

THREAT ASSESSMENT MANUAL

January 2012

Piedmont Virginia Community College
Threat Assessment Team

PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Effective: January 2012

PURPOSE

The purpose of the threat assessment procedures is to provide guidelines for threat assessment on the Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) campus and identify resources, programs, procedures and safeguards that will ensure the safety and security of the PVCC community.

OVERVIEW

The Code of Virginia (§23-9.2:10) requires each institution of higher education to have both a violence prevention plan and a threat assessment team on campus that will implement assessment, action, intervention and follow-up in all cases that involve threatening or violent behavior. In contrast to PVCC's violence prevention policy, the threat assessment procedures pertain to individual case management.

Piedmont Virginia Community College is committed to providing an environment that protects the security and safety of the campus community. Violence, intimidation, or threats of violence, both specific and implied, will not be tolerated on the campus, and the college reserves the right to take strong and preventive measures to prevent violence before it occurs. The PVCC Threat Assessment Team (TAT) has been established as part of PVCC XII – 2.0 Violence Prevention and Threat Assessment Policy (http://www.pvcc.edu/docs/policies/policy_violence_prevention.pdf).

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

The PVCC Threat Assessment Team seeks to improve the safety and security of the campus through a multidisciplinary approach to identifying, managing and monitoring persons and situations that may pose a threat to the members of the college community. The team is committed to early intervention to prevent violence and provide support and resources to persons referred to the team that may need help and intervention. The team also fosters a culture of reporting threats across the campus and provides meaningful training for faculty and staff at the college.

MEMBERSHIP

The Threat Assessment Team is composed of the following college staff in compliance with the Code of Virginia (§23-9.2:10) guidelines:

- Dean of Student Services (Chair)
- Disabilities Counselor
- Human Resources Manager
- Chief Security officer
- Division Dean
- Faculty Member*
- Faculty Member*
- Representative from Region Ten Community Services Board (mental health services)
- Representative from Albemarle County Police Department (available for consultation when needed)

*Faculty members serve for a two-year term. Faculty membership will always rotate so that the team has a balance of new and current members.

The PVCC Threat Assessment Team has access to mental health professionals and crisis intervention through a Memorandum of Understanding with Region Ten Community Services Board.

Legal council is provided by the VCCS legal counsel and the Office of the State Attorney General.

All team members will undergo appropriate training in threat assessment protocols and policy and will attend training and professional development as needed.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The Threat Assessment Team meets twice a month on a regularly scheduled basis. The Dean of Student Services establishes the meeting schedule for each semester at the start of the fall semester. In addition, the Dean of Student Services or any other team member may call an emergency meeting as needed. The Dean of Student Services will inform all members of the time and location of the meeting.

THREAT ASSESSMENT RECORDS

The Threat Assessment Team shall maintain confidential records for all threat assessment cases and all follow-up and reports that derive from threat assessment proceedings. These records will be entered in a secure, protected and searchable database that will have the capacity to monitor ongoing cases and provide longitudinal follow-up and assessment.

IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING THREATENING OR TROUBLING BEHAVIOR

It is the responsibility of all members of the PVCC community to report intimidating, threatening, and abnormal behavior. The Threat Assessment Team in cooperation with the college administration will provide guidance and training to help faculty, staff and students recognize troubling behavior that may be a cause for concern.

The Threat Assessment Team and the college administration will also encourage awareness and a culture of reporting in order to prevent violence and provide support and referral when needed.

The responsibilities in this procedure will enhance and not replace current education, resources and programs operating in other college units and divisions. All students, faculty and staff will have clear protocols for reporting incidents through their supervisors, through the Dean of Student Services and through their academic dean. No person who, in good faith, reports threatening or other concerning behaviors in accordance with this procedure will be subject to retaliation.

Reports and referrals shall be handled discreetly and professionally to protect both the alleged victim and the accused, and all deliberations of the Threat Assessment Team will be confidential.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND SANCTIONS

Prohibited conduct and college sanctions are defined and enumerated in the PVCC Code of Conduct and are available online (www.pvcc.edu/codeofconduct). Possible sanctions for a violation of the Code of Conduct include: warnings and reprimands, referrals to counseling and outside community agencies, disciplinary probation, disciplinary probation with revoked college privileges, suspension and expulsion.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

The college has multiple reporting mechanisms in place on the campus for identifying and reporting threatening behavior and concerns.

Immediate Danger → Call 911/Security cell phone at 981-6362 or speed dial 1 in classrooms.

Acts or immediate threats of violence must be reported immediately by calling 911 and/or PVCC Security at 981-6362 or speed dial 1 in classrooms. This reporting of immediate danger applies to all staff, faculty and students. Examples of imminent threats or danger include:

- Brandishing guns, firearms or other weapons
- Suicide threats or recent attempts at suicide
- Physical threats or aggression toward another person
- Severe rage and verbal threats to kill or harm someone
- Possession of drugs or alcohol or under the influence of drugs and alcohol

Threat or concerns that are troubling but do not require an immediate response → Threat Assessment Team

All threats of violence or intimidation should be reported to the Threat Assessment Team from all members of the college community.

Examples of threatening behavior or incidents that should be referred to the Threat Assessment Team include:

- Evidence of suicidal thoughts expressed through writings, papers or conversation
- Angry outbursts or intense and abnormal reactions to events
- Preoccupation with violent themes, death or destruction
- Stalking behaviors
- Evidence of hopelessness or despair
- Threats or inappropriate emails
- References to harming others or planning a violent event

Staff members should report a threat or concern by filling out the Threat Assessment Report online. (Link to be announced) The Threat Assessment Team will be automatically notified by email when the threat assessment report is submitted through the Maxient conduct manager program. The campus team will use a feedback loop in the Maxient software system to confirm to the referring staff member that the report is being acted upon. Staff members should also alert their immediate supervisor that a report has been submitted and forward a copy of the threat assessment report to the supervisor.

Faculty members should report a threat or concern by filling out the Threat Assessment Report online. (Link to be announced) The Threat Assessment Team will be automatically notified by email when a report is submitted through the Maxient conduct manager program. The campus team will use a feedback loop in the Maxient software to confirm to the referring faculty member that the report is being acted upon. The faculty member should also alert his/her academic dean when a report has been submitted and forward a copy of the threat assessment report to the dean for review.

The academic dean will consult with the Threat Assessment Team to determine if the reported incident should be handled as a classroom management issue, a misconduct issue or a threat assessment case. Judgment about the seriousness of a case should be made by the Threat Assessment Team because the team may have additional information that may alter the seriousness of the incident.

When there is any doubt as to whether to refer the case to the Threat Assessment Team, always refer the case, and the team will determine what action, if any, is needed.

INITIATION AND MANAGEMENT OF A THREAT ASSESSMENT CASE

Once a case is forwarded to the Threat Assessment Team, the members meet in closed session to discuss, investigate, assess and determine an action plan for the case.

- Step 1: Identify person of concern and conduct initial screening.
- Step 2: Gather all information necessary to evaluate the threat. Evaluate the subject, the context and the situation. Call additional witnesses if necessary.

- Step 3: Determine if the threat or situation presents an immediate danger. If yes, then contact law enforcement immediately or other appropriate community resources immediately.
- Step 4: Continue to evaluate the seriousness of the threat. Determine if the threat is a transient or substantive threat.
- Step 5: Assess the level of the threat through the NaBITA Threat Assessment Tool and classify the threat on the Mental and Behavioral Health scale, the Generalized Risk scale, and the Nine Levels of Aggression. (See the NaBITA Index scale, Appendix B)
- Step 6: Continue a full inquiry of the threat and make appropriate assessments.
- Step 7: Formulate an action plan and intervention if appropriate.
- Step 8: Involve other offices, staff and resources as appropriate.
- Step 9: Develop a safety plan to resolve the conflict.
- Step 10: Refer the subject to counseling or outside mental health services as needed.
- Step 11: Refer subject to disciplinary process as needed.
- Step 12: Implement plan and assign timetable of steps.
- Step 13: Continue to monitor and follow up plan until the case is resolved or closed.
- Step 14: Document decisions using the Threat Assessment Team Review Sheet. (Appendix C)

SCOPE AND AUTHORITY OF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

The PVCC Threat Assessment Team has the authority to hear, evaluate and take actions on cases by the authority of the Code of Virginia (§23-9.2:10).

When the Threat Assessment Team determines that a case is appropriate for its involvement, the referring administrative unit and all other divisions or persons that may have a relationship with the case shall coordinate their actions with the Threat Assessment Team. The Threat Assessment Team is not designed to usurp the authority of other units, but to work with them in order to protect the safety and security of the campus community.

To ensure safety and prevent violence, major decisions involving the subject of an active threat assessment case should be reviewed by the Threat Assessment Team. In general this means that no institutional actions, such as disciplinary actions, or other actions that affect academic status should be taken without consultation with the Threat Assessment Team. Decisions to take disciplinary action or to suspend or terminate a student or employee who is under investigation by the Threat Assessment Team should be done with considerable caution. In the event that there is a disagreement between the administrative unit and the Threat Assessment Team on whether to implement disciplinary proceedings, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services will make the final decision.

OUTCOMES AND SANCTIONS

The Threat Assessment Team is empowered to take necessary action that is consistent with college policy and applicable law. The team aims to intervene early to provide support and referral as needed and impose sanctions as a last resort.

Outcomes and sanctions may include:

- Interventions and referrals to other staff, departments and resources within the college as needed
- Referral to Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures as appropriate. Sanctions may include warnings, counseling, suspension and dismissal.
- Referral to outside law enforcement officials
- Referral to outside mental health agencies in the area
- Voluntary mental health assessment
- Mandated mental health assessment
- Voluntary withdrawal or separation from the college
- Continuing monitoring, referral and follow-up as needed

DEFINITIONS

COLLEGE FACILITY: Any defined space used to conduct the business of the college, including a room, lab, series of rooms and labs, building, controlled outdoor area or college-owned or leased vehicles.

COLLEGE PROPERTY: Land or buildings that the college, through the State Board of Community Colleges, owns or leases.

EMPLOYEE: Any full-time teaching, administrative or professional faculty or classified staff member, adjunct faculty and wage hourly staff.

INTIMIDATION: Engaging in actions that include, but are not limited to, stalking or behavior intended to frighten, coerce or induce stress.

PHYSICAL ATTACK: Unwanted or hostile physical contact such as fighting, hitting, pushing, shoving or throwing objects.

PROPERTY DAMAGE: Intentional damage to property, including property owned or leased by the college, employees, students, volunteers, visitors or vendors.

RETALIATION: Reprisal, interference, restraint, penalty, discrimination, intimidation or harassment, determined in accordance with applied legal standards.

STALKING: Repeatedly contacting another person when the contact is unwanted. Additionally, the conduct may cause the person reasonable apprehension of imminent physical harm or cause substantial impairment of the person's ability to perform the activities of daily life. Contact includes, but is not limited to, communicating either in person, by phone or computer, or remaining in the physical presence of the other person.

STUDENT: Any individual who has accepted the offer of admission to PVCC and who has not yet graduated or officially transferred to another institution. If a student's enrollment lapses for more than one calendar year, the student will no longer be subject to disciplinary action under this policy.

STUDENT EMPLOYEE: Any work-study student or student wage employee whose primary relationship to the college is as a student.

THIRD PARTIES: Individuals who are not college employees or students, such as relatives, acquaintances, contractual workers, vendors, visitors, volunteers, community patrons, clients or strangers.

THREAT: The expression of intent to cause physical harm or mental harm. An expression constitutes a threat without regard to whether the party communicating the threat has the present ability to carry it out, and without regard to whether the expression is contingent, conditional or future.

VICTIM: An individual who has experienced or witnessed an act or acts of violence or threats of violence as outlined in this policy.

VIOLENCE: Any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse by employees, students or third parties. It includes, but is not limited to, beating, stabbing, suicide, shooting, rape, domestic violence, attempted suicide, psychological trauma such as threats, obscene phone calls, emails or social media posts, an intimidating presence, harassment of any nature such as stalking, shouting, or swearing, and property damage. It does not include lawful acts of self-defense or the defense of others.

WORKPLACE: Any location, either permanent or temporary, where an employee performs any work-related duty.

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IMMEDIATE DANGER — CALL 911. OTHER CONCERNS — CALL CAMPUS SECURITY, 434.981.6362, or SPEED DIAL 1 IN CLASSROOMS.

<p>Concern for Student</p> <p>Incidents observed that provoke thought or concern but require no emergency response.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Report concerns to the Threat Assessment Team using the online reporting form. (Link to be announced)</p>	<p>Aggression</p> <p>If you see or are dealing with aggressive or threatening behavior.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Call PVCC Security - Speed Dial 1 in classrooms or 981.6362, or call 911.</p>	<p>Danger to Others</p> <p>A student expresses (verbally or in writing) a willingness or desire to harm or kill others or a student demonstrates (in progress) or is attempting to harm or kill others.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Call 911. PVCC Security will be notified immediately.</p>	<p>Disability</p> <p>If you see or are dealing with a person with a disability who is in difficulty, ask him/her if you may contact the disabilities counselor.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Contact PVCC Disabilities Counselor, Susan Hannifan, at 961.5281.</p>
<p>Danger to Self</p> <p>A student expresses (verbally or in writing) a willingness or desire to harm or kill himself / herself with no specific plan.</p> <p>In this situation, the danger is not imminent and only involves the person.</p> <p>Example: A student may write about or discuss a sense of desperation or hopelessness with death as a solution.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Contact 961.5264 in the Admissions and Advising Center. A counselor will be on duty in the Center to provide services as needed.</p>	<p>Danger to Self</p> <p>A student demonstrates (in progress) an attempt to harm or kill himself/herself or has a specific plan to harm himself/herself.</p> <p>Here the danger is imminent or in progress.</p> <p>Example: A student advises that he/she has taken pills, has a weapon, has cut self or advised that when they leave they are going to implement their suicide plan.</p> <p>OR</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Call PVCC Security - Speed Dial 1 in classrooms or 981.6362, or call 911.</p>	<p>Substance Abuse</p> <p>A student appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs in class, or is seen in possession of the same.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Call PVCC Security - Speed Dial 1 in classrooms or 981.6362.</p>	<p>Illness or Injury</p> <p>If you see or are dealing with a person who is injured, or ill, or whose behavior seems erratic.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Call PVCC Security - Speed Dial 1 in classrooms or 981.6362. If no response, call 911.</p>
<p>Emotional Behavior</p> <p>If you see, or are dealing with, a student who “needs to talk to someone” about a personal concern or is experiencing a psychological crisis.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Contact 961.5264 in the Admissions and Advising Center. A counselor will be on duty in the Center to provide services as needed.</p>	<p>Sexual Assault</p> <p>A student reports they are a victim of ongoing or very recent physical or sexual abuse at the hands of a relative, guardian, caretaker, spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend, or unknown.</p> <p></p> <p>Action: Call PVCC Security - Speed Dial 1 in classrooms or 981.6362.</p>	<p>Disruptive Conduct in the Classroom</p> <p>Faculty members have broad authority to manage their classroom. If you believe a student’s behavior is inappropriate, consider a general word of caution rather than singling a student out or embarrassing the student. Try to speak to the student after class and make sure that the student understands why his/her behavior is disruptive.</p>	<p>If the student’s behavior reaches the point that it interferes with the classroom environment, the student should be asked to leave the class. The student should be provided with a reason for this action and given an opportunity to discuss the matter as soon as possible. When you dismiss a student from your class, you should also notify the dean of your division and the Dean of Student Services.</p>
<p>Threat Assessment Team</p> <p>Mary Lee Walsh, Dean of Student Services Yvonne Carey, Human Resources Manager Brian Flick, Faculty Member in Police Science Katry Hudson, Dean of Health and Life Sciences</p> <p>Tim Brown, Chief Security Officer Susan Hannifan, Disability Counselor Kim Hoosier, Faculty Member in Sociology</p>			



NaBITA THREAT ASSESSMENT TOOL

MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, "THE D-SCALE"

DYSREGULATION/MEDICALLY DISABLED*

- ▲ Suicidal
- ▲ Para-suicidal (extreme cutting, eating disordered)
- ▲ Individuals engaging in risk taking behaviors (e.g. substance abusing)
- ▲ Hostile, aggressive, relationally abusive
- ▲ Individuals deficient in skills that regulate emotion, cognition, self, behavior and relationships

DISTURBANCE

- Behaviorally disruptive, unusual and/or bizarre acting
- Destructive, apparently harmful to others
- Substance abusing

DISTRESS

- Emotionally troubled
- Individuals impacted by situational stressors and traumatic events
- May be psychiatrically symptomatic

GENERALIZED RISK



NINE LEVELS OF AGGRESSION



9

LOSE/LOSE ATTACK



8

WIN/LOSE ATTACK

7

LIMITED DESTRUCTIVE BLOWS



6

THREAT STRATEGIES

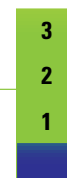


5

FORCED LOSS OF FACE

4

IMAGE DESTRUCTION



3

ACTIONS VS. WORDS

2

HARMFUL DEBATE

1

HARDENING

CRISIS PHASE

ESCALATION PHASE

TRIGGER PHASE

*Medically Disabled is a clinical term, as in a psychotic break. It is not the same as "disabled" under federal law.



CLASSIFYING RISK

MILD RISK

- Disruptive or concerning behavior.
- Student may or may not show signs of distress.
- No threat made or present.

MODERATE RISK

- More involved or repeated disruption. Behavior more concerning. Likely distressed or low-level disturbance.
- Possible threat made or present
- Threat is vague and indirect
- Information about threat or threat itself is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail
- Threat lacks realism
- Content of threat suggests threatener is unlikely to carry it out.

ELEVATED RISK

- Seriously disruptive incident(s)
- Exhibiting clear distress, more likely disturbance
- Threat made or present
- Threat is vague and indirect, but may be repeated or shared with multiple reporters
- Information about threat or threat itself is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail
- Threat lacks realism, or is repeated with variations
- Content of threat suggests threatener is unlikely to carry it out.

SEVERE RISK

- Disturbed or advancing to dysregulation
- Threat made or present
- Threat is vague, but direct, or specific but indirect
- Likely to be repeated or shared with multiple reporters
- Information about threat or threat itself is consistent, plausible or includes increasing detail of a plan (time, place, etc)
- Threat likely to be repeated with consistency (may try to convince listener they are serious)
- Content of threat suggests threatener may carry it out.

EXTREME RISK

- Student is dysregulated (way off baseline) or medically disabled
- Threat made or present
- Threat is concrete (specific or direct)
- Likely to be repeated or shared with multiple reporters
- Information about threat or threat itself is consistent, plausible or includes specific detail of a plan (time, place, etc), often with steps already taken
- Threat may be repeated with consistency
- Content of threat suggests threatener will carry it out (reference to weapons, means, target).
- Threatener may appear detached

INTERVENTION TOOLS TO ADDRESS RISK AS CLASSIFIED

MILD RISK

- confrontation by reporter
- behavioral contract or treatment plan with student
- student conduct response
- evaluate for disability services and/or medical referral
- conflict management, mediation, problem-solving

MODERATE RISK

- confrontation by reporter
- behavioral contract or treatment plan with student
- student conduct response
- evaluate for disability services and/or medical referral
- conflict management, mediation (not if physical/violent), problem-solving

ELEVATED RISK

- confrontation by reporter
- evaluate parental/guardian notification
- evaluate need to request permission from student to receive medical/educational records
- consider interim suspension if applicable
- evaluate for disability services and/or medical referral
- consider referral or mandated assessment

SEVERE RISK

- possible confrontation by reporter
- parental/guardian notification obligatory unless contraindicated
- evaluate emergency notification to others (FERPA/HIPAA/Clery)
- no behavioral contracts
- recommend interim suspension if applicable
- possible liaison with local police to compare red flags
- deploy mandated assessment
- evaluate for medical/psychological transport
- evaluate for custodial hold
- consider voluntary/involuntary medical withdrawal
- direct threat eligible
- law enforcement response
- consider eligibility for involuntary commitment

EXTREME RISK

- possible confrontation by reporter
- parental/guardian notification obligatory unless contraindicated
- evaluate emergency notification to others
- no behavioral contracts
- interim suspension if applicable
- possible liaison with local police to compare red flags
- too serious for mandated assessment
- evaluate for medical/psychological transport
- evaluate for custodial hold
- initiate voluntary/involuntary medical withdrawal
- direct threat eligible
- law enforcement response
- consider eligibility for involuntary commitment

Appendix C
Piedmont Virginia Community College
THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM CASE REVIEW SHEET

CASE #:	Subject Name:	Date of Review:
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Priority Level	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority 1 (Imminent Risk)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority 2 (High Risk)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority 3 (Moderate Risk)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority 4 (Low Risk)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority 5 (No Identified Risk)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Information	

Management Strategies	Comments	Assigned To:	Date Completed:
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor – Passive			
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor – Active			
<input type="checkbox"/> Subject Interview			
<input type="checkbox"/> Involve Subject Support System <input type="checkbox"/> Trusted Ally <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Family			
<input type="checkbox"/> Victim Interview			
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspension <input type="checkbox"/> Termination			
<input type="checkbox"/> Bar Subject from Campus/College <input type="checkbox"/> Bar Subject from Contacting Victim <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Order			
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness for Duty Evaluation			
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Commitment <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary <input type="checkbox"/> Involuntary			
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer for Criminal Investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Refer for Disciplinary Action			
<input type="checkbox"/> Notification for Safety Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Target <input type="checkbox"/> Target Spouse/Family <input type="checkbox"/> College/Workplace Officials <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement Agencies			
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Student Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Dean of Student Services <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Services			
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Employee Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Services <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____			
<input type="checkbox"/> Move Case to Inactive Status			

Resources

Appendix A – Adapted from Wytheville Community College. (2011). Threat Assessment Team Guide for Faculty & Staff.

<http://www.wcc.vccs.edu/docs/WCCThreatAssessmentTeamActionGuide.pdf>

Appendix B – NaBITA: the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association. (2011). The NaBITA Threat Assessment Tool.

<http://www.nabita.org/documents/THREATASSESSMENTTOOL.pdf>

Appendix C – Adapted from Tidewater Community College. (2010). Tidewater Community College Policy: Prevention of Campus and Workplace Violence Worksheet, No. 1301.

<http://www.tcc.edu/policies/1000/1301CampusandWorkplaceViolencePrevention.pdf>