

## Threat Assessment in Community Colleges

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Threat assessment and management in higher education is still in the early stages of development. Little is noted in the research literature about the practices of threat assessment teams in this environment, particularly in community colleges. To fill this knowledge gap, a random national sample of 15% ( $n = 148$ ) of public community colleges were surveyed as to: (a) threat assessment practices, (b) continuing education needs, and (c) training delivery preferences. Lead threat assessment practitioners were surveyed from those institutions. A total of 113 participants returned a completed survey. This number represented a return rate of 76%. A post hoc power analysis reported an actual power (i.e.,  $1 - \beta$  error probability) of 0.84. The professional breakdown of respondents was law enforcement/security ( $n = 52$ ), college administration ( $n = 55$ ) and other ( $n = 6$ ). The vast majority (73%) of the community colleges operated with a formalized threat assessment team, yet 67% of respondents reported fewer than 40 hours of threat assessment training. The leading types of team composition were: (a) employees only (57%), and (b) mix of employees and outside personnel (32%). Most college threat assessment teams addressed more than just students as threat sources (69%). The top continuing education needs reported ranged from legal implications to advanced training of threat assessment and management. Inferential statistical analyses revealed that, in reference to their professional background, threat assessment practitioners similarly rank their: (a) continuing education needs, and (b) training delivery preferences (i.e., in person vs. online). Implications for both research and practice were discussed.

*Keywords:* targeted violence, violence prevention, college shootings, threat assessment

Threats are being assessed in community colleges throughout the United States. The common name for a group of professionals that cooperatively work together to assess and manage threats of targeted violence is a threat assessment team (TAT). The need for TATs to take the lead in assessing and managing threats of targeted violence within the community college environment is based on the current high incidence of violence on college campuses

throughout the United States. Since the school shooting at Columbine in 1999 and the Virginia Tech massacre in 2007, the TAT is becoming an increasingly recognized component of institutions of higher education (IHE) and is responsible for assessing, managing, and mitigating the impact of target-based violence as it relates to community colleges. Yet, little is known about the practices of those doing threat assessment and management, especially within community colleges. There are no other studies focusing on community colleges and their unique dynamics. In the United States, community colleges offer a wide variety of diversity among the student and staff population which set them apart from K-12 schools, four year colleges, and universities. Community colleges often have open-access enrollment processes, open campuses, varied social climates; a more diverse range of ages, abilities, backgrounds, intellectual levels; and motivations than at other IHEs. This complex student body that community col-

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leges serves also includes populations such as recently discharged veterans, newly released parolees, and individuals struggling with mental health issues. Compared to universities, community colleges traditionally have lower tuition rates, smaller class sizes, transient student population, and provide the convenience for commuters and working professionals. The open college environment has also become a place for community members to congregate, attend functions, and explore resources. These differences impact the elements for threat assessment processes for community colleges. Some of the areas include the types of situations TATs assess and manage, educating a constantly moving student population on the importance of reporting, and understanding the importance of working with other threat assessment professionals outside of the college community. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to develop TAT trainings and protocols to meet the specific needs of the places in which they are implemented.

To fill this knowledge gap, threat assessment practitioners were queried about their professional backgrounds, activities, and training needs. An evolution in the assessment of targeted violence has occurred over the years, from unstructured clinical judgment, profiling, and development of actuarial tools to predict violence to the current best practice known as structured professional judgment (Guy, Packer, & Warnken, 2012; Randazzo & Cameron, 2012). The most contemporary approach to threat assessment and management advises that the TAT be comprised of a multidisciplinary group of school and community officials, including law enforcement, mental health professionals, and appointed school employees (Meloy, Hoffmann, Guldimmann, & James, 2012; O'Toole, 2000). These TAT members work collaboratively to assess and mitigate the threat of violence from multiple perspectives. The team approach to threat management in colleges has proven the most effective because it allows a comprehensive and dynamic response to a complex and potentially dangerous situation (Deisinger, Randazzo, & Nolan, 2014; Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neil, & Savage, 2008; Meloy et al., 2012; Van Dreal & Speckmaier, 2011; Vossekui, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002).

Because a perpetrator often displays warning signs, or leakage, of an intent to commit an act

of target-based violence before the event, threat management in the college environment is becoming increasingly viewed as a job in which the entire campus community must participate (Borum, Cornell, Modzeleski, & Jimerson, 2010; Hollister, Scalora, Hoff, & Marquez, 2014; Meloy et al., 2012; O'Toole, 2000; Vossekui et al., 2002).

Within community colleges, there are numerous TAT structures and protocols that are being used to assess and manage threats of targeted violence. These range from one person assessing the situation to contracting with an outside threat assessment professional and having a formal TAT of college practitioners. Historically, these processes stem from research based on workplace violence, political assassinations, K-12 violence, and domestic violence. This research project aimed to identify the common features of community college TATs. Understanding the essential TAT composition, functionality, procedures, training needs, and delivery modalities for training will help to develop the most effective practices for college-based TATs.

There is now a standard for TATs that includes having a multidisciplinary team that is created and trained to identify, assess, and prevent/mitigate situations that might lead to targeted violence. This standard is supported by the American National Standards Institute, which produced the publication *A Risk Analysis Standard for Natural and Man-Made Hazards to Higher Education Institutions* (ASME Innovative Technologies Institute, 2010). The multidisciplinary team should establish and utilize community relationships with both law enforcement and mental health agencies. To develop a comprehensive awareness of the problem, it is important to look at the diverse aspects of targeted violence in IHEs, the statistical data regarding subjects and victims, the environmental and social contexts, the motivations, and the prevention and the management strategies that TATs can utilize (Randazzo et al., 2012). A distinction can also be made between threat assessment strategies for K-12 and IHEs (Sulkowski & Lazarus, 2011).

In 2010, the FBI released a report that analyzed violent and lethal incidents—including campus violence—in IHEs between 1900 and 2008. The report focused on defining the most important data regarding subjects and victims

involved in campus attacks, as well as the prevalence of these violent acts (Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010). During the stated period, the FBI discovered that 272 incidents of violence at IHEs had occurred, resulting in 281 deaths and 247 nonlethal injuries. However, unlike other crimes, these acts of violence result in the loss of life and limb, as well as profoundly disturbing psychological damage to the campuses and communities in which they occur.

The campus attacks report highlights the essential need to establish connections to community resources ahead of time, as these situations are not specifically confined to the current student population. The concern has a broader aspect, and we should be careful not to focus on only the current student population. According to this study, students represented 45% of the incidents. The remaining 55% of the cases included former students (15%), current and former employees, (11%) indirectly affiliated with the IHE (20%), and subjects with no known affiliation with the IHE (9%). Almost all of the acts of violence were perpetrated by one person, and 94% of the subjects were male. The percentage of subjects who were in a relationship with a student or employee at the IHE was 20%. Lastly, the report found evidence of leakage in many of the violent incidents: in 13% of the cases, subjects threatened victims verbally or in writing; 19% of subjects stalked or harassed victims; 10% of subjects engaged in violent behaviors upon victims; and in 31% of the cases, outside observers of the subject were aware of suspicious or threatening behaviors of concern (Drysdale et al., 2010).

The campus attacks report also concluded that in over 75% of the cases a specific target was in mind and the violence was usually enacted as retribution in the context of a relationship (Drysdale et al., 2010). Along these lines, it is vital for TATs to better understand the psychological and emotional stressors and motivations that lead to incidents of targeted violence.

Providing threat assessment and prevention of target-based violence at IHEs involves an understanding of the unique social and environmental conditions present at these institutions. Citing the work of Boynton (2003); Sulkowski and Lazarus (2011) stated, “College campuses are prime locations for violent perpetrators to stage devastating multiple victim attacks due to

their dense populations, relatively low police presence, and open and welcoming nature” (p. 338). Further, IHEs typically feature larger, more diverse campuses than K-12, in which strict monitoring—such as metal detectors and physical access control—is not appropriate (Fox & Savage, 2009).

The present study was designed to identify the threat assessment practices and needs of practitioners working in U.S. community colleges. Three research questions guided this study: What are threat assessment team practices in community colleges? Is there a relationship between professional background of a threat assessment professional and the ranking of the priority of continuing education topics? Is there an association between professional background of a threat assessment professional and whether web-delivered training is preferable?

## Method

### Research design

This study used a cross-sectional observational design following the STROBE protocol (Jepsen, Johnsen, Gillman, & Sørensen, 2004; Vandenbroucke et al., 2007). Participants were surveyed following Dillman’s tailored design method (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). Dillman’s method sets forth a detailed structure of prenotifications and follow-up communications that have been proven to enhance survey response rates (Rookey, Le, Littlejohn, & Dillman, 2012). A post hoc power analysis was conducted. Balkin and Sheperis (2011) noted that such an analysis provides that actual power in the study and gives a means by which to understand why nonsignificance may have occurred. The post hoc power analysis was conducted using G\*Power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). The effect size was drawn from a mean of effect sizes reported for educational and psychotherapy studies reported in Lipsey and Wilson (1993). Several input parameters were employed: (a) Mann–Whitney *U*, (b) two-tailed, (c)  $d = .47$ , (d) parent distribution = Laplace, (e) size of Sample 1 = 52, (f) size of Sample 2 = 55, and (g)  $\alpha < .05$ . The G\*Power 3.1 output contained an actual power (i.e.,  $1-\beta$  error probability) of 0.84.

## Participants

The participant queried from each of these randomly selected public community colleges (15% of the 986 colleges,  $N = 148$ ) was the lead threat assessment professional for that institution. There were 113 participants who provided completed surveys. This number represented a return rate of 76%. Survey respondents were 83 men and 28 women ranging in age from 29 to 70 years ( $M = 52.9$ ,  $SD = 8.67$ ). Most were non-Hispanic Whites (75%), with 10 Hispanics, 12 African Americans, 2 Native Americans, and 1 Pacific Islander. Almost half of the participants held a master's degree (48%). The professional breakdown of respondents was law enforcement/security ( $n = 52$ ), college administration ( $n = 55$ ), and other ( $n = 6$ ). The professions that comprised the "Other" category included counselor, human resource professional, and attorney. Because of the small number and heterogeneity of persons in the "Other" category ( $n = 6$ ), this category was not used for the inferential statistical analyses. On average, respondents had 13 years of experience ( $SD = 1$ ) as a threat assessment professional and had received fewer than 10 hours of training in this area ( $SD = 2$ ). The respondents reported membership in threat assessment professional associations: Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (5%), International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administration (28%), Campus Law Enforcement Affiliate (12%), National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (24%), and ASIS International (8%).

## Measure

Participants were first queried about nine demographic factors. Then the participants were asked 11 questions about their threat assessment work (Items 10–21 on the survey): (a) nature of participants' TAT (4 questions), (b) participants' threat assessment work (5 questions), and (c) participants' threat assessment continuing education needs (2 questions). These questions were derived and refined after consultation and review from leading experts in the field of threat assessment.

In order to develop a comprehensive list of threat assessment activities for this query, the following research-based resources were con-

sulted: (a) Exceptional Case Study Project (Borum, Fein, Vossekul, & Berglund, 1999), (b) *The School Shooter* (O'Toole, 2000), (c) Safe School Initiative (Vossekul et al., 2002), (d) "The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment" (Meloy et al., 2012), (e) "Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams" (Deisinger et al., 2008), (f) Workplace Assessment of Violence Risk (White & Meloy, 2010), (g) *Risk Assessment Guideline Elements for Violence* (Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, 2006), (h) *Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Guideline* (American Society for Industrial Security, 2005), (i) the Oregon's Willamette Valley Adult Threat Advisory Team (Van Dreal & Okada, 2013), and (j) Oregon's Mid-Valley Student Threat Assessment Team (Van Dreal, 2013).

Survey questions regarding participants' TAT activities pertained to the extent and nature of threat assessment and management practices. These questions also pertained to the kinds of situations which the TAT would address and what specific strategies and documentation of incidents they would employ. Survey questions regarding participants' continuing education needs for threat assessment pertained to the priority levels assigned to specific TAT concerns, such as confidentiality and legal implications, as well as the preferred mode of educational training. The specific survey questions and response options for Items 10–19 can be found in Tables 1 and 2. The text for Item 20 addressed three training modalities: in person, live web (e.g., Adobe Connect, Skype), and anytime web (e.g., YouTube). Please select all of the delivery modalities in which you would be willing to participate: (a) in person, (b) live web, and (c) anytime web (e.g., YouTube). For the acceptability of web delivery endorsement variable, endorsing only "In person" was recoded "No." Endorsing a synchronous and/or asynchronous delivery method was recoded "Yes."

## Procedures

A random selection of 15% ( $n = 148$ ) was made of the 986 public community colleges in the U.S. The researchers contacted each college for information on how to find the lead threat assessment practitioner within their institution. Colleges with no threat assessment practitioner

Table 1  
Participant Responses to Survey Items

Item no.	Item	Response options	Response
1	Which of the following best describes the structure of your team (circle one)?	Informal team structure	Percentage selected 19
		Formalized team structure	73
		Team contracted to outside agency/person	0
		Team currently developing a structure	8
		No team structure in place	0
2	Which of the following best describes your team composition (circle one)?	The team is exclusively employees of your worksite	Percentage selected 57
		The team is a mix of worksite employees and people external to your organization	32
		There is no formal team at my worksite	2
		The composition is determined when it is convened based on the situation	9
3	Which area is the primary focus of your team (select one)?	The team focuses on student issues only	Percentage selected 24
		The team focuses on employee/faculty issues only	3
		There are separate teams for various groups	4
		The team combines both student and employee/faculty issues	69
4	Select the functions of your team (all that apply)	Assessing people that have the potential for targeted violence	Percentage selected 19
		Assessing situations that have the potential for targeted violence	19
		Assessing the physical environment of the college	13
		Preparing for potential threats	14
		Managing people	17
		Managing situations	16
		Other (please specify)	2
5	Select the cases you would consider (all that apply)	Potential threatening physical behavior	Percentage selected 20
		Potential verbal threats	18
		Actual threatening physical behavior	19
		Actual threatening verbal behavior	19
		Written or digital threats	19
		Other (please specify)	3
6	Select the activities of your team (all that apply)	List of questions	Percentage selected 6
		Checklist of behaviors (no scoring system)	16
		Checklist of behaviors (with a scoring system)	9
		Administer customized list of questions based on the situation	12
		Interview suspect	29
		Interview others	25
		Structured risk assessment instruments	3
		Other	3
7	The average number of new cases per month		$M = 4$ $SD = 8.6$
8	The average number of continuing cases a month		$M = 4$ $SD = 11$

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

Item no.	Item	Response options	Response
9	Documentation processes your team utilizes (all that apply)	Personal case notes	Percentage selected 20
		Official case notes	22
		Electronic database internal to the college	46
		Electronic database (hosted off campus/purchased)	7
		Incident reports	31
		Other (please specify)	1
10	Prioritize continuing education activities		Priority ranking percentage (high)
		Basic threat assessment and management	49
		Advanced threat assessment and management	42
		Threat assessment team dynamics	30
		Investigative questions	35
		Confidentiality	59
		Ethical considerations	56
		Legal implications	74
		Practical exercises	37
Other (please specify):	.8		
11	Preference for training delivery		Percentage selected
		In person	42
		Live web	30
		Anytime web (e.g. YouTube)	26

*Note.* The percentages for Items 1–3 do not add up to 100% because of rounding.

at their institution were replaced by a random draw from the population of U.S. public community colleges not selected from the initial random selection. Once the threat assessment practitioners were identified, Dillman's protocol for Internet surveys was followed (Dillman et al., 2009). The purpose of the study was described in an introductory e-mail along with the

request for participation. The participants received an online 20-item survey asking for demographic information, as well as their view on a number of aspects of threat assessment issues. Reminder e-mails were sent to participants encouraging the completion of the online survey. Research data was obtained by the completion of the online survey (Qualtrics), which included

Table 2  
*Ranking of Threat Assessment Continuing Education Topic Areas*

Area	Number of respondents ranking topic area as "high priority"
Legal implications	82
Confidentiality implications	66
Ethical considerations when conducting threat assessment	62
Basic overview of threat assessment and management	54
Advanced training of threat assessment and management	46
Practical exercises (e.g., investigative practices)	40
Investigative questions used during threat assessment	38
Threat assessment team dynamics	33
Other	8

*Note.* Topics specified in the "Other" category and ranked as a "high priority" were: (a) local police officer training, (b) FERPA, (c) communication and documentation techniques, (d) professional development, and (e) implementing incident command system with all employees and resources.

the collection of demographic information, threat assessment composition, functionality, protocol, and training needs. Anonymity was maintained through the Qualtrics feature “anonymizing responses using survey options” permitting the researchers to see who had completed a survey while anonymizing the responses.

### Data analysis

For the first research question, the following descriptive statistics were calculated: (a) the percentage of respondents who selected an item’s response option (survey Items 1–6 and 9) and (b) the mean and standard deviation for each item’s response option (Items 7, 8, 10, and 11). For the second research question, a Mann–Whitney *U* was used. For this analysis, the independent variable was the participants’ professional category (law enforcement/security or college administration), and the dependent variable was the ranking of each continuing education topic based upon the count of “high priority.” For the third research question, a chi-square test of independence was used. The rows for the cross tab were the professional background categories (i.e., law enforcement/security or college administration), and the columns were the acceptability of web delivery (i.e., yes or no). All analyses were done using Microsoft Excel.

### Results

In terms of the first research question, a wide variety of threat assessment practices were reported. The majority of responses (72%) indicated having a formalized team structure in place. Only 20% of respondents indicated informal team structures. There were also colleges that were currently developing a structure for their college TAT (8%).

In terms of team membership and composition, over half of the TATs (57%) are composed of employees at the college, whereas the membership of some teams (32%) was composed of a mix of worksite employees and people external to their college. Few teams (9%) decided on the team composition when the meeting is convened and based on the situation. Very few (2%) reported having no formal team at the college. TATs had different focuses. Teams that combined the focus of both student and staff

issues were reported by 69% of the respondents, whereas 24% of the teams focused on student issues exclusively.

There were various roles and functions for the community college TATs reported. These ranged from assessing people or situations that have the potential for targeted violence (80%) to assessing the physical environment of the college (54%). The majority of the respondents indicated that their teams managed people or situations that have the potential for targeted violence. Other comments related to the function of the TAT included training employees on what and how to report situations of concern, violence prevention, and “supporting students who are at a low-level of distress.”

TATs handled a variety of situations or cases. The majority of respondents indicated that their team would consider addressing reports of potentially threatening physical behavior (89%). Other situations the majority of participants indicated would be addressed included (a) actual threatening verbal behavior (88%), (b) actual threatening physical behavior (88%), (c) written or digital threats (e.g., texts, anonymous social media posting, e-mail) (87%), and (d) reports of potential verbal threats (84%). A small portion of respondents suggested other types of cases that their TATs would consider (i.e., 18% of respondents). The respondents that checked “Other” described cases that involved: (a) natural threats (e.g., tornadoes), (b) significant changes in student behaviors, (c) guns, (d) terrorism, (e) student conduct issues, and (f) restraining orders.

Various activities or threat assessment methods utilized by the TATs were reported. The majority of the teams (81%) conducted personal interviews with the subject of concern and interviews with people who were close to the subject of concern (71%). Almost half used a checklist of behaviors that did not include scoring systems (45%), while others (34%) administered a customized list of questions based on the situation. Structured risk assessment instruments were utilized by 28% of the teams, and checklists of behaviors with a scoring system were reported by 23%. Respondents also reported using a set list of questions (18%) and utilizing other assessment instruments (10%). Comments related that other activities included (a) social media examination, (b) having no

formal checklist, (c) utilizing charts, matrices and rubrics, (d) home visits, (e) background checks for weapon possession, and (f) utilizing psychological reports. Some teams contracted forensic psychologists to conduct risk assessments.

The participants reported a low level of training specific to threat assessment. A total of 67% reported fewer than 40 hours of threat assessment training. As a reference point, the typical three-credit course requires 33 contact hours of instruction.

The average number of new threat assessment cases that college teams received within a month varied from 0 to 75 cases ( $M = 4$ ). The responses for the number of threat assessment cases managed per month were 0 to 100 ( $M = 4$ ). Documentation practices specific to threat assessment and management included incident reports (88%), official case notes (62%), personal case notes (56%), an electronic database internal to the college (46%), and the use of electronic databases hosted off campus (19%).

In terms of the second research question, a Mann–Whitney  $U$  test was employed to determine if the ranking of continuing education topics differed based upon participants' professional category (i.e., law enforcement/security or college administration). The options for continuing education were: legal, confidentiality, ethical, basic, advanced, practical exercises, investigative questions, and team dynamics. The results from this analysis suggested that there was no difference between the two groups ( $U M = 37.5$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .8924$ ). Since there was no difference, the nine continuing education topics combining all participant responses were ranked [Table 2](#). Training needs reflected in the "Other" category included (a) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), (b) communication and documentation techniques, and (c) implementing incident command systems.

For the third research question, a chi-square test of independence was used to examine whether the professional background of the respondent (i.e., law enforcement/security or college administration) was related to whether web-delivered training was acceptable (i.e., yes = 1 or no = 0). The results from this analysis did not report a difference,  $\chi^2 = 3.2124$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = .2006$ . Overall, 93% of the participants reported in-person training as ac-

ceptable and 73% reported web-delivered training as acceptable.

## Discussion

Understanding and implementing appropriate threat assessment and management practices is essential in order to establish an effective TAT system (Deisinger et al., 2014; Okada et al., 2011). Community colleges have formulated teams under the context of threat assessment and management without having clear purpose, understanding, and training. With this study, we sought to identify actual practices and needs.

There was some variation in community college TAT practices. These practices ranged from assessing people or situations that have the potential for targeted violence (80%) to assessing the physical environment of the college (54%). TATs are responding to a variety of circumstances that clearly do not rise to the level of a threat of targeted violence. Some of the respondents' comments indicated that a part of the function of their team is to address Clery Act and hate/bias crimes.

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (1990), or Clery Act, is a federal statute codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), with implementing regulations in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations at 34 C.F.R. 668.46. The Clery Act requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses. There should be an overlap in the reporting of threat assessment cases along with Clery Act cases and hate/bias crime cases, but not all threat assessment cases will be Clery Act or hate/bias crimes.

The second research question looked at the relationship between professional background of a threat assessment practitioner and continuing educational priorities. The results of this analysis suggest that there is not a relationship between the professional backgrounds of TAT practitioners and continuing education priorities. The top three training priorities were legal implications, confidentiality implications, and ethical considerations when conducting threat assessment.

The third research question examined whether there was a difference between professional background and the acceptability of web-delivered training. The vast majority of partic-

ipants reported both in-person training and Web based training as acceptable.

There are two important limitations to this study. First, this research was specific to public community colleges. Private colleges, universities, and tribal community colleges were not within the scope of this study but would be good candidates for future research. Additional research is needed to explore the topic of violence mitigation within the wider scope of all institutions of higher education. The second limitation involves the target population of the study. This population did not extend beyond the person identified as the lead threat assessment practitioner at each school. As such, results cannot be generalized to those who do not participate in threat assessment on a regular basis.

This study also has implications for basic threat assessment education. Educators who train future threat assessment professionals should adjust their curriculum to ensure vital elements are covered adequately: (a) information sharing, (b) confidentiality of threat assessments, (c) interdisciplinary team concepts, (d) legal and ethical implications, and (e) recognizing preincident indicators.

Future research is needed to examine the various levels of understanding of threat assessment practices and compare them to recommended best practices and approaches. It is important to understand that certain management interventions may also be strategies that could potentially trigger acts of violence (e.g., trespassing students) (Deisinger et al., 2014; Van Dreal et al., 2011). Student-based threats are just one of many threats to safety on campus. Having a TAT within IHE needs to be approached globally, addressing student, staff, and community members as they relate to the campus community. IHEs should have one threat assessment team that handles threat cases regardless of the status of the subject of concern, and that team should have working relationships in place with community resources in order to more completely assess and manage those threats (Okada et al., 2011).

Since the field of threat assessment and management is in an early stage of development, it is very important to continue research into assessment and intervention strategies that reduce the overall incidence of targeted violence at IHE. It is very difficult to measure success in this area, since quantifying acts of targeted vi-

olence that are prevented are often not included in statistical reports.

In summary, the findings from this research indicate that TAT practices are in no way standardized, that there is a wide variation of practices among TATs at community colleges, and that there is a lack of information on best practices. Further, there is no relationship between professional background and the priority ranking of continuing education, nor is there a relationship between a TAT member's professional background and the acceptability of web-delivered training. This study revealed a confusing array of practices and practitioners with a limited amount of training. Clearly, the emerging field of threat assessment requires further standardization of practice and more continuing education for its practitioners. These findings support the growing need for education, awareness, and technical support around the best practices for threat assessment and management.

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