age appropriation would need to be determined by the professional providing the training to alleviate the potential of causing fear rather than preparation. This is where the state could assist with developing a standard training format. SC3 also addresses this concern.

It's hard for individual colleges for security to do a lot on their own. They need to come together and work together to try to get more training on the state level ... Everyone needs to be involved. Everybody needs to know what their responsibilities are. (SC3)

SC3's concern is that it is very difficult for community colleges like his to create and sustain a training program for their security personnel and officers. SC3 believes that the state should create a training program for security personnel to assist higher education institutions in campus security.

The research indicates that colleges cannot afford, nor are they equipped, to handle the type of formalized training that needs to happen for campus security departments across the state. The need for change must come from the state legislature and the attorney general's office to provide proper legislation and legal direction for this to happen. Creating a law that allows anyone of legal age to carry a concealed handgun on a college campus has produced a great need for professional security training.

When you train your entire campus, if an intruder is going to be on campus, possibly they are one of our students that we are training, so they kind of know how the process works. (SC4)

... We follow the run, hide, fight, we adopted from the FBI. (SC4)

SC4 is specifically concerned that if students are trained along with the faculty and staff, they may be the potential shooter. The training they received on campus would provide them with the understanding of how the campus will respond. It is not uncommon for institutions not to train all students in their active shooter drills. Many do at least inform all students and employees of what to do in order to help prevent widespread panic during an active shooter event. The theory is to train campus personnel, so they will be able to respond appropriately during an active shooter event and inform students. SC4's concern for training all persons, including students, on the campus, is understandable as historically, active shooter(s) had prior knowledge of the educational institution prior to the incident.

SC4 noted that the FBI program used on their campus is an alternative to the ALICE program for campus personnel training. The FBI program provides a modified version of the run, hide, fight training at a reduced cost. ALICE provides a more in-depth version of training with many how-to scenarios during each training program.

Of course, legislation and regulations drive our world in regard to whether it's conceal carry or open carry all those things impact our training and what we train. In the two years we have been training in ALICE, we have totally changed what we do, based off of the changes to conceal carry and open carry. (SC6)

SC6 noted that situations are dynamic and fluid enough that trainings must be continually reviewed and modified. As laws continue to change in the state of Kansas, so must trainings and education for campus personnel. Dodge City Community College has been an ALICE campus for two years and has already completely modified the trainings that are conducted and the intended reactions due to the changes to the conceal and open carry laws.

SC7 proudly noted that they have nearly 100% participation in ALICE training from faculty and staff. He indicated that he is creating a training video for adjunct instructors, so everyone has access to the training. He intends to make it available to view in his office.

Many campus security directors are concerned about whether to train the student body. It seems logical that as times goes on they will become more comfortable with training classrooms. The majority of directors believe that if the faculty and staff are trained, someone will know what to do in all buildings if an active shooter event occurs. While there is way to know for sure, a predominant concern about training students is that a potential active shooter is receiving training and will then have knowledge of what the procedures are during an active shooter event. It is important to note that in the shootings that have occurred in the past, the shooter(s) had knowledge or knew someone with knowledge of the venue that was attacked. This has been the standard for every active shooter event across the country. Students will ebb and flow, but ideally, the proper preparation of faculty and staff for active shooter training will allow their knowledge and skill to be continued wherever their career takes them.

**Analysis.** Currently, the state of Kansas provides no formalized security training for campus security officers or departments. This has placed the burden on each campus security director to create the best training program he can for his campus and officers. As indicated in the participant interviews, they are creating training for their campuses and providing every resource possible to assist all campus personnel with the best knowledge and education possible, thus preparing them to respond with the best preparation possible.

SC1 focuses on training his entire campus community including students, faculty, staff, and public for active shooter preparedness and has the resources to accomplish such a task. SC1's vision is to have training participation from the entire campus and public. SC4 supports

the FBI training format for campuses to explore for potential cost savings as it is a similar training to the ALICE system. SC3 is concerned with smaller campuses' ability to do continuous, sustainable training. He believes it will have to come from the state for affordability and sustainability. At the state level, the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center does all certified law enforcement training for most of the state law enforcement agencies. To include campus security personnel in this opportunity, new legislation would need to be created, implemented, and funded.

From the data collected, the directors feel a sense of urgency to provide training for their campuses. The most common concern was lack of funding and consistent training for the officers to bring back to the campuses. The need for a consistent format of training provided by the state or another government agency seems to be a great need, whether for firearms or response to active shooter. Shifting to the ability for more campuses to take an active part in creating and using a training program for all campus security officers would be an invaluable benefit to the community and technical college campuses and their directors of security.

### **Subtheme 2.2: Train Officers to Train Others**

Finding ways to reduce costs and provide proper training is the focus of many participants. Sending an officer to a train the trainer makes financial sense and focuses on the areas needed for campuses.

**Introduction.** The participants were focused on, and concerned for, the safety of everyone on their campus. However, there were some distinct differences regarding the amount of, and level to which they believed students should be trained. Subtheme 2.2 will explore the accessibility of training for all campuses that is affordable, realistic, and meaningful for each campus.

**Data.** Professional training for Kansas security directors who are not sworn police officers currently requires travel to another state. Most participants indicated that it would be invaluable to bring the training to campuses within the state, thus providing an opportunity for more security personnel to participate.

This summer I attended the advanced ALICE course in Missouri and talked to some folks there at the course and then also with the ALICE course training institute and came up with a plan for our college. It is a genuine issue. We are having shootings about every week to two weeks and as I went through the course, I was updated on several shootings that had occurred within the last year. (SC1)

SC1 highlights the importance of continuing education as crucial to keeping campus security personnel updated on current happenings in the educational environment in regard to active shooter training. ALICE was selected by four of the participants who do their own training for its ease of understanding and thoroughness of its material. All ALICE instructors are required to do continuous updates to stay current in their trainings.

In addition to campus security personnel, SC1 further noted his attempt to get 100% of the college-wide personnel trained.

What we are doing here at the college is we have partnered with the OZ training institute with the e-learning for our employees, faculty and staff. Currently, at this time, we have purchased 100 licenses that were set up about a month and a half ago. We are at about 50% completions. So we are headed in the right direction. (SC1)

In his attempt for global campus training, SC1 has focused on the easiest and most efficient way he has found to train employees. The e-learning system is used within the state of Kansas for continuing education. It allows participants to upload educational training materials and view them at-will. At the time of the interview, SC1 has been able to accomplish approximately 50% participation from his campus and is hoping to have 100% participation for ALICE training and education via this method. Although not as robust, and with no interaction, this method falls short of comprehensive training for an active shooter event. However, with no

state-provided, formalized training, it is the best option SC1 has found to meet the needs for his campus based on his aspiration for all employees to receive training.

Campuses are vulnerable; they (shootings) are happening more and more. Now campuses being attacked are a public concern. The campus security needs to build trust. I believe in involving the campus in training like the criminal justice program and its students along with the emergency management program. This enhances an attitude to help with future training. (SC2)

SC2 has taken the approach of involving programs such as the emergency management program on his campus to attempt to provide well-rounded training as well as an understanding of an institutional education program. SC2 also focuses on getting his campus involved in active shooter training, ensuring that as many from the campus are involved as possible. His goal, along with essential employee training, is to build trust among the community college employees, students, and security department, which is important during a time of crisis.

We train the best we can. We follow our procedure to where we think we have everything in place. Not everything is in place right now, but we have a good procedure right now that we feel we are able to respond and react accordingly if we follow that. (SC4)

SC4 has established what he believes are good procedures for his campus to follow should an active shooter event occur, creating an atmosphere where personnel will know what to do based on known procedures. His goal is to provide enough education and understanding through the procedures that the campus knows what to do if an active shooter event happens.

With thoughts of pre-Columbine, . . . is having no thoughts about it at all, to that will never happen here, to now we are training because we want to be prepared in case it would happen here. (SC5)

An active shooter event is significant because it changed the world of law enforcement forever in how it is trained respond to an active shooter. Officers are now trained to enter a building without waiting for backup to arrive. The Columbine High School active shooter event that occurred on April 20, 1999, caused the change in law enforcement training. As officers

waited for backup to arrive, 13 people were killed and 20 were wounded. As these events have continued to occur, police training has changed, as has the attitude among educational institutions about the need for better training for their security personnel, employees, and students.

Reflecting on the Kansas legislature's changes to the Kansas conceal carry and open carry laws, SC6 is concerned that by law, as of 2017, campuses must allow conceal carry on their campus.

I think that the changes coming down the pipe are fluid with regards to legislation. Of course, legislation and regulations drive our world in regards to whether it's conceal carry, open carry all those things impact our training and what we train. (SC6)

SC6 refers to training for the campus and preparing faculty and staff for students carrying guns on campus. This will be a cultural change and will significantly alter the training needs within campus communities. Students in classrooms with guns will inevitably be on the minds of many faculty members after July 1, 2017. For example, codes of conduct procedures outlining how faculty should handle disciplinary issues if a student needs to be removed from class should be addressed prior to July 1, 2017.

the biggest thing for us was making sure we coordinate with the local police department. (SC8)

Coordinating campus training with the local police is very important for all campuses in case of an active shooter event. The most significant reason is so both the local police officers and the campus security know how each other will respond and react to active shooter situations. It also provides an opportunity for local law enforcement to understand the important details of the college campus.

We now train for active shooters. (SC9)

I believe everyone must be involved or the entire process breaks down. (SC10)

There is never enough training. Interaction between staff, faculty, and students is extremely important when it comes to working with security. (SC11)

The above participants indicated that active shooter training is not where it needs to be. For many campuses, it has not been a priority. The need has now become apparent and campuses are working as diligently as possible to prepare for an event that in the past seemed unlikely.

**Analysis.** Participants were adamant about the preparation necessary to provide a safe and secure campus. The focus was not limited to needs for the campus security department, but rather on the level of training and coordination that is currently needed among all areas of campus and the growing need as the exemption of conceal carry is lifted in July 2017. While each participant is currently providing training to the extent they are able, the need for more and better training as campuses begin dealing with new issues and situations is paramount. Training those that will train others in consistent, thorough, and updated methods that they can confidently use on their campuses is sought-after by the participants.

### **Subtheme 2.3: Arm and Train Security Correctly**

Ensuring that proper training is provided to the officers involved on each campus is very important to the participants.

**Introduction.** Providing proper education of firearms to security departments no matter how large or small is essential and is a concern as so many security officers are not yet able to carry a firearm while on duty. As the conceal carry law changes, many campus security directors will be faced with the challenge of achieving an acceptable level of proficiency with a firearm within his or her department. Again, there is no state-provided firearm training for college campus security departments. Without a change in legislation, security directors will need to seek out a training program that will provide the training that they require for proficiency and certification of their entire department.

**Data.** Participants reflected on the need for properly trained, armed security.

It's (firearms training) a perishable skill. As far as marksmanship you've got to stay honed. At the campus police department, we are probably more toward the bare minimum because of all the other hats you wear. (SC1)

Frequent firearms training is critical for individuals that are expected to carry a gun as part of his or her job. As SC1 says, it is a perishable skill, which means it is very easy to lose the ability to be accurate and proficient with a handgun and a diminished skill will impair an officer's ability to perform proficiently in a crisis. Many law enforcement departments only qualify once each year at the range.

We don't carry, but if we did we should be at the level of training, or more, than a law enforcement officer, considerable liability. (SC2)

SC2 references the annual gun range training for law enforcement and the liability that infrequency carries with it. He believes that his officers should train more often than the bare minimum required by law enforcement. Although each administration has its own philosophies as to whether firearms are to be carried on campus by security officers, officers without weapons could potentially be at a severe disadvantage after July 1, 2017, when concealed weapons will be allowed on campuses. Bearing this in mind, administrators and Boards of Trustees at each campus should re-examine their policies and the underlying philosophical reasons they were initially created.

The administration needs to authorize it. The administration will also not let us have Tasers. It's political. They will not give us the tools for the job. Do they want me to hit them with a chair to stop a crime (SC3)?

With only three of the agencies that participated in this research currently allowed to carry weapons, there was a definite theme among the others of frustration for not being allowed to carry firearms as part of their job. SC3 was willing to voice his opinion of having his ability to protect students severely diminished by not being able to carry necessary tools of violent crime

prevention. At this time SC3's department is not allowed to carry any protective weapons: Tasers or firearms.

We have to get ready for it (conceal carry on campus). There was a discussion that we contract private security at night. Now the discussion is moving toward should the college provide its own campus security or should we move in the direction of our own campus police department. So if we are talking about training if we had armed security, then my opinion, if you're going to have armed security then they need to be fully trained law enforcement officers. (SC5)

SC5's campus is having the conversations necessary as it prepares for the lifting of the conceal carry law exemption and considering options of changing its security office into some full-blown police department, or contracting security through a private firm. Either would be a viable option. It just depends how involved the campus wants its own security department. This decision again must be discussed at the Board of Trustee and administrative level.

I will say that we have spoken with the police department as a part of our development plan. In either case if we have weapons, then the police department wants us to train and qualify with them. Use the same kind of weapons, the same kind of rounds. (SC6)

SC6 is taking a proactive approach with his local law enforcement agency, even as they work on developing the best solution for their campus needs. Should the decision be made to have armed security guards or police within his department, he wants their training to be from law enforcement. Training with local agencies would be invaluable to both the college and local police department. Training together serves to create a bond of understanding as to how each other will respond during an event. It also allows the local agencies to understand the campus better to help ensure a more rapid response by knowing where buildings are within the campus.

I think if we are going to carry, my officers have, in the past, been certified to carry a firearm. I have made it clear to our administration you need to be state law enforcement, or you should not be in the role. I think state certification is the only answer for that one in my opinion. (SC7)

Understandably, as SC7's comment indicates, although the most prevalent direction for most participants was to arm their security departments, they were not willing to do this without proper and sufficient training. SC7 goes a step further in wanting his officers certified. Campuses should have the ability to work with local certified police officers to help with training needs.

Like I said, when the signs (prohibiting conceal carry) come down, we will need officers to carry on campus. They will have to be trained. They will have to be provided with the weapons, not just guns but Tasers and different types of resources that they might have. The security officer tells me now that he is just a target. She can't protect herself or defend anybody. We need to give them the resources they need to provide protection.  
(SC9)

A frustrated SC9 provides insight into how one officer currently feels about being vulnerable without the proper tools and training necessary for her job. He believes that when the signs prohibiting concealed weapons in building come down, as required on July 1, 2017, his officers will need to be armed for their own protection as well as the protection of the campus population.

I think all of our officers must be law enforcement qualified to carry firearms to protect the campus community and surrounding community. I do believe that extensive force continuum and firearms understanding training must be adhered to and trained upon regularly. All firearms and ammunition, both training and duty, must be provided by the institution. This is to prevent altered firearms or reloaded ammunition from being used.  
(SC8)

SC8 also supports moving campus security departments to full law-enforcement-qualified officers, including standard firearm training as well as written and practical examinations that, once successfully completed, certifies an officer to carry a firearm. He also reiterates that the campus must provide all firearms and ammunition for both duty and training for the officers for safety reasons.

We have adequate training with firearms but could always use more training. Financially it would be nice to have more range time like once a week but probably not realistic.  
(SC11)

Although SC8 and SC11 are in vastly different situations with their security departments, their sentiments are the same regarding the need for arming and training officers. SC8, like the majority of participants is not allowed to carry at this time on his campus but would like to with adequate training and certifications. Being one of the departments that carry firearms, SC11 feels that his training is adequate, but could always use more. This was expressed by most participants. They would always like to have more training.

**Analysis.** Whether or not to allow firearms on campuses rests solely with the Boards of Trustees and the administration at each college. If security departments currently not armed are allowed to begin carrying handguns, providing proper training, certifications, and ammunition will be essential. Initial and continued fiscal needs must be considered as part of the discussions. Purchasing handguns and ammunition and providing initial training as a one-time shot is not sufficient. Campuses that choose to allow firearms within their security departments will undergo a cultural adjustment, but this was the consensus of the participants of the direction that will be needed moving into the future.

#### **Subtheme 2.4: Using the Best Available Resources**

Pulling from all available resources and is imperative for many place bound campuses and their officers.

**Introduction.** Throughout theme 2, the topic of training has been explored from different perspectives; the role of the state, campus training, and officer-specific training for armed security departments. While each campus will need to determine each of these as appropriate for them, a final theme that emerged from the interviews deserves some attention. There was a common theme among the participants about the best resources currently available to them as they work to prepare their college community for a potential “active shooter” event. ALICE

(Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate), by and large, appears to be the most coveted training tool among the directors to prepare the campus communities for awareness prior to an event and action during an event. However, due to strict budgetary restrictions, only four of the seven participants who conduct their own training were able to use this training method. The remaining three used a modified version of the FBI's run, hide, fight.

**Data.** The participants reflected on their perceptions of the best resources for training.

If there is an intruder in one of our buildings then they know the process, how we evacuate. We follow the run, hide and fight; we adopted it from the FBI. (SC4)

The FBI training is more economic and accomplishes a training format for educators but is not as in-depth. However, for institutions not able to afford the ALICE training, it still provides alternatives for educators as to what to do if an active shooter event occurs.

Participant SC1, who is able to use ALICE training on his campus has opened the topic up to the campus newspapers, so the students are aware of the ALICE procedures.

I have had discussions with the student government body the executive committee of our student government about ALICE and we put information about ALICE in our newspapers just so the students know about it and are not left out. We are having more shootings than fires. We need to move in that direction within the state to train folks with age appropriate training and I think that will enhance survival.....ALICE hits it right on the head because it is so simple and I am getting a lot of positive feedback from faculty and staff about the training. (SC1)

SC1 discusses the interaction throughout the campus community about ALICE training and what it does. While more expensive than other trainings such as the FBI run, hide, fight training, ALICE training is more in-depth and provides a more informative approach including embedded scenario training.

The faculty and staff originally were trained to shelter in place. Shelter in place refers to during an active shooter event, the individual or individuals stay where they are and hide until the event is over. That basically was the only option they were given. Now law enforcement is suggesting that we run options for shelter in place, escape if you can, and the worst case scenario is fight back. So we are just now in the process of starting to work and putting information out. (SC5)

SC5's approach is to use local law enforcement for ALICE training to reduce cost and create a closer connection to the community law enforcement. Providing training for campuses is becoming a norm for local law enforcement agencies. Often, there is little or no cost to the institution, yet the campus is provided a professional training experience.

So that at any moment, when the beacon sounds with "an active shooter has been reported in a hall," the faculty and staff are well trained enough to know what to do. Some students such as RA's and athletic teams know what to do. (SC6)

SC6 is very active within his campus and community, providing active shooter training to provide up-to-date training. His passion was obvious as he spoke about the training events he conducts and others from his campus speak highly of the education he provides. He also provides ALICE training, as he believes it is the most thorough training available. It is his belief that it is very important that the entire campus has an understanding and is trained on how they should respond during an active shooter event. This reduces the loss of lives and provides them with a comfort of at least formulating a plan as to how they are going to react.

I am an instructor for ALICE. I conduct training seminars for faculty and staff. We are now into the training side of students now. Other than students we are very close to 100% participation in the ALICE program. Prior to ALICE I looked into the run, hide, fight program, concluding ALICE provides the best information on the market now for this type of training. (SC7)

SC7 concurs that ALICE is the best training currently on the market and is trying to provide the entire campus with the feeling of safety and understanding when it comes to an active shooter.

My personal feeling is that you should, if you can, get people out and get them away from the site. A lot of training tells you to lock down in place and I don't necessarily believe in that from the standpoint that if you have an alternate exit from where the activity is happening then you should get out. Flee vs. hide method. (SC8)

Participant SC8, who is not currently using ALICE, works with his campus to ensure they understand the difference between hiding in place and getting away from the site. Believing that getting away is important so the loss of life is minimized.

Recounting an actual situation, and why they changed training methods, SC9 described the following:

We actually had a disgruntled student that has been a threat to our campus about three or four years ago. We were doing a lock down at the time and door monitoring. We were very concerned that the student would come to campus to do harm. Our campus is like many others with budget constraints. They are now training a staff member in ALICE so they may have that resource that would be on going for students and staff members. (SC9)

SC9 believes in providing the best training possible for faculty, staff and students, while remaining within budget. Reduction in funding is what many campuses are dealing with across the state. Staying focused on the main goal of providing the best affordable training for campuses seems to be a consistent theme with the participants.

**Analysis:** Again, with no formal training for security officers or campus employees provided by the state of Kansas, the burden has been placed on each director to create the best training programs they can for their campuses and their officers. As indicated by most participants, ALICE provides the most thorough training tool and is the most suitable for campuses, as budgets allow. Some are working with local law enforcement agencies to provide lower-cost options for their campuses, while still providing essential ALICE training, where possible. For those participants who are unable to provide ALICE training, other options are utilized to provide the best training possible.

## Summary

Theme 2 focused on the participants' views on the need to improve essential training for all full- and part-time security personnel on campus including the lack of state-supported training for campus security departments, the need to train the trainers, and appropriate training specific to armed security. Currently there is no formal, mandated, or prescriptive training for safety and security directors, which has created a sense of ineffectiveness among the participants. The distinct difference in categorization of an armed security officer versus a police officer, leading to the inability of security officers to have access to the training they desire is frustrating.

With no formalized training, the burden has been placed on each campus security director to create the best training program he can for his officers and campus within fiscal and time constraints. The participants differ in their approaches regarding who should receive training and what training that is provided. All believe better training for armed officers is needed. On the issue of training the campus, however, some believe in training the entire campus, including students to some extent, while others do not believe that training students is the best route to take.

There was also a distinct difference in the trainings that are provided among the campuses. Most participants indicated that ALICE provides the most thorough training tool and is the most suitable for campuses, but not all provide this training. Much of this is also due to fiscal limitations.

The need for a consistent format of training provided by the state or another government agency seems to be a great need, whether for firearms training for officers or response to active shooter training. Giving campuses the ability to take an active part in creating and using a

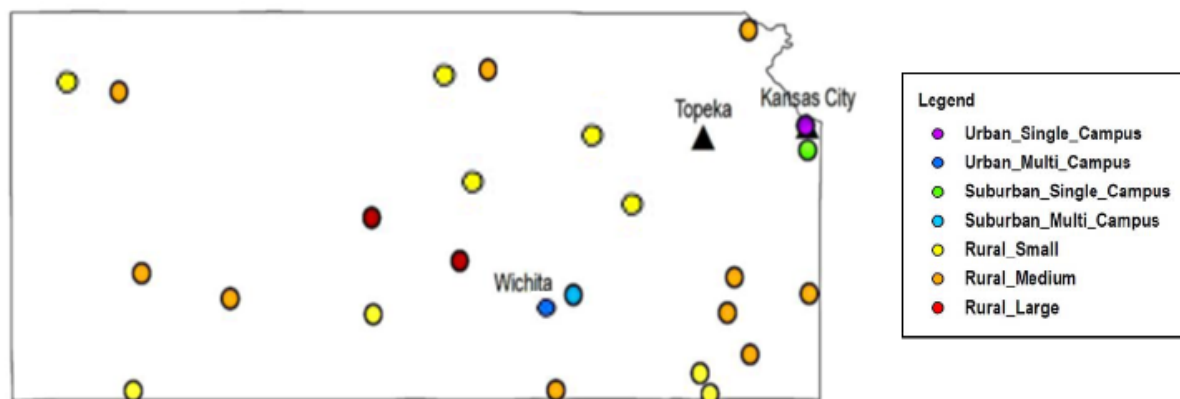
training program for all campus security officers would be an invaluable benefit to the community and technical college campuses and their directors of security.

### **Theme 3: The Training Challenge: Dealing with Limitations**

Finding the best opportunities for their campus officers to receive the proper training is imperative to each institution.

In the previous theme, training was discussed from different perspectives; officer specific training, campus-wide campus training, and the role of the state to provide these trainings. As participants discussed training needs and options available to them to prepare their campuses for concealed weapons and potential active shooters, many indicated that they are challenged with fiscal, geographic, or department size limitations, or a combination of all three. While one might expect there to be fiscal constraints, the interviews also showed that directors at campuses in rural areas experience more challenges than those at more centrally located campuses. Similarly, participants with small departments expressed more challenges in acquiring training for their officers and providing it for their campuses than those with larger departments.

For perspective, Figure 3 demonstrates the size and locations of the community and technical colleges in Kansas.



*Figure 3. Kansas Map with community and technical college locations*

Throughout Theme 3, the participants' perceptions of the challenges of fiscal, geographic, and department size will be explored, as well as their thoughts on how they will provide the best training for their officers and campuses within the confines of their unique limitations.

### **Subtheme 3.1: Fiscal Limitations**

Having the funding to train, equip, hire individuals a security department is a struggle for some of the participants.

**Introduction.** There is a consistent concern among the participants about the affordability of essential training for armed security officers, required training for police officers, and necessary training for the campus at-large for active shooters. The Kansas Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training (KS-CPOST) requires police officers to qualify annually with their duty firearm (KLETC, In-Service Training Guidelines for Kansas Law Enforcement, September 11, 2014). Although Kansas only requires firearms training for sworn police officers, the directors who have, or anticipate having, an armed security department indicated that they would only want security officers armed if they had the same or similar training as required for police officers.

Participants indicated that the fiscal obstacle becomes exacerbated with the continued reduction in higher education funding from the state. For institutions that either currently have, or are considering moving to an armed department in 2017, the costs are looming. This is particularly concerning for the eight institutions that would need to consider increasing budgets as they move from unarmed safety and security offices to armed security offices or police departments.

**Data.** The participants reflected on fiscal limitations for training.

We don't get near enough (training), at least for us here. What I see is we want safety as a priority and unfortunately, we just don't have the resources, financial resources, to be able to do updates and practice. With the current state of affairs, there is a big economic impact affecting colleges in our state with the funding. (SC7)

SC7's comments represent the participants' struggles to secure the funding necessary to meet the training needs for themselves and their officers to the extent necessary to provide the best security for their campuses. The ability for colleges to sustain budgets for security departments and all other divisions and departments within the college has become a challenge. While institutions hold the security of their campus communities in high regard, that priority, historically, has not always culminated in an adequate departmental budget. The majority of participants indicated that their campuses are currently struggling to work with smaller budgets that are a result of state-mandated cuts to funding. An increased departmental budget was not expected by most participants. During his interview, SC7 expressed a need for a statewide training format to assist campuses in consistent, sustainable training and is beginning to work with another security director in the state to create the beginnings of state-wide discussions.

SC9 further elaborated on the fiscal challenge many will face as they move to being armed security offices.

We are a safety office not a security office. We are not armed. We don't carry weapons, mace, Tasers, or handcuffs. We try to keep the students safe. So training for us there is really none available in our area. Again it is a financial thing; the cost of transportation, lodging, and the training. We will have to make it a priority in 2017. This office will have to be trained. (SC9)

SC9's comment represents most of the participants' comments that, even as safety and security office directors, they don't have the resources to train adequately. All participants indicated their belief that security offices need to be armed. As SC9 works toward developing an armed security or police department for his campus, he understands that budgetary restrictions

will potentially be difficult to overcome as it will take a much more robust budget than what he currently has. He indicated a desire to have the state of Kansas assist in the training, as they do with police, so he would have the ability to go to the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center, which was a sentiment shared by most participants.

SC3 is also a strong supporter of the state creating a mandated security training for colleges, preferably at the KLETC.

We don't have anyone that does training for us. It would be good if the state would set up training programs at KLETC that would deal with what we deal with. It's hard for individual college's security to actually do a lot on their own. They need to come together and work together to try to get more training on the state level. The institutions are not getting it done. It would be good if the state would set up a training program at the KLETC that would deal with what we deal with. It needs to be tailored to campus security. (SC3)

Like many participants, the urgency and desire to make something happen for his department is obvious. SC3's comment succinctly captures the crux of the participants' thoughts as he speaks to the need for community and technical colleges to work together to achieve formalized training for security officers and approaching the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center to begin discussions about the possibility of assisting campuses to get training.

Both SC4 and SC10 express the consensus of the directors that finances and budgetary limitations create a challenge for campuses to properly train their security officers and the campus at-large.

I think it (firearms/training) costs a lot. (SC4)

Finances are always a concern. We try to do in-house training. (SC10)

Participants indicated that institutions are working with less state funding and anticipate this continuing. This probability is causing security directors, among others, to become more innovative. Several participants indicated that they are hosting training events and inviting others

to participate with them in order to generate cost savings. More than half of the participants pointed out that they host trainings at their institutions for local law enforcement and regional security directors to offset costs. Many indicated opting for training via the internet to eliminate the need to travel.

Again it is a money issue. We have to stop putting a price on everything. We need more training in this area so people can feel more confident in their security. You have to have qualified security. (SC3)

My budget is extremely small compared to others, but I don't have any complaints. I think the opportunities are there, we just need to take advantage of it. (SC1)

We have adequate training with firearms but could always use more training. Financially it would be nice to have more range time like once a week but probably not realistic. (SC11)

The above participants are in vastly different fiscal situations. SC3 has an extremely limited budget and does not feel that it is adequate for even the minimum training required for security officers. During his interview, SC1 indicated that his budget is smaller than the public safety agencies he works with locally, but he monitors his budget closely to make sure there is enough money for training. Even with the ability to secure training and range time, SC11 feels that, although fiscally his budget is adequate, the capacity to do more would improve his ability to keep his campus safer. The comments from these participants, though seemingly different, all reflect the core concept of Subtheme 3.1 that they need additional fiscal resources for adequate training.

**Analysis.** Each participant is unique in his or her fiscal circumstance. The ability to be innovative with training is what all are trying to accomplish. Additionally, the ability to work with administration to make safety and security a priority even when budgets are tight is what they are all striving to achieve.

Several participants indicated that their colleges are in discussions about changing their unarmed safety and security departments to armed security or police departments. They differ in their perceptions of which is the better option, which will be more fully developed in Theme 4. Those that choose to become armed security offices will need to budget for initial and continuing officer firearm training addressed either in-house or through other training venues since the KLETC does not train yet train security officers. Campus police departments would be treated like any other police agency and can train at the KLETC, which is a 14-week program followed by a required minimum of 40 hours of training annually. Regardless of the option chosen, there are significant fiscal implications a college must contemplate as it determines the type of department it will have.

### **Subtheme 3.2: Location and Department Size Limitations**

Size of department and the secluded, remote areas of the campuses provides unique opportunities and challenges for campus safety and security directors.

**Introduction.** From the perspectives of the participants, it was clear that there was a difference in the perceptions of availability of training based on the location of the college itself. Although tied closely to fiscal limitations, there was a distinct difference in participants' perspectives regarding the availability and opportunity for training the more rural the campus was. This was often coupled with the limited size of the department itself, making training even more difficult for small, rural institutions.

I don't know ... I'd say we can go train with the local police department any time we want. We did the first full scale active shooter two years ago. Other than that the training is expensive and not readily available due to the rural nature of where we are. (SC6)

SC6's comment is an example of the concerns expressed from the rural institution participants about their ability to get consistent training to keep officers prepared for an active

shooter. Although his department can train with the local law enforcement, this training is limited and does not encompass issues that are unique to college campus security offices (i.e. Title IX and Clery Act), nor does it provide in-depth certifications for active shooter training. During his interview, he also echoed the desire to have a state-driven training format for campus security, as did most of the participants.

In addition to the geographic location of the institution, participants indicated that the size of their department in terms of personnel impacts their ability to attend trainings.

Well I have, from the upper administration, that they will not limit us on training. Now we can't go crazy with it, but like I said we only have two guards so I can't be sending both officers away for a two or three-day training somewhere too far away. (SC4)

SC4's comment is an example that was expressed that the limitation of the number of officers a department has also creates a training hardship due to lack of continuous coverage while the officer is away, especially in the rural areas of Kansas. Participants indicated that most of the training that law enforcement or security officers need to attend is through either the National Rifle Association (NRA) or the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA), as these are nationally recognized trainings. These are generally minimum two-day training, and the majority of the courses taken are at least a week long. SC4 reiterated the need for training to be set up by an agency to assist smaller departments with the ability to keep trainings closer to campuses.

Well there is just me and it was brought up last week under what circumstances I would be allowed to carry. What would the officers be comfortable with, and what would administration be comfortable with? The magic number seems to be 40 hours for certified firearms training, which typical training for a new police officer is. (SC5)

SC5 has a unique situation as he is a single-person department. In the process of determining whether to move to an armed department, his campus is having discussions with local police officers to determine their comfort level of training for an armed campus

department. Both his campus and local police department are relying on the 40-hour training as required by KSA 74-5607a for police officers, which would require him to be away from campus for an extended period. He does have a contracted security company he works with for the evenings on his campus, however, the campus has limited controls on the company. He has concerns about how the students are treated by the contracted officers and that pertinent information is relayed him timely. As a retired police officer, SC5 would like to see a campus police department so it would be police officers working with the students, faculty, and staff.

Well there I am, just me. We need training. Just look at the diversity of the students on our campus. We have students from all over the United States. There are 11 foreign countries represented on campus. Their perceptions are different. Trying to integrate all of people into this and make them all feel safe and comfortable, security needs to change to adapt all of those things. If I could go to the law enforcement training center, maybe in the summer when they hold training then I am good with that. Ultimately it will be the trustees that make that decision. (SC5)

SC5 is working to try to create a full police department on his campus. He speaks of KLETC creating specific training programs to address issues unique to college campuses. He was the only participant out of the 11 that referred to the unique situations on college campuses due to the number of students from a multitude of other countries. Because of the diversity of people and cultures that live, work, and learn together on a college campus, sensitivity to a variety of cultures is very important to campus security. It is extremely important in a college setting to understand basic customs from other countries when dealing with students or personnel from those countries, so officers do not inadvertently worsen a situation or escalate a problem during contact with individuals. Ideally, SC5 would like these trainings to occur during down times when he could take advantage of them. During the school year it would be very difficult to attend trainings as it would leave his campus without security during the day.

During his interview, SC1 indicated that he monitors the KLETC bulletins for upcoming training opportunities.

Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center (KLETC) does a great job sending out bulletins with training for the next four months, I believe, of training opportunities... I think opportunities are there, we just need to take advantage of it. So once we get things established we are going to start with our drills and scenarios. We actually have scale scenarios where we bring in evaluators to include the police department, EMS and all the first responders. (SC1)

Since SC1's agency is a campus police department, this is an option for him.

Unfortunately, as indicated above, these trainings are for law enforcement only and security officers are neither required to train nor have the option to train at the KLETC. SC1 welcomes all first responder agencies to train with his department and shares whatever materials they have. Many participants indicated that working with other agencies within the community is vital to assist in everyone's knowledge of the campus as well as building relationships for the future in case an active shooter event occurs.

While the difficulty for attending training resounded among the participants from very rural locations, a much different picture was described from the participants from campuses closer to metropolitan areas.

There's so much training, private companies, defensive tactics, federal government training and homeland security. (SC11)

There really hasn't been an issue. We have set aside budget dollars for what we need. You spend what you need at the time and right now training is needed. (SC8)

Both SC11 and SC8's campuses are centrally located and much closer to multiple training options; thus, they can easily take advantage of more training without the fiscal and time constraints of long drive times, hotel, and meal expenses. Although SC8 speaks of setting aside budget dollars, he does not have the added expense of travel that the rural colleges must contend with which exacerbates their training expenses.

**Analysis.** While all participants value the ability to obtain consistent training, for the first time, there was a different perception about the availability of such training among the participants. Examples from SC4, SC5, and SC6 presented challenges unique to rural campuses and small security departments. SC8 and SC11 are both more centrally located and had none of these challenges. This indicates that rural community colleges face even greater obstacles addressing their security needs than similar, but less rural, institutions within the state. Regional training options would help to resolve some of the inequalities for training and help bring a higher level of security for all Kansas community and technical college students.

### **Subtheme 3.3: Using Resources to Overcome Current Training Limitations**

Providing innovative ways to receive training for their departments is important to the safety and security directors.

**Introduction.** Security departments struggle with overcoming location challenges and securing sufficient funds to receive quality external training. Many of the directors have explored innovative approaches to accomplish their training goals for their officers. Options such as hosting trainings for other public service agencies will sometimes result in discounted or free seats if there are enough paying participants. During his interview, SC10 indicated that he hires off-duty law enforcement officers to bring training to the campus for continuous updates. Other participants indicated similar strategies. Innovation and creativity during times of financial constraints are very important to try to remain fiscally responsible to stakeholders without compromising the security of the campus.

**Data.** Participants reflected on using creative strategies to overcome current limitations.

We don't get near enough at least for us here. What I see is we want safety to be a priority and unfortunately we just don't have the resources, financial resources, to be able to do updates and practice. What I have found is being able to host training events so my

officers can get their hours. We need to stay up to date. I have to be creative. A local highway patrol officer comes in and presents training. (SC7)

SC7's example is reflective of the resourcefulness of directors in utilizing resources such as local law enforcement to keep his officers and campus updated. Signs to watch for that could cause an active shooting on campus are extremely important for the entire campus, including training on drugs and signs of drugs, especially for campuses that have on-campus housing. SC10 also spoke directly to having law enforcement provide professional development on this topic as his experience as a law enforcement officer has shown him that the presence of drugs can escalate a situation to violence very quickly. The more robust the training is for all signs to look for that could instigate or escalate a situation to an active shooting, the better for the overall safety of campus.

There is a lot of internet training that you can get for little cost and sometimes no cost at all. We are very blessed to have several officers in this area that are experts in several fields, so we try to send our officers or at least one officer to some special training. Like this coming year, we are sending someone to tactical emergency medicine school, which I hope we never need, but he is an EMT and has expressed interest in expanding his knowledge base, so I hope to send him. Availability has never been an issue. (SC10)

SC10's resourcefulness in training his officers in a variety of ways exemplifies the comments of the participants on how they try to find ways train their officers in a variety of areas. He also seeks out many options for cutting costs, while still getting some of the training in-house to benefit all his officers and campus. Also, coming from law enforcement, SC10 utilizes additional resources by hiring officers with backgrounds and certifications in a variety of areas that could help the campus. The officers then continue their education and enhance the safety of the campus.

I think it is the responsible thing to do. I think that whether it is ALICE or some other program law enforcement agency with school resource officers they should be training their folks. (SC1)

Promote the training necessary to make it a priority; I have yet to be turned down on training. It is a liability concern. (SC2)

SC1 and SC2 focused on making sure that training is a priority for both the campus at-large and security officers. SC2 comes from a law enforcement background and utilizes programs around his campus to do campus training. This assists him in two ways; he gets the campus trained and he also provides a procedure to be modeled in the future. While SC1 uses the term “responsible”, SC2 speaks of “liability.” The participants all indicated that the worst thing a department could do for its campus is nothing. Continuous, consistent, and documented training is important to all campuses and, fortunately, this was reflected as a priority in all of the interviews.

**Analysis.** Each security director has a unique situation when working to provide a safe campus for their employees, students, and visitors. While some may be similar, each has a distinct combination of fiscal resources, geographic location and department size. Unless or until there is direction from the state along with fiscal resources and options for regional trainings, many of these campuses will continue to cobble together training that they hope is enough to provide adequate active shooter and officer trainings. Ingenuity and innovation permeated throughout the interviews along with an understanding of responsibility to all stakeholders.

### **Summary**

Throughout Theme 3, the limitations to properly training security officers, whether due strictly to fiscal restrictions or those, coupled with geographic location and department size, has been explored. As continuous training becomes a reality and necessity, security directors, along with college administration, will need to develop options to accomplish the priorities they set forth for campus safety.

Each participant is unique in his or her fiscal circumstance, geographic location and department size. With the impending lifting of the conceal carry and constitutional carry exemption, several colleges are considering changing to armed security or police departments. Working with administration to make safety and security a priority is what they are all striving to achieve. Budgets continue to become tighter with continued higher education cuts from the state, but keeping security as a priority is necessary. The participants cannot change the location of their campuses, but they showed resourcefulness in providing training, even within current limitations. Staying focused on the main goal of providing the best training possible for faculty, staff, and students, while remaining within budget was consistent among the participants.

#### **Theme 4: Best Practices for Campus Security and Active Shooter Prevention**

Throughout Chapter 4, the topics of concerns about the new requirements for allowing concealed and open weapons on campus, the training that will be a necessity and the limitations to that training have been explored. A final theme that will be covered is the participants' views about the best practices they can implement to keep their respective campuses safe and prevent an active shooter event. While all participants believed they needed to be armed, there were opposing views on whether it would be more advantageous to be a security department or a police department. They all also believed that the use of a prevention team, comprised of key personnel across campus, was essential for intervention and prevention of an active shooter event.

##### **Subtheme 4.1: Campus Security or Police Department**

Which choice is the best for the institution and the personnel running the departments.

**Introduction.** There was an interesting dynamic that emerged when the participants discussed their views on the best option for their campus departments. While there was

consensus regarding the need to be armed once the exemption is lifted, there was almost an even division on whether a security department or a police department was best option for a campus. Four participants were adamant that a security department offered the best solution; four indicated that a police department was the best solution; and three indicated a desire to have a combination of both. Campus security is predominantly administrative, and issues are generally handled internally, while police departments would require involvement of city or county prosecutors as part of the decision-making process. Both campus security and police departments have pros and cons and finding the best fit for a college can be a challenge.

**Data.** Participants reflected on their views of the best type of department for providing campus security.

I'm in favor of having a safety and security department at the college, it's more effective. It can provide services to students and able to treat the problem internally. (SC2)

SC2 and his administration are planning to maintain a campus security department. In addition to working to prepare for conceal carry, this will allow them to provide a more controlled environment to work with students on minor issues, which is what several participants would like the option of doing. With this flexibility, if a misdemeanor occurs on campus, the campus judicial system will be able to handle it with internal sanctions.

We have discussed this with the police department and they want us armed. On the other hand, we have more flexibility as security. We can use probable cause as private security. We can do more than police department. The police chief wants us to do more, but the county attorney won't move forward. I am not sure that I want to be a sworn officer. I like having the freedom that an officer does not have. (SC3)

SC3 waivers slightly about which direction he would like to see his department go but does not want the restrictions of a police department. For him, having the ability to work with students and develop a rapport around campus as smaller issues are addressed would also build the foundation for the training and cooperation necessary for an active shooter event. SC3

indicated that the police chief and county attorney differ on their views regarding the college's security. Unfortunately for this participant even his desire to become an armed department is being stymied as it is the prerogative of the county attorney.

Just being where we are located we could not have a campus police department. We couldn't afford it. We don't have enough officers; two people. I like our system now. When I was a student here they had an outside company come in and they didn't know, nor really want to learn, campus procedures. They were really hard on the students. They didn't build a relationship with them. Everybody viewed those guys as just out to get us. "You know screw them, don't talk to them, avoid them at all cost." With our in-house security we have control of them. They know all our procedures, they know policies and they know changes. They know our students. (SC4)

SC4 also appreciates the ability to have a campus security department and having the ability to develop a rapport with students. He also mentions fiscal and personnel reasons for not having a police department. If his department would become a police department, he and his officers would be obligated to commit to continuous training and working under the purview of the local prosecuting attorneys, both city and county. SC4 prefers the ability to have internal control and working directly with students within the campus judicial system.

We've talked about that. About both directions. The way it was explained to me, if we have a safety and security department on campus then we can handle things in-house. We can take care of things we need to as we see fit. Once we go to a police department then there are a whole other set of regulations by law that we have to follow. I'm not saying that is wrong or right. I am just saying that sometimes there are gray areas that we can deal with better. If we make the decision to go to law enforcement, then we will have to be ready to know that our responsibilities have changed, and we will have to handle things in a different way. (SC9)

SC9 echoes the sentiments of the other three participants regarding maintaining the flexibility of a security office.

Participants that prefer developing a police department offered the basis for their views.

I believe that some campus police departments provide a little bit better safety and security to their campus. If there is an agreement made with the local law enforcement and they have that coverage and it is the same coverage that campus police would provide I think that is fine. (SC1)

SC1 has a background in law enforcement at his local police department. He and his administration are focused on developing a strong campus police department. They plan to work closely with the county and city prosecutors as well as the local police department to establish procedures as they begin working together. The campus attorney will also be a part of the conversations so that everyone knows the expectations.

My preference would be campus police. Fully trained, accredited, commissioned through the state of Kansas. I do not feel I am qualified for the position so I would like to see the college find a retired federal agent with a number of years in administration and then let them hire officers. Federal agents might help to defuse some of the politics of jurisdiction. (SC5)

SC5 prefers to have a campus police department commissioned through the state. A very real challenge he foresees, should they move that direction is, dealing with local politics, including local law enforcement and prosecutors, as these entities would all have to approve the change. The process is generally time consuming to address the issues and concerns of local politicians as well as developing rules and regulations. A retired federal agent would be an excellent resource to help in these scenarios.

I would rather have a campus police department. Both of our employees have talked about this and our survey warrants that our constituents want a police department. They want real security professionals. They don't want a vice president of operations. (SC6)

SC6 surveyed his campus and there was an overwhelming majority that indicated they wanted a police department on campus. SC6 concurs and feels a police department would be the best way to deter violence on campus.

It depends on the size of the college whether they are able to have a police department. A college our size, we are big enough to have a police department. (SC11)

SC11's comment indicates an understanding of what it takes to maintain a campus police department. A police department is very expensive when it comes to training and certification and does operate under different regulations from the local prosecutors. While the flexibility of

security does suffer, as a police department, the ability to work more closely with attorneys and other police departments with access to more information quickly can be an advantage. For example, security departments cannot legally obtain information from tag numbers nor do they have legal access to dispatch centers. So, it truly comes down to the need of the campus and desire of the board of trustees and administration.

My honest opinion is you should have both. Primary would be the police department. My idea is a limited service police department. I don't expect campus police to have certain tools for certain crimes or investigation, canine officer and so on. Whether it is the common issues, drug issue, traffic issues, or tickets, we would seek outside cooperation for the offenses that limited police department could not take care of. Being 24/7, you would always have at least one officer here. Being mindful of economics, I thought you could run 2 man shifts; one police officer and one security officer. (SC7)

If finances would allow it, both types of departments would be SC7's preference. He envisions seeking outside cooperation from local law enforcement to work with the campus department, as he does not foresee having capacity for all types of investigations. Although two-person shifts would be ideal, if they were fiscally prohibitive, having a one-person shifts with cooperation from the local law enforcement agency could work for his campus.

There are times when I think a campus police department would be best. Because I think one of the biggest complaints the security officers have right now is that the kids know you don't have any authority to arrest me so why should I take you serious. I think from that standpoint, if they were actually officers and could make arrests, and I think some things would change the attitude of some students. Then there is also the argument of do I really want to have a gun-toting officer on my campus, where it gives the impression that it is not a safe environment. But some people see it as it is safe because you have gun toting-officers on your campus then other see it as it is not safe if you have a gun-toting officers your campus. Everybody sees that a different way. (SC8)

Establishing a respected department is very important to the safety of any campus. A department that evolves within the campus community and is valued by both the employees and the students is a necessity. Unfortunately, SC8's department has not been able to ascertain that respect, especially from the students. This creates an animosity that is counterintuitive to the

safety of the campus. SC8 believes that the authority of a campus police department could help immensely with this situation.

I think you can have both. I think you need a designated police department to handle most items. That will be enough to handle major crimes or those types of things. But we can offset a lot of the pressure as with us writing “minor in possession” or those type items that we wouldn’t have to bother the local police department on. The security department would be working hand in hand with each other but they could work with the kids closer. Right now we just have a security department but my belief is a police department could benefit us. But security allows us to handle things internally. The number one thing is to be able to protect our campus and our students. (SC10)

SC10 concurs that the use of both a police department and security department could benefit not only each other, but the campus. Being able to offset minor incidents institutionally would assist the police department focus on the bigger issues and would also assist with the higher educational reporting that is required by the Clery Act, as referenced in Chapter 2.

**Analysis:** Campus security has become a focus for college campuses. No longer are campuses able to focus simply on safety issues; the focus has shifted to security. As with many of the topics discussed throughout Chapter 4, the best solution for each campus will need to be determined by those that govern and administer as they understand the environment, community, and stakeholders. Regardless of whether a campus determines that the best solution is an armed security department or a full-fledged police department, there must be a solid working relationship established with local law enforcement.

#### **Subtheme 4.2: Using Early Intervention Teams for Active Shooter Prevention**

The early intervention of potential problem individuals on campus is an innovative approach to attempt to stay ahead of the curve on an active shooter.

**Introduction.** Regardless of their position about a security or police department for their campus, all of the participants supported a campus-wide team approach to intervention and prevention of an active shooter event, and 10 of the 11 participants currently utilize a threat

assessment/early alert team. Generally, these teams were a well-rounded group of key personnel on campus. Some campuses also use the expertise of law enforcement or mental health professionals, either as standing members of the team, or to assist when necessary. These teams typically meet at least once a month to discuss issues on campus or happenings on other campuses. During an urgent event, they will come together and take action. An urgent event could be a suicide threat or attempt, or information that there may be an active shooter threat to the campus or personnel.

**Data.** Participants reflected on their use of teams for intervention and prevention.

I know in our college we have an identified team of three members, which I am one of them. It is loosely tied together when I talk about the policies and all of that, but I can say this; from the time I have been here we have had a few people that have been flagged for various issues and we were very efficient in the way we handled it. It didn't go through a formal committee. Let's just say the right discussions were there and the right action was taken in the evaluation process and follow-up. (SC1)

SC1's team is relatively small compared to others, but has been very efficient in handling the issues they have had so far. They have developed a system that allows for immediate response to an issue and bypasses the bureaucracy that often hinders educational processes. This is what an early alert/intervention team is supposed to do for an institution. This is an ideal situation for an institution and allows for immediate peer review, feedback and action.

We have a crisis management team that has been organized. (SC5)

We work with counselors and have a check and balance system. (SC2)

It will take all of them for the ideas. All the input is good. (SC3)

SC5's team includes a variety of members from across his campus as well as community first responders that he works with on a continual basis. His use of both campus personnel and professionally trained first responders is critical to him as he is a single-person department. SC2 is adamant about working with counselors as a key component of his team. His counselors, in

fact, lead his team. He is aware that, although they are bound by confidentiality, they can provide insight into behaviors that others may bring forth. SC3 is as inclusive as possible without the team becoming too cumbersome. His team comes together to gather ideas and formulate plans to assist in making critical decisions in how to handle events such as an active shooter.

I don't know if every campus has one, but they should have one. They need to meet weekly. Sometimes we meet twice a week just because things happen, students change, and the intervention piece is huge for us. We try to intervene before something serious happens to keep everybody safe. (For example) 'John Smith' has been to the counselor's office. She obviously won't tell us why, but he has been there. Whenever you bring all those pieces in then, 'John Smith' is in this class and he has done this, 'John Smith' in housing last week did this. Wow! We need to intervene. There might be something happening here before it blows up into something major. (SC4)

SC4's team is one of the most active teams that was described. He has developed a communication network through his college to assist in information flow that is critical for early intervention. He utilizes the expertise of the college counselor so, when needed, the working relationship and trust is already established to share information to protect someone from themselves or from causing harm to others. Communication throughout a campus can be difficult, but an early intervention team can assist in gathering pertinent information that allows all the pieces of the puzzle to put together for protection of the campus community.

SC4's example of "John Smith" exemplifies his belief in the team effort to prevent violent events from occurring on campus. The team that he works with is more involved than most and meet as much as possible. His strong belief is that early intervention early is the best prevention and discusses issues consistently. As such, SC4 has established a very good recognition and notification system within his institution. This type of system will expedite a team's response and action to the event.

We have a threat assessment team. I would say it is essentially worthless at the moment due to the lack of training, resources, time and money. I am on it, but right now it is basically defunct. (SC6)

, SC6's experience with a threat assessment/early alert team has not been as positive as the other participants. This can reflect attitude of the administration, the campus at-large, the community, or the security director himself. In this case, SC6 is working to develop a better trained team. As the importance of early intervention and prevention becomes more and more apparent with continued incidents across the nation, the institution will, ideally, see the value in it and place more emphasis on an active, educated team.

I think that is the ticket to it, with these active shooter situations. Most of the time there will be an indicator of some sort prior to. Most of the instances that have already happened, we look at and there were indicators that were ignored, overlooked, not reported, or whatever. That piece of it has been a missing component for years. We have implemented a Behavioral Intervention Team. The Behavioral Intervention Team involves the college counselor and he uses a variety of ways to collect information. Students or faculty reporting stuff, the humanities department is a great resource. (SC7)

SC7 has taken a proactive approach to getting his campus involved in reporting potential issues to his team. He mentions the Humanities department as an example, but this information could come from any source. His institution has done an excellent job in getting divisions and departments from across campuses involved by assisting in information sharing and prevention. Early alert and intervention teams are invaluable when it comes having another tool to prevent a shooting from occurring.

We use a Behavioral Intervention Team, which is an intervention team where people can report to this group. This group evaluates, investigates if there is a threat, and what the threat is. (SC8)

Having an intervention team to determine whether something is factual or not is an invaluable asset to assist a campus prevent or identify an active shooter. Gathering information from many sources is essential but can also be overwhelming and cause teams to receive conflicting information. Therefore, an intervention team including a combination of educators and professionals is valuable to a campus and a director of safety and security. A team that has

combined professional training and the knowledge of student daily behavior working together to evaluate information will be able to expedite the decision-making process and move quickly to intervene on a potentially violent situation.

It is not a bad idea. I would be supportive of it. We do risk assessments and safety audits. (SC9)

C9 is the one participant who does not currently have an early alert team. This participant is also the one whose department is currently just a safety department. Although he understands the necessity and is in the process of developing a security department, he has no background in law enforcement or security. Because of this, he feels inadequate to lead an early alert team. In all reality, it would probably behoove him the most to develop and work with an early alert/intervention team. Without security, a notification system, or teamwork, this participant's college is potentially at the most risk for a devastating active shooter event.

As I mentioned before, we activate our team whenever needed. It is headed by our counselor at our college. (SC10)

SC10's team is led by the counselor, which can be advantageous as counselors have access to pertinent information that others will not have. While they are bound by privacy regulations, they can help draw out, and filter through information that is brought forth and may have connection to outside resources that others may not have. SC10 indicated that they only activate when needed, but they meet monthly, continually work with each other, and are now integrating information to assist the campus working with them more.

We welcome anyone's outside advice. It's easier to know you are doing it right. (SC11)

The team that SC11 works with is unique in that the team does not always work directly with him. They utilize personnel from many outside agencies within the team, so an immediate response could come from any internal source and then all agencies needed would be notified and activated. This one is distinctively different, but they have the population in the surrounding

areas from which to pull assistance. Having that understanding, cooperation, and information-sharing is essential to him and his team.

**Analysis.** Today we are better informed and know more of what to look for when it comes to potential active shooter incident. In most of all recorded college active shooter incidents, the signs and signals were there before the incident occurred. These signs can include a change in habit or activity, a video, a Facebook posting, a written note, a conversation, or a written assignment. Therefore, it is vitally important to develop a team including colleagues from across campus and encourage and promote information flow to team members.

Determining information is essential to the development an intervention plan for the prevention of an active shooter event. Participants in this study used a combination of internal sources for notification of changes in behavior and external sources for professional expertise beyond college counselors. The most important aspect of a team is that they are developed and meet regularly, whether weekly or monthly. The vital role that these teams fulfill is that they are organized because of their professional knowledge and expertise and they are brought together to make critical decisions when needed.

### **Summary**

Throughout Theme 4, the final theme of the participants' views regarding the best practices for providing a secure campus through types of departments and utilizing teams for information flow was explored. This topic was unique in that the participants were the most divisive and uniform, depending on the subtheme. All participants firmly believe that they need to be armed and utilize a team to be proactive in intervention and prevention of an active shooter event. An almost even split occurred on the best tactic to take for the armed security or police department.

Historically, the signs and signals of an impending active shooter event were present, but were consistently overlooked. However, retrospection has shown how important it is to have information coming from many different educators and professionals. Alone, a single behavior or change in habits may seem insignificant, but a multitude of them can certainly indicate a potential issue. As Doss & Shepherd, (2015) indicated, it is important to understand that no single shooter or type of shooter possessed all or even a portion of all indicators. One shooter can be an honor student, and another can struggle in school. One shooter could be the ideal employee, another constantly written up for policy infractions. One shooter may be popular and outgoing, and another disliked and a loner.

Whether a campus determines that the best solution for them is an armed security department or a police department, there will need to be a well-established working relationship established with local law enforcement and within the campus community. It is vitally important to have a team of cross sectional professionals from educators to outside resources assist in the evaluation of information that comes in.

### **Conclusion**

The researcher sought to better understand how trained and prepared campus safety and security directors feel they are to handle an active shooter event. The researcher focused on college safety and security director's perceptions of their training by specifically asking about their preparations for an active shooter event on a college campus in Kansas. The intent was to elicit the experience of the participants as they engage in implementing procedures and ensuring preparedness of the safety and security departments of these institutions.

The researcher sought the experiences, attitudes, and understanding of campus safety and security directors concerning their preparedness for active shooters at Kansas community and

technical colleges. The data provided by the campus security directors experiences, attitudes and understandings were analyzed. These analyses led the researcher to a better understanding of the experiences, attitudes, and understandings of campus security directors and their preparedness for active shooter.

The researcher carefully analyzed the data and observation as the themes emerged. The importance of linking these to the research questions was paramount through the data collection. Themes emerged from the data collected identifying the perceptions of the safety and security directors, conceal carry on campuses, need to improve essential training for all of their campus personnel, limitations of dealing with training, best practices for campus security and active shooter prevention. Analyzing further subthemes were identified and data collected from the interviews from each participant safety and security director.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

Between 2016 and 2017 50 active shooter events have occurred across our country. The most notable were the First Baptist Church, Sutherland Texas and October 1, 2017, Harvest Festival, Las Vegas shootings. Incidents ended in exchanging gunfire with law enforcement, committed suicide, killed by police, stopped by citizens and apprehended by police. The significance of this FBI study “Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2016 and 2017,” is how contact with law enforcement will have on the campus community. The need for extensive training in active shooters on campuses and in buildings. The original definition from the U. S. federal agencies define active shooter as, “an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.” The FBI now expands this definition to include more than one individual in an incident and omits the word confined as the term excludes incidents that occurred outside buildings.

Why this information is important is due to the manifestation of active shooter preparedness by individuals coming up with new and innovative ideas creating loop holes in previously thought out training and response strategies. Case in point was the Las Vegas shooter having multiple rooms with weapons and video surveillance preparing for law enforcement. The undeveloped area public access and events on campuses now plays a large part in active shooter defense strategy for campus safety and security directors. This due to the Las Vegas shooter method of operation large event or gathering concern into the mix of strategies and techniques of training and preparedness. Even though the shooting did not occur on a campus the similarities of campus gatherings of concerts, football games or even graduations must come into the training and concern thought patterns of the directors.

The purpose of the qualitative thematic analysis study was to explore the perceptions, attitudes, and understandings of campus safety and security directors regarding their preparedness for an active shooter on campus. The research questions established within this study, “What are the experiences, attitudes, and understanding of campus safety and security directors concerning their preparedness for active shooters at Kansas community and technical colleges?” and “How do these experiences, attitudes and understandings create the foundation for practices, policies, and procedures at Kansas Community colleges and technical colleges?”

The data shows that safety and security directors are as prepared as the limitations from the state, administration and financial limitations will allow them to be. Participants are on the forefront of knowledge and education for active shooters on their campus. The research supports that directors are literally doing everything they can possibility do to assist their campuses in preparing for an active shooter event. Enhancing their skills and assist in campus understand of what to do if an active shooter event should occur. The research also supports that drawing from their (directors) experiences is assisting the campus community in developing better practices, policies and procedures. The researcher gained a better perspective as to how trained and prepared campus safety and security directors feel they are to handle an active shooter event. The intent of this research was to elicit the experience of the participants as they engage in implementing procedures and ensuring preparedness of the safety and security departments at their institutions. This study further examined how these experiences may influence or inform practices regarding preparedness for an active shooter(s) on campuses. The data collected from the community and technical college campus safety and security directors were throughout data are plural specific to the directors’ perceptions of their preparedness for active shooter(s).

Thematic Analysis was chosen for methodology due to its ability to emphasize pinpointing, examining, and recording themes within the data.

The findings give us a new understanding of Kansas community and technical college campus safety and security directors' ability to prepare for an active shooter. Active shooter events and incidents of targeted violence are both rare and real (Snyder & Holder, 2015). The perceptions, attitudes, and understandings of campus safety and security directors bring to life the realities of preparing small community and technical colleges. The limitations of this study were that of interviewing only the community and technical colleges with security across the state collecting data from eastern, central and western Kansas. Data was not collected from those who had police departments or all campuses throughout the state. The research focuses on the directors or person in charge of security on campus and not the officers or administration of the colleges.

Four themes emerged from the data supported by 13 subthemes. The themes and subthemes are listed and discussed below. Current literature is synthesized with the assessment of the research findings including participants' perceptions, attitudes, and understandings. Evaluation of the research findings are viewed within the context of scholarly writings, the law, and current literature. These elements are then synthesized into an inclusive and holistic analysis that provides a focused evaluation of the emergent themes from the research.

### **Analysis of Theme 1: Extensive Concerns Raised Regarding Kansas Conceal and Constitutional Carry Law**

What are the experiences, attitudes, and understanding of campus safety and security directors concerning their preparedness for active shooters at Kansas community and technical colleges? The general theme is supported by 4 sub themes or categories and associated

findings which are detailed accordingly. The 4 subthemes were designed to explore issues important to the participants discovered throughout the research.

Most of the safety and security directors were uniform in their concerns and challenges facing the with the new conceal carry laws while still attempting to prepare for the active shooter event on campus. The participants had many concerns about the conceal carry on campus law. Knowing it will be their job to create the procedures in handling conceal carry participants when that day comes. All these opinions are based on the experiences, attitudes and understanding of participants.

Even though the concerns or “fear of the unknown,” is raised about the new conceal carry law which started July 1, 2017, their safety and security directors are preparing their best to be ready. The presence of conceal carry on campus could potentially enhance safety on campus once the adjustment of them being on campus is better understood and accepted. Actively preparing their campus communities for “active shooter,” preparedness and now the conceal carry. Concerns were raised by participants faculty about how to approach a person with a gun. Many hours of training will be needed to educated faculty, staff and students about what to do and the difference between “active shooter,” and conceal carry. Developing stronger and more robust threat assessment teams to actively engage concerns across campus. Also training faculty, staff, and students as to report anything that looks out of place or concerning.

Again, much like the paradigm shift that took place within the law enforcement community when Columbine and Virginia Tech active shooter attacks happened. Community Colleges, Universities had to look at their own responses and notification systems and reevaluate each detail of what is needed to mitigate lives lost during active shooter events. The addition of conceal carry for campuses legislative theory was not to create more issues but reduce the issues.

Conceal carry upon campuses is to allow the opportunity for person(s) to defend themselves as well as deter the potential attacks not to become the problem. The law allowed four years for an institution that did not want to participate in the new law to put in place defensive measures. No community or technical college and/or University was able or chose to participate in placing the defensive measures in place. Those being electronic devices at each public entrance with personnel for searching. The reality for most campuses is that there is a vast amount of public access areas on a college campus that are not accessed through building entrances, so there would always be areas where direct access would be unenforceable for restricting a concealed weapon.

#### **Analysis of Subtheme 1.1: Any Student Aged 21 or Older May Have a Concealed Gun in Class**

Participants indicated their concerns for this but were realistic about developing practices, policies, and procedures to handle the new challenge set before them. The implications and concern of campus violence and what guns in the classroom could present. The concern over security on campus needing to carry guns on campus where before they were not allowed to carry. Participants brought up faculty and staff carrying on campus or feeling that they need to. The challenge of providing training if they are employees for them taking steps to make sure they are properly trained if they carry. Then when the security officers can carry what will be their training and qualifications to ensure they are properly trained.

Non-traditional aged students encompass a large majority of students across the country by needing to further their education, career changes or just plain life changes. The probability of the non-traditional student is there, and they will be in classrooms. Again, most will not allow

faculty, staff or students know they are carrying concealed. The concern by participants was due to potential violence within the classroom.

The concern was also raised of the cost of the equipment dealing with concerns and potential problems with more guns on campus. During the time of this study only 3 of the 11 institutions could carry sidearms. This by far leaves the safety and security employee at an immediate disadvantage. Some reasons used were philosophical reasons from upper Administration and or Board of Trustees, some was due to the lack of training. This issue keeps coming back to whether they remain a security department or move to the police level of officers on campus. Moving to police would allow them to send officers to the academy for formalized training.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 1.2: The Conceal Carry Debate Generates Strong Opinions**

The participants major concerns of who exactly would be carrying guns on campus is there. The reality most of the conceal carry individuals you may never know. Again, the debate about security officers being able to carry side arms and be properly trained if conceal carry is going to be allowed.

SC6 indicated that after surveying students and employees, employees had concerns on whether they wanted people to carry or not. However, they did feel that they wouldn't mind a select few personnel being allowed to carry. The concern primarily appears to be who will be allowed to carry concealed on campus. SC7 spoke of the reality that most traditional students on campus will not be of age and will probably be graduated or moved onto University before they are of age to carry.

Such things as video surveillance, computer aided emergency notification systems (text messages, cell phone notifications), intercoms external and internal, proper lighting throughout

campuses. These will all assist in mitigating issues on campus and assist in lowering concerns of the campus community.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 1.3: Preparing for the Inevitability of Guns on Campus**

Four years is what was given by the Attorney General's office providing ample time for campuses to prepare for the conceal carry law that changed in July of 2017. Constitutional carry that was also allowed with this law in 2013 creates the largest concern. These will be individuals on campus with no training, 21 years old or older and be allowed to carry a handgun. These participants were also concerned about constitutional carry which does not mandate a background check. So, each of the individuals who decide to exercise their rights and carry conceal will do so without a background check.

This adjusted the concern of training security officers for active shooter to dealing with untrained individuals having a handgun on a crowded college campus. Potentially creating an impromptu active shooting event. Many participants echoed the same concerns of untrained in handling a handgun or possibly unfamiliar with the handgun they are carrying creating a larger problem.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 1.4: Current, Updated Information will be Crucial for a Safe Campus**

Getting the campus community involved in training and assisting them in understanding the need for active shooter training is at the forefront of the participants minds. Whether FBI (run, hide, fight) or ALICE training (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training matters not to the personnel that are being educated. What matters to them is will it work when I need it? Both training formats have been proven to work during real events. A new issue that this

researcher has run into is having to check with the insurance provider to make sure they allow ALICE training to be adopted and taught to employees.

No matter what procedures are adopted getting the buy in and providing a clear and concise ability for those involved to ask questions and feel comfortable with the changes of today. Providing a proper information “pipe line,” for the campus community is what the participants strive to achieve throughout each educational year. The one thing that must be kept in the back of all participants is that educators don’t come from an emergency response background and assisting them to understand the process and clear concise directives will provide a smoother transition throughout the training of the campus community.

## **Analysis of Theme 2: The Need to Improve Essential Training for All Campus**

### **Personnel**

What are the experiences, attitudes, and understanding of campus safety and security directors concerning their preparedness for active shooters at Kansas community and technical colleges? The theme is supported by 4 sub themes or categories and the associated findings which are detailed accordingly. All developed subthemes describe in the words of participants explaining their experiences, attitudes and understandings of attempting to keep a safe learning environment for all. These opinions are based on the experiences, attitudes and understandings of participants.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 2.1: The Role of the State of Kansas to Provide Formalized Security Training**

Participants indicated some frustration and concern that there was not a statewide consistent training format for community colleges to prepare them for an active shooter event. As mentioned in the research four trained in the ALICE program, four train with local law

enforcement and three train their campus with the FBI run, hide and fight. Preparing students, faculty, staff and the public as to what to do and how to respond to an active shooter event weighs heavy on the participants minds. The participants believe if it was more regimented and formalized by the state it would better prepare the campus community.

The literature did not support a specific training format or centralized location for having such a training. Studies such as the one conducted by MHEC do support the need for preparation for a violent event such as an active shooter event on campuses.

Since a statewide security office training format has not been developed the burden falls upon the shoulders of the campus security director. His/her (director) advanced training and education are important to be able to train campus officers and the campus community to respond or react to an active shooter event.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 2.2: Train Officers to Train Others**

The learning environment could be hindered because of instructors fearing to do their jobs. Thus, providing a learning environment where the security department has not only dedicated officers but officers who are certified and able to instruct classes for the campus building their confidence in knowing their clientele. Working side by side for a common goal in this case reaction and response to an active shooter is important to the officers and to the participants of this study.

The participants state the need to instruct and help others on campus. Student, faculty and staff understand the new conceal carry laws and how to respond to conceal carry participants on campus. By teaching the security officer to be able to train others in conceal carry concern, first aid, CPR and many other classes that could be taught around to the campus community. The

officers will build officers confidence in their abilities and knowledge of the subjects taught providing a much safer environment for all to learn and work.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 2.3: Arm and Train Security Correctly**

Only three out of the eleven visited allowed their officers to carry a fire arm. According to supporting literature from this study two disconcerting perceptions regarding firearms for security officers were identified. The first perception was that campus safety officers had not been adequately trained to handle an “active shooter” situation. Second was the perception that there was no longer-term financial commitment from the school administrations for preventing firearm violence on their campuses (Thompson, A., Price, S., Mrdjenovich, A., Khubchancani, J. 2009). This correlates specifically to the data collected from the participants.

Ensuring that their campuses are prepared by giving the tools needed to protect themselves and others in an active shooter situation is up to the philosophy of the Trustees and Administration of the college. By the state providing professional training for the officers to carry firearms or legislators providing action through laws enabling administrators to building adequate budgets and providing the funding to the administration on campus to protect their campus will be totally up to the state and its citizens. Items that will be needed for these officers are bullet proof vests, ammunition, firearms, uniforms, and professional training are the essentials needed for security officers to have a chance against an active shooter.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 2.4: Using the Best Available Resources**

Ultimately from the interviews the campuses will have to decide which training is best for them, ALICE, Run, Hide, Fight or something else from the local law enforcement training. The reality is administration through the guidance of the security director will need to decide. But again, we come back to budgets and the cost of their direction. This again as mentioned

before is where the state needs to provide an enhanced ability financially for the campus administration to build a budget to sustain their direction. State legislatures need to be made aware of this concern through a spokesperson for the campus security directors educating them on the need.

### **Analysis of Theme 3: The Training Challenge: Dealing with Limitations**

Throughout Theme 3, the participants' perceptions of the challenges of fiscal, geographic, and department size will be explored, as well as their thoughts on how they will provide the best training for their officers and campuses within the confines of their unique limitations.

#### **Analysis of Subtheme 3.1: Fiscal Limitations**

Through this study it became apparent that campus security has no voice in any direction they want to go. Therefore, a strong organization needs to be formed of campus security directors and officers allowing them to have a stronger voice. This organization then could provide common themes and avenue of funding that could assist in training needs, legislature communication and direction of the campuses across the state. Providing one strong voice carrying throughout the state for campuses security directors and allowing administrators to understand that it's just not their director of their campus that needs. That there is a statewide need for this mission of protecting campuses and needing the financial backing to making it happen.

The needs being that of a proper firearms program needed with professionally trained instructors. Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center has those trained individuals providing a recognized curriculum. The Kansas Commission on Peace Officers' Standard and Training (KS-CPOST) is such a format needed for training the security officers across the state for their

campuses. Right now, you must be a sworn officer to be provided the training through the academy.

Literature supports that most feel that community colleges and universities should receive carte blanche when it comes to the protection of their campus community (MHEC 2008).

However, the continued reduction in funding across the board for community colleges and some universities has placed an undo financial burden upon many of the security departments across the state according to participants. It again falls on the back of the administration and trustee's philosophy and what direction they want when it comes to funding the security departments of community and technical colleges across the state.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 3.2: Location and Department Size Limitations**

Across the state you will find many campus safety and security departments on campuses. We have discussed ad nauseum the financial reason and need for more money. I believe we can all agree security departments have been under funded as a rule. With the changes in the state laws and concerns of active shooter looming in the wings the need for a better vision for small agencies has become very important. With the one to two and three-person departments it makes it extremely difficult to cover the campuses if one is out for extended training. Thus, one of the many reasons campuses have not readily become police departments due to the 14-week training they would have to be gone from campus for. Time and distance to get to training for many provides a difficult challenge so even sending someone to state training they would have to travel a great distance and could not respond to calls like many with training in their own communities. A centralized or regional training facility could provide a positive direction for those departments so far away. Making training and education of their officers more available and affordable.

### **Analysis of Subtheme 3.3: Using Resources to Overcome Current Training Limitations**

Becoming innovative in their thoughts of how to train the participants campus and officers is how they have learned to survive. By sending one officer or the director going himself to a train the trainer course to be able to bring back the training for their campus and department. Reaching out to local law enforcement agencies for training assistance providing a more positive working environment for both local and college agencies.

Each being challenged by geographic location, financial backing, department size and administrative philosophy they (the directors) have learned how to adapt and overcome obstacles to ensure that the campus and officers don't fall behind. The main objective is to provide the best training with what they can find for the director's campus and officers.

### **Analysis of Theme 4: Best Practices for Campus Security and Active Shooter Prevention**

The best practices for campuses continue to evolve. Even though it was not discussed as part of this study video surveillance and blanket notification systems seem to be great tools of the trade for campus security departments. Participants seem to have notification systems and video but not much was said about them. One office did however show me a room full of monitors covering the campus and real-time ability to capture something as it happens. The problem with video is if you do not provide the personnel to watch it twenty-four hours a day it becomes a potential witness to the crime. Notification systems work well if all areas of notification are covered. Texting, email, phone, and external notification to name a few.

#### **Subtheme 4.1: Campus Security or Police Department**

No matter whether you are a campus security department or police department it all comes down to what you are willing to give up for what you get. A police department many

times takes away the campuses ability to handle criminal activity on their own and places it in the county or district Attorneys hands. The determination factors many times comes down to how many officers and whether they can let them be gone for 14 weeks for training while other means cover the campus. But realistically it may just come down to the vision and philosophy of the President and Board of Trustees at the campus. Either way the campus leadership directs the enforcement the reality is a positive relationship with local law enforcement is invaluable for the campus. This provides a safety barrier of local patrols and visits enabling all to get to know each other and working habits.

#### **Subtheme 4.2: Using Early Intervention Teams for Active Shooter Prevention**

10 of the 11 participants agreed that a campus-wide prevention team of some sort is the way to help prevent potential active shooter. It is never going to catch or stop all the events, but it is a proactive approach to helping with an ongoing problem. In most active shooter events, prior warnings were given, such as statements and/or behavior, weeks in advance in some cases (Cornell & Allen, 2010, p. 10).

Participants develop a team of professions from inside and outside the campus community. This provides a well-rounded team of evaluators to be objective in their investigation. Many signs and signals have been overlooked over the years prior to an active shooting event. Columbine, Virginia Tech, and most recent the Mandalay Bay shooting. It was all there but no team was in place to monitor or evaluate each situation and put the pieces of the puzzle together.

### **Research Findings**

The inevitability of guns on campus became a reality as of July 1, 2017. Now campuses are assessing how to manage concealed carry and what training is needed for campus security.

Requirements for extra training and incidents of friendly fire incidents are major concerns. Research has also shown that there is some apprehension potentially having untrained individuals making the wrong decision during a shoot don't shoot situation. There is also concern over people carrying concealed without a background check; constitutional carry allows an individual to carry concealed at age 21.

In the opinion of the campus safety and security directors interviewed, funding for placing electronic devices and personnel at access points of all buildings on campus is impossible. This was a requirement of the K.S.A. 75-7c20 conceal handgun in public building. In fact, as of July 1, 2017 all community colleges have had to allow conceal carry on their campuses.

When considering costs to restrict concealed weapon access, additional personnel would be required to search the area on the person identified as having a metal object before the person moves on. Pertinent to the decision-making process for an institution is the reality that even if a college would elect to use this method, it does not address public access to the campus at-large. There are numerous public access areas on a college campus that are not accessed through building entrances, so there would always be areas where direct access would be unenforceable for restricting a concealed weapon.

### **Conceal Carry**

The impact of concealed weapons in the classroom will be a challenge for many. New policies and procedures will need to be in place for faculty, staff, and administration. A conclusion was reached through the data collected that communication will need to occur between administration and students conveying the new rules. Also, enhanced training for personnel to ensure a safe encounter between the conceal carry person and officers, faculty, staff.

Strong debates and opinions have been expressed through the research about the type of training, if at all, conceal carry individuals will receive. The original law in 2006 focused on training and background checks for conceal carry participants. Now since 2013 Constitutional Carry allows anyone of legal age to carry a concealed handgun. This is without training or any background checks. This is a consensus from the campus security directors, faculty, staff, and administration.

### **Response to Incidents**

For many years, “hide in place” was the protocol during an active shooter event. However, today FBI “Run, Hide, Fight” and ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate) are gauged to better prepare institution personnel as to what to do during an active shooter event. Past events have shown that hiding in place creates a stationary target for the shooter. With ALICE for instance when the alert goes out, the choice exists to lockdown and to inform others where the shooter is and what is going on. In the researcher’s opinion both trainings allow dialog between faculty, staff, and administration, thus providing an opportunity for ownership and understand by all involved.

Applying what you know about active shooters and providing training on campus is critical. The supporting data shows that convincing and working with faculty and staff is probably the most challenging task a security director will have. Helping all to understand what to do during an event and practicing as much as possible is most helpful. Most training and education will tell you that you react the way you train. As a leader on campus helping the complacency be replaced by an attitude of “I knew this could happen” and react.

### **Training**

In the state of Kansas there is no formalized training yet designed for campus security officers. Believing strongly the many of the campus safety and security directors concur that

formalized documented training for campus security is imperative. Campus administration and safety and security directors are responsible for creating a formalized training for security. Some campuses choose not to go the law enforcement officer direction though due to lack of funding, personnel, or support. Therefore, the creation of a formalized training academy would be the choice of many to maintain their security staff on their campus.

Many of the campuses visited during data collection were staffed with unarmed security officers. Many of the participants were frustrated about where to train. Training is often created by the safety and security director or external law enforcement professionals are hired. Many campuses utilize local law enforcement agencies to assist in training security officers. Training officers to be proficient with their firearms is most important. With the changes to the conceal carry laws involving campuses it is crucial to professionally train officers in using their firearms as well as confronting an armed individual.

Participants reflected on the vital need for properly trained officers. Firearms training is a perishable skill that could be lost without enough training time. Most law enforcement departments must qualify once a year and training are provided on the range all year long. Many participants felt that administration needs to need to authorize the arming and training of its officers. If the officers are not allowed to carry a firearm the administration needs to examine a more positive alternative such as Tasers to give the officers some form of defense.

Some participant directors spoke of having or exploring private security for their campus. Some participants would rather have their own security department to work with the students and get to know them better. They (participants) spoke of having their own officers allows them to train with local law enforcement. This would help solidify a better working relationship with local law enforcement. It also would allow law enforcement a better understanding of how the

college operates. Campus security could take advantage of firearms training, Taser training, use of force courses, traffic stop training (on campus), building searches, search and seizure laws, and evidence control just to name a few. Whether or not to allow firearms on campuses rests solely with the Boards of Trustees and the administration at each college. If security departments that are currently not armed can carry handguns, it will be essential to provide proper training, certifications, and ammunition. Campuses that choose to allow firearms within their security departments will undergo a cultural adjustment but doing so was the consensus of the participants of the direction that will be needed moving into the future.

The need for training equipment for the security officers and their departments rest solely on Administration and their ability to budget and provide the needs. Priorities set for the departments and budget requests are placed on the directors. Being innovative and a visionary when it comes to developing the department equipment needs is the challenge that faces the security directors. Preparing the participants' departments for active shooter, many with the constant reduction in funding, has been a major challenge for each director of safety and security. They have had to draw from the local law enforcement or combining resources to bring in a company like ALICE to do the training. Many participants felt more of a focus should be placed on security like finances and affordable training giving the campus population more confidence in the security staff. Most of the participants acknowledged the value of an early intervention team. The participants recognized that early intervention has the potential to disarm an active shooter before they can formulate a plan. Some frustration was expressed about lack of training for this threat assessment team also. Even though institutions understand the importance they may lack the support from administration.

Training for their officers and whether they will be allowed to carry a handgun themselves? Whether or not to become a police department or stay a security department? There is no doubt a major paradigm shift is about to occur amount the community and technical colleges within the borders of Kansas.

### **Discussion**

The data show that training and equipping safety and security officers is a significant challenge to many small community colleges. The Kansas legislature needs to enact new innovative laws enabling community colleges to train their security officers if they choose to remain security.

Data also show that many security officers on community college campuses are not allowed to carry firearms. By working Kansas University and Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center didactic and practical training could be developed in the state of Kansas. Providing proper guidance and supervision over this training enabling community colleges to gain the level of safety and security education and training that many community colleges have with police departments.

By working together Kansas Legislature could take action that will allow community college Board of Trustees to enact policy and procedures creating a training format providing a safer environment for safety and security officers. Thus, enabling the safety and security department to provide safer campuses. Legislature's mission has been to deter violent crime and active shooters from coming to our state campuses. Those who are hired to protect the campus community should also be afforded the same opportunity by being allowed to carry professionally. Eventually each of these officers will be confronted with someone with a gun on campus. Granted, the majority will comply with reasonable requests and actions taken by the

officers but as we have been shown 254 times since 2013 across the nation in the educational setting an active shooter may come. Training with local law enforcement officers will provide the proper knowledge for safety and security officers to handle such an encounter. However, and encounter or an active shooter event happens the concern of notification comes into place for the campus.

No matter what emergency notification devices you use with your community college operations. Sharing access and controls with local law enforcement is so very important. During an active shooter event law enforcement will be notified and respond. Their job will be to neutralize the threat. Giving them access to your video feeds so there can monitor, and pin point the shooter will diminish the time factor it will take to find the threat and minimize the injuries and deaths that could occur.

Taking small inexpensive steps such as coloring or numbering hallways and buildings so during an event you and the law enforcement can determine that a threat is entering and shooting in building 6, blue hallway. Providing wasp spray for the educators and staff so if they are unable to leave the premises and they are sheltering in place they can ward off the threat and escape to safety. Providing a spring-loaded punch so if through the window is the only avenue for escape the educator or staff member can cover their face and eyes and place the punch in the corner of the window pushing the punch causing it to shatter and allowing the students, faculty and staff the ability to escape.

If faculty and staff carrying concealed there are a few things that they will need to keep in mind. Are they carrying the ammunition that will stop after it hits its target, or will it keep going down range potentially injuring others? How will law enforcement identify them from the active shooter should they choose to engage the active shooter. Law enforcement is trained to neutralize

the threat so how will they tell friend or foe. Have they taken the proper training to handle an active shooter such as understanding the difference between cover and concealment, shoot and move and weapon retention? Being a former conceal carry instructor I know that the initial training did not teach any tactics on the range or how to keep your pistol from being taken from you.

Many institutions have an emergency notification system including the participants of this study. The questions or discussion did not go into much about the systems used from most of the participants. However, there are some overarching suggestions for the institutions still making decisions as to what to do. As with any study a campus community needs assessment should be conducted. This will be an analysis to determine do the system fit the needs of the campus. Any system needs to have redundancy utilizing more than once type of notification (Example: texting, email and verbal) warnings when the notification goes out. Can you set up a utilize preset warning for the campus so it a button push only? An exceptional group of volunteers from across the campus should be the responders and receive more frequent notification. They must be trained in basic first aid, fire extinguisher training, storm response, and active shooters. These are the campuses go to individuals when an emergency occurs they are willing and able to react to the need including setting off the notification system. Once a system has been selected the entire campus must be trained on it and what to expect. Then adopt it to the human resources policy for new hires to receive the orientation when hired. Make sure students all have campus emails to assist in mass notifications. Then at minimum each semester there should be a drill for the campus and a bi-weekly test of the system. These are just a few suggested procedures in selecting and use of an emergency notification system.

## **A Call to Action**

Today campus officers will have to prepare for more sophisticated and better planned attacks on their campus. Future research directs to the recent active shootings—in Sutherland Texas and Las Vegas—have been better planned and better armed. Since the 1990s Hybrid Target Violence (HTV) has become more frequent. HTV is defined as an intentional use of force to cause physical injury or death to a specifically identified population using multifaceted conventional weapons and tactics (Frazzano & Snyder, 2014, p.2). This definition, based on “hybrid” weapons and tactics, better captures the operational range of hazards confronting first responders and the communities served (Frazzano & Snyder, 2014, p. 3).

Even though Sutherland and Las Vegas did not occur at institutions of higher education we must learn from each event how the shooters are executing their tasks. Leveraging lessons from past shootings and having an appreciation for historical precedent. While focusing a keen eye and having an awareness for impending threats (Frazzano & Snyder, 2014) will set the stage for the future of training community and technical college safety and security officers. In changing tactics and training methods for officer’s campus security departments are becoming more aware of and better prepared for the active shooter. The vision of many of the participants in this research was to involve the entire campus community in the training. Joint planning, training, and understanding are required to better neutralize the active shooter or HTV event. According to Frazzano and Snyder (2014) when lives are being lost to an active shooter or HTV attacker those first initial seconds are most critical. This paradigm shift will maximize lifesaving forces in the face of danger that is seemingly unimaginable (Frazzano & Snyder, 2014, p.11). Creating a campus that is a ready, resilient, and resourced collective of interoperable campus

security and first responders is needed to effectively engage and counter the event (Frazzano & Snyder, 2014, p. 11).

Throughout the research the participants spoke about ALICE or FBI training, both using a variation of “Run, Hide, and Fight.” Preparing others for an active shooter event relies on the campus security directors and officers preparing for real challenges that may be faced during an active shooter event. The more realistic the training, the better prepared the campus will be.

A suggestion that was not supported by data collected but is strongly suggested by the Department of Homeland Security is to training others to “Stop the Bleed,” is also part of the training that needs to take place. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has recently started the “Stop the Bleed” campaign where citizens and first responders can train together reducing the number of casualties (DHS. 2015). The average time it takes [who? first responders?] to arrive on a scene is approximately 7 to 15 minutes (DHS 2015). Bleeding control is imperative in reducing casualties during an active shooter event. Most institutions utilize text messages and e-mail notifications of an event. It has been proven repeatedly that rapid communication saves lives. Quick deployable messages through their rapid communication software allow students, faculty, staff, and visitors to react, moving away from harm to a place of safety. Visual message boards and monitors in hallway or outside monitors and a voice on outside speakers will assist everyone moving around the campus in case their phone is on silent and prevent the shooter to have a tactical advantage.

Many campuses are hiring ALICE trainers to come in and do their training and/or trainers in the run, hide and fight created by the FBI program. Due to budgetary restrictions not, all campuses can take advantage of the training available. This why a community and technical college campus wide officer training concept needs to be developed this way they are all trained

the same and allows faculty, staff, and officers to feel that no matter where they go or visit the campuses and their communities are prepared.

Kansas Legislation should take a strong look at a possibility of creating new training regulations controlled by Kansas University and Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center along with providing the funding for these campuses to ensure all can take advantage of the new training programs. These regulations would confront and diminish the safety and security training needs for the community and technical colleges throughout the state of Kansas and could be a model other states could follow. This model would allow all campuses to train together and create a communication network much like the law enforcement has a communication and prevention network.

### **Recommendation for Further Research**

Much like any research there are many questions yet to be answered and this research study is no different. Safety and security will always be an integral part of campuses everyday life. These may be issues brought to light through this research project or they may be new ventures of exploration in this research area.

An area that was touched upon but just opened the door slightly is there an effective training format that can be created or brought in to accommodate the immediate need for training. Does a state-run organization run something like this or are there specific training programs across the state at a regional training community college where many organizations needing security could receive training?

Another area that needs to be looked at is how do community colleges select a director of security and do they select them from law enforcement or from professional security. Even

though it was not a part of this research, throughout the interviews the ability to find qualified candidates was a concern.

To summarize there are many avenues to be explored in this area of safety and security for community and technical colleges. Housing, training, and selection processes are just a few areas that the research is wide open to examine. Participants were all very passionate throughout this research study and exemplify the professional staffing all community and technical colleges attempt to emulate.

Campus safety and security director's preparedness for active shooters on their campuses was the primary focus of this study. Community and technical colleges are comparatively safe learning environments for students, faculty, and the community. The reality of violence and potential for tragic events happening are a very real concern. This study's focus was on medium size community and technical colleges in the state of Kansas. The findings of this study do not provide a solution for any community or technical college, their administration, or the state legislature whose decisions affect each one of these institutions. It does however provide a foundation as to how prepared these directors feel they are for an active shooter event. This research also provides other research areas that need to be explored.

## **Conclusion**

Campus safety and security director's preparedness for active shooters on their campuses was the primary focus of this study. Community and technical colleges are comparatively safe learning environments for students, faculty, and for the community to come. The reality of violence and potential for tragic events happening are a very real concern for all these professionals. This studies focus was for medium size community and technical colleges in the state of Kansas. This analysis will not provide a solution for any community or technical college,

their administration or the state legislature whose decisions affect each one of these institutions. It does however provide a foundation as to how prepared these directors feel they are for an active shooter event. This research also provides other research areas that need to be explored.

The research obtained significant insights as to the attitudes, understandings and perceptions concerning the preparation for active shooter. This research gives a clearer understanding of the safety and security directors' perception as to how prepared they are for an active shooter event. These directors of safety and security know that a failure to train, failure to educate, and failure to prepare for these disastrous events will only way in favor of the attacker. A well-prepared director of safety and security with the passion to "protect and serve" may not be able to avoid an attack, but it will reduce the success of the attacker's ability carrying out their plan.

This research plan took an in depth look at safety and security director perception of their preparedness for active shooter. Specifically, the understandings, perception and attitudes of safety and security directors as it related to preparedness for an active shooter event. Out of the 20 community and technical colleges, 12 safety and security departments were identified through Carnegie classifications 7,500 students and below, non-duplicated head count from two-year community and technical colleges.

Boards of Trustees, administrators and chief financial officers the time is now to act. We must be able to come together in policies, procedures and prepared actions to be able to better understand the potential volatility of some individuals. As many of these issues remain still unresolved, the higher education communities will continue to strive to develop more viable policies and procedure and become better prepared to face the unknown. All institutions of higher education will strive for better ways to protect their students, faculty, staff and

community. The threats of active shooters are real and to quote one of the participants in this study, SC1, “There are more shootings than fires.” Campuses must give the same resources, finances and attention to your campus security divisions to be able to give them tools to do their jobs.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Interview Questions**

1. What barriers/challenges do you see in developing policies and procedures for your department working at a community/technical college? How would you overcome those barriers and challenges?”
2. In your opinion what policies and procedures could your institution adopt to help your department be better prepared for an active shooter?
3. Active shooters are one of the biggest concerns for campuses. What steps have been taken to prepare your campus for an active shooter event?
4. Does your Board allow conceal carry on your campus? How has it changed your policies, procedures, and preparedness?
5. What type of funding would it take to realistically protect your campus community?
6. What are your steps to creating policy and procedure for your department?
7. How many full-time officers do you have? How many part-time officers do you have?
8. What have you found that works for your department in training for active shooter(s) on campus?
9. What is the make-up of your Threat Assessment Team?
10. What do you see the pros and cons are for community and technical colleges for having safety and security departments or campus police departments?
11. How often do you train with the entire campus?
12. What division of the college does your department fall under?