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University Office of Security Preparedness Bulletin

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Featured Article

TERRORISM—STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

By Adam Sparks
2004-2005 Student Government Association
President

Are we scared? Only when we think about it.

That’s the conclusion I reached from speaking with students about terrorism and campus security. We generally feel safe on campus—terrorism is something that happens in New York, Washington, or abroad. Our daily lives are not visibly affected. Once someone makes the point that Sanford Stadium holds nearly 100,000 people, however, eyebrows raise and tensions rise. The mention of travel and study-abroad opportunities also induces some mention of fear of terrorism or anti-American violence. I have seen formerly enthusiastic students recede from their study-abroad plans in the face of heightened terror warnings, or given the global climate, heightened tensions with a rogue state like North Korea. On the other hand, I traveled through Morocco and Tunisia last May, both heavily populated by Arabs and Muslims, and felt safe and welcome as a student and guest.

One of the big problems our generation faces is what to do with our professional lives in the face of an age of indiscriminate violence, highly empowered non-state actors, and the quick availability of sensitive information. In my talks, I found that very few students were changing their academic plans as a direct consequence of the events of September 11, 2001. I must believe, however, that this new plan weighs on many of our

minds. I can vouch anecdotally that more and more people consider public service a viable option, and that within the School of Public and International Affairs, students have a strong interest in security studies and many outlets through which to exert their energies.

Perhaps the most frustrating obstacle for students is the poor quality of information most of us feel we possess concerning our safety. Students alternately say we are barraged with warnings and data, leading to ignorance of what information really matters, and say we do not have enough information to form an educated opinion. Several students noted that they could watch the news, but are too busy to do so. We need, then, a time-efficient means of absorbing meaningful information about our security, and more importantly, the wherewithal to think about our own vulnerability without losing perspective on the great experience that is college.

Definition of Terrorism

Terrorism is the use of force or violence against persons or property in violation of the criminal laws of the United States for purposes of intimidation, coercion, or ransom. Terrorist often use threats to create fear among the public, to try to convince citizens that their government is powerless to prevent terrorism, and to get immediate publicity for their causes.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) categorized terrorism in the United States as one of two types, domestic terrorism and international terrorism.

Referenced from: Georgia Office of Homeland Security’s web site:

<http://www.gahomelandsecurity.com>

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Opal Haley
NAMED NEW INTERIM DIRECTOR
for The University Office of Security
Preparedness

Opal D. Haley, former director of Training and Development at the University of Georgia, serves as interim director of the University Office of Security Preparedness effective February 14, 2005.

Haley fills the position of Asa T. Boynton, Associate Vice President for the office, who retired December 31, 2004.

Haley brings with her 23 years experience in the human resources field and has spent 18 of her 20 years at the University in the Training and Development Department. Her accomplishments include helping develop training programs that support institutional goals, customer needs, and best practices.

She worked for Clarke County police department as well as the Georgia Department of Revenue, prior to joining the University. She holds a master’s degree in human resources and organizational development from the University of Georgia where she also earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology.

The University created the Office of Security Preparedness in 2002 following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Although not a law enforcement unit, the office works with other campus security, environmental, and academic units in providing information, training, and education to help the University identify possible security threats.

Campus in the Age of Terrorism

The University of Georgia, like many other American campuses, contains a host of tempting “soft” targets for terrorist. Research laboratories, stadiums and arenas, high-speed computer networks, high-rise residence halls, as well as close proximity to transportation and fuel hubs, makes securing a college campus challenging to security personnel. The idea of an “open access” campus adds to this challenge. Because of budget constraints, inadequate staffing of security personnel, and the need for training, most colleges are stuck in the ‘response’ mode.

The University of Georgia recognized this challenge and responded by creating the University Office of Security Preparedness with the idea of providing students, staff, and faculty with up-to-date preparedness information. This challenge evolved with a campus website www.uosp.uga.edu as a source of information and links that would help the individual prepare for emergencies and disasters, as well as terrorist threats.

Ask yourself, “What can I do to help protect myself (and my family) in the event of a terrorist threat?”

- Listen to official campus announcements (radio, TV, email notification, building intercom systems) and abide by the instructions
- Stay calm
- Report any suspicious or out-of-place actions or people to the University police at (706) 542-2200 or the nearest police department
- Get training on emergency preparedness and first aid. (UGA Training and Development and the University Health Center offer courses.)
- Know your building’s emergency plan (office, dorm, classroom, study area, etc.) If you are not sure, ask someone in charge of the area.



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