Community College of Beaver County

INSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURE for Threat-to-Others Assessment

Reference: Policy 5.480 Civility

Reference: Policy 2.100 Computer and Technical Resources

Purpose

The CCBC Board of Trustees affirms its commitment to the principles of free speech guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. At the same time, the Board believes that intellectual discourse and free speech must occur in a civil environment free from harassment, intimidation and violence.

To that end, the purpose of this procedure is to provide a means for reporting and addressing alleged violations of Civility Policy 5.480, specifically with regard to "physical and/or verbal threats with the effect of causing apprehension or fear in another or of creating a hostile environment." This procedure will address the course of action to be taken by the College in the case an individual threatens to harm **another student, faculty, staff member, or visitor** - with the safety of the student and/or any affected employees being taken into consideration.

Definitions

A **threat** is defined as any conduct that is perceived as being dangerous to the physical and/or emotional well-being of others or the campus community in general. Moreover, a threat includes cyber-bullying. The Community College of Beaver County does not tolerate cyber-bullying and as such does not permit individuals to use YouTube, MySpace, Twitter, blogs, MSN Hotmail, Facebook or similar sites while on college property as a way to harass other students and/or employees. Cyber-bullying includes teasing, spreading online rumors and sending or posting unwanted and threatening messages, images, or defamatory material while using internet services like email, chat rooms, instant messaging, social networks or through websites. Bullying through mobile technologies such as SMS is also considered cyber-bullying and will not be tolerated while using the computer and technical resources of the College.

A **threat assessment** is a tool the College may use when facing an extraordinary discipline and safety issue. A threat assessment is a way to assess an individual's particular physical, emotional, and psychological well-being and to help them to receive the assistance needed in order to continue being a productive member of the campus community. The primary goal of the process at CCBC is to provide early assistance to an individual in distress in order to ensure well-being and safety and help prevent situations of concern, either before or after a conduct violation has occurred, from becoming more serious.

While some threat assessment resolutions may result in disciplinary action against the individual, it is the sincere hope that through the threat assessment process, resources and assistance can be provided in such a way that the individual can continue to receive a quality education or employment experience and CCBC can continue to be a friendly, safe environment for students, faculty and staff.

Immediate Response Team (Substantive Threat)

This team is composed of the Chief of Security, the Dean of Enrollment Services (student threat) and the VP Human Resource Development (employee threat), as necessary. This team determines whether the situation is perceived as an immediate danger to campus safety or a transient threat situation, in which case this team will convene the Threat Assessment Team as outlined below.

Threat Assessment Team (Transient Threat)

The Counseling Coordinator or College Counselor, as appropriate, the Deans of Enrollment Services and Academic Support Services, the VP of Community Relations and Development, the VP of Human Resource Development, and the Chief of Security are responsible for assuring compliance to this procedure and constitute the core of the College's threat assessment team. The Dean of Enrollment, at his or her discretion, may include additional staff or Faculty with expertise in dealing with a perceived threat as needed. The VP of Community Relations and Development shall act as the sole source of communication with the Media, as necessary. If a conflict of interest arises for any of the Team members, the Dean shall appoint a substitute for that individual.

Steps in Threat Assessment

Step 1: Identify the threat.

A concerned individual will contact Campus Security, a Counselor, or the Dean of Enrollment Services to seek assistance. It is mandatory that the individual who reports the threat complete a Threat Assessment Referral Form (Appendix I). The designated institutional authority must recognize when a request for help involves a threatening situation. To encourage threat identification, CCBC shall provide regular training.

Step 2A: Substantive - Intervene to reduce the risk of violence.

In immediate and serious threatening situations, the Immediate Response Team reserves the right to waive the assessment process outlined in this document and act in the best interest of campus safety. If these individuals determine that the reported behavior is perceived as a danger to the physical and/or emotional well-being of other individuals, they will dial 9-1-1 immediately to receive assistance from local police and authorities to remove the individual from campus.

If the Immediate Response Team determines the threat is not substantive, then they shall convene the Threat Assessment team. Also, this response team shall convene the threat assessment team for evaluation and follow-up of all substantive threats and proceed with Step 3 of this procedure.

Step 2B: Transient - Evaluate the seriousness of the threat.

Gather all available information relevant to the reported threat or threatening behavior. The team scribe shall document the assessment via the Threat Assessment Form (Appendix 2). Interview the individual who made the threat, the recipient of the threat, and other witnesses. Take verbatim notes or obtain written testimonial. Evaluate the context and situation in which the threat was made. Preserve all evidence of the threat. In some cases, local law authorities may be called to conduct the interviews.

Attempt to resolve the threat as a transient threat. Determine if the threat includes (1) figures of speech or comments made in jest that do not convey a genuine intent to harm anyone (2) statements made in anger or frustration that dissipate leaving no intent to harm anyone. (3) If appropriate, attempt to mediate a dispute or resolve a conflict that stimulated the *transient* threat. If there was an

identifiable potential target of attack, they should be questioned as to whether or not they feel threatened in any way by the individual. The individual should be able to explain his or her behavior, retract the threat, and apologize and make amends to others. (4) If necessary, the team shall determine if it is appropriate to discipline the subject for inappropriate behavior as per the code of student/employee conduct as found in the student/employee handbook. (5) If appropriate, the team may refer the subject for off-campus counseling or some other intervention to address a problem linked to the threatening behavior.

Step 3: Evaluation and Recommendation.

- A. Threat Assessment Team Investigation. The team will (1) Review the alleged safety concern or code of conduct violation. (2) Evaluate the individual's behavior in light of the accumulated evidence (3) Discuss appropriate recommendations and (4) Complete the assessment within three (3) business days if the individual has been removed from campus. At its discretion, the team will have full investigatory authority when reviewing the alleged concern and evaluating the individual's behavior. The team has a right to: (1) Interview the individual and all relevant witnesses (2) If applicable, interview the accuser(s) (3) Inspect any of the student's school records. For substantive threats where local police and authorities are involved, the team will fully cooperate and coordinate its investigation with such authorities; however, this combined effort will not negate the ability of the College to take action.
- **B.** Threat Assessment Team Recommendations. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the team's recommendations shall be reduced to writing via the Threat Assessment Form (Appendix 2) as soon as practicable. They may include a suggested Action Plan for the individual, if any. An action plan may include, but is not limited to: Referral for anger management counseling, professional psychological assessment and treatment, scheduled meetings with supportive services staff (student), administrative withdrawal from the College (student), or discipline sanctions as appropriate. The VP Finance & Operations, in conjunction with the Provost and/or the VP Human Resource Development as necessary, reserves the right to disagree with the recommendations of the Team and implement other action consistent with the Code of Conduct and/or in the best interest of campus safety, as appropriate. In such case, a revised recommendation report will be prepared by the team and approved by the VP Finance & Operations, Provost and VP Human Resource Development as necessary.
- C. Use of the Threat Assessment Team's Recommendations. Once the Team has presented its report to the VP of Finance & Operations and recommendations are finalized, the Dean of Enrollment Services shall meet with the Student and explain the Team's recommendations. In the case of employee behavior, the VP of Human Resource Development shall meet with the employee. The student or employee will be given written notification of the investigation, findings, recommendations, and if applicable, discipline sanctions and appeal process. Conditions under which the student/employee may remain in good standing or return to campus and follow-up requirements will also be outlined. In the case of a safety concern absent a conduct violation, if the student/employee does not voluntarily agree to the Team's recommendations, the Team may file the appropriate Code of Conduct charge and pursue the discipline process.

Step 4: Implement a safety plan.

Maintain contact and follow-up to monitor the effectiveness of the plan.

If the student remains enrolled, (1) the Team shall meet at least every other month for one school year to monitor the progress of the student and create a written progress report after each meeting that will be filed as a student safety plan report in the office of the Dean of Enrollment Services. (2) If a student agrees to be bound by the recommendations of the Team, and the student violates any of those recommendations, the violation will be treated as a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, and normal disciplinary procedures will follow (3) At the end of the one-year review period, the team will decide if additional monitoring is necessary and for how long. (4) Once additional monitoring is deemed unnecessary, the Team will create a final written progress report and include that report in the safety plan file as mentioned in (1) above. In the case of an employee, the VP of Human Resource Development shall define the terms of follow-up to monitor the progress of the employee.

If the student has been removed from campus, the student's record will be flagged and if he or she wishes to return, the student must meet with the Dean of Enrollment Services to (1) discuss the student's progress (2) indicate readiness to return to school by presenting documentation from an appropriate licensed professional stating the student is prepared to attend class.



THREAT ASSESSMENT REFERRAL FORM

Date of Referral:				
Referral Source (Name/Title):	Di	vision/Dept:		
Referral Phone(s):	Fa	x #:		
Individual Making Threat:				
Location of Incident / Perceived Threat:				
	T	T =.		
City:	State:	Zip:		
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Threat Assessment Summary

This document should be used as a starting point for areas to consider during threat assessment. This should not limit other sources of information that may be invaluable in assessing a threat.

Date of Assessment:	Person Reporting Threat
Date of Threat	Time & Place
Individual Making Threat:	
Intended Targets / Victims	
Exact Wording and Nature of the Threat:	

Types of Threats (Is this a threat?) Keep in mind the following types of threats:

Direct or Substantive Threat: Identifies a **specific act** against a **specific target** and is delivered in a straightforward, clear, and explicit manner: "I am going to place a bomb in the school's gym."

Indirect or Transient Threat: Tends to be vague, unclear, or ambiguous. The plan, the intended victim, the motivation, and other aspects of the threat are masked or equivocal: "**If** I wanted to, I **could** kill everyone at this school". Violence is implied but tentatively "if I wanted to" and suggests a violent act **COULD occur not that it WILL occur**.

	THREAT INDICATOR	? S
Indirect:	Direct:	Direct:
☐ Threat is vague and indirect	Strong indication of a possible place	Direct, specific and plausible
	and time	
☐ Information within the		☐ Threat suggests concrete steps
threat is inconsistent,	Strong indication the threatener has	have been taken toward carrying it
implausible or lacks detail	taken preparatory steps, or a general	out, for example, statements
	statement about the availability of	indicating that the threatener has
☐ Threat lacks realism	weapons.	acquired or practiced with a
		weapon or has had the victim under
Content suggests person is	Specific statement seeking to convey	surveillance.
unlikely to carry it out	that the threat is not empty	
		"At 8 am tomorrow morning I intend to
"If I wanted to, I could kill		shoot the principal. That's when he is
everyone at this school"	"I'm serious!"	in his office by himself. I have a 9mm.
		Believe me, I know what I am doing. I
"I could make his/her life	"I really mean this!"	am sick and tired of the way he runs this school."
miserable"		this school.

TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

	ACTION NEEDED	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Threat Assessment Team Signatures:

Signature	Title	Date

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