

Social Media – Critical Incident Management

These recommendations are intended to be “content neutral,” meaning that they are designed to offer support across a wide spectrum of views.

These recommendations focus on threats, intimidation or harassment from outside the university. For information about policies and procedures governing harassment allegedly committed by Washburn employees, or students on campus, please see Washburn policies on discrimination, harassment and/or sexual harassment [here](#). Additionally, the Washburn [Student Conduct Code](#) is a resource as well as the [Campus Climate Team](#).

In matters of safety and security, individuals are encouraged to make use of University, college and campus resources to assist them in responding to an immediate situation, as well as to address any concerns that arise in the longer term.

Recommendations:

Ensure your safety. Identify your primary concerns and seek out assistance. The following suggestions may be of use in your personal safety planning.

- If you believe your physical safety is at risk, immediately notify the police in your home jurisdiction or call 911. For safety on campus, contact [Washburn Police](#).
- Do not delete any messages, but you may want to disengage from reading social media, emails or voice messages. Preserved messages may be of use in identifying the harassers and pressing any relevant charges.
- Create a log to document and archive all threatening emails, tweets, Facebook posts, and phone messages. Consider asking a friend to monitor social and other media on your behalf and to keep you apprised of any developments or threats.
- Save screenshots of harassing or threatening social media posts to preserve as evidence in case the author deletes the original post.
- Be cautious about responding to threatening emails, tweets, blog comments etc. in most cases it will be in your best interest to not respond. Although responding seems like the right thing to do, it may only provide the harassers with additional material and serve to prolong the harassment. If you choose not to respond, you may also want to encourage your friends and colleagues to do the same.
- Consider changing the passwords to all of your social media and personal accounts.

Overall, the recommendations break down to:

1. Ignore them. Their goal is to elicit a response, don't give it to them.
2. Block them.
3. Respond only if you feel as though you must.
4. Record and report. If you feel threatened, contact the proper authorities and keep a record of the hostile or threatening posts. Take and save screenshots in case you need to file a police report or take legal action.

Adapted from Social Media Support and Resources for Penn State Faculty (9/17/2020)