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**AN EXAMINATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS SAFETY AMONG
FULL-TIME FACULTY AT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

by

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ABSTRACT

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS SAFETY AMONG FULL-TIME FACULTY AT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Hailey Ann Hermosa
Old Dominion University, 2024
Chair: Dr. Dennis E. Gregory

The view that colleges are generally safe has been challenged by threats of violence on campuses across the country, causing fear among stakeholders. Community college faculty are not immune to crime-related fear on campus; however, the research has largely ignored this population. This research serves to fill that gap.

The purpose of this nonexperimental quantitative study was to examine perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges. An electronic Likert-type scale survey was disseminated to a sample of 472 full-time faculty throughout seven Virginia community colleges of varying sizes. Of those, 135 (28.7%) voluntarily participated in the study. Participants self-reported experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and demographic information. Respondents reported they are most concerned about being victimized on campus by being threatened with a firearm (30.9%), having something stolen (28.1%), and being verbally threatened (25.9%). Regarding perceptions of campus safety, no statistically significant differences were found within the sample subpopulations for age or race; however, statistically significant differences were found within the sample subpopulations for gender and years of experience. A statistically significant difference was found between male and female respondents specifically for how safe they feel in their office, with female faculty feeling significantly less safe. Similarly, respondents who did not identify as either male or female reported feeling less safe in campus bathrooms, than their male or female colleagues. Every faculty demographic

surveyed selected campus parking lots (which in some cases was tied with other locations) as the place on campus that elicits the highest level of fear of victimization, except for faculty respondents who did not identify as either male or female regarding their gender, for them, the campus bathroom elicits the highest level of fear of victimization.

With a limited budget, it is critical to know how to best allocate funds to improve perceptions of campus safety and address crime-related fear on community college campuses. This study provides guidance for administrators by suggesting actionable steps that can be taken to improve perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty.

Keywords: campus safety, faculty perceptions of campus safety, community college campus safety

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This dissertation is dedicated to my family, without their support, none of this would have been possible. To my father, who served as a police officer for more than 23 years, your life-long dedication to safety in-part inspired my research journey. To my mother, who is my forever confidant. Mom, thank you for your listening ear and for cheering me on throughout this journey. To my amazing husband, Paul, who I quite literally could not have done this without. Thank you for the countless hours you spent serving as both father and mother to our children. While I was in class, working on projects, at Summer Institute, and conducting research, you were the constant that kept our family on track. I will forever be indebted to you for raising our six beautiful children for all those semesters – and you did it so beautifully. Also, your proofreading skills are stellar, thanks babe. To our babies, Sebastian, Ellington, Gideon, MacGyver, Liam, and Tatum – I love each and every one of you so very much. Always remember, you can do hard things.

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To the community college presidents, vice presidents of institutional effectiveness and the like who opened doors for this research to be conducted, thank you! Without you believing in the purpose of this research, we would not have been so successful in the effort to research perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty. To the 135 full-time faculty throughout the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) who participated in this study, thank you! Without your willingness to share some of your most vulnerable thoughts, feelings, and perceptions regarding campus safety, this research would not have been possible.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Safety is a human right (Ceccato & Abraham, 2022) and individuals have the right to work in a safe environment (Cooper et al., 2011). College campuses are expected to be safe and secure places for students to learn, faculty to teach, administrators and staff to manage, and others to visit (Anderman et al., 2018; Wade 2018).

Learning environments (public schools and institutions of higher education (IHE)) are, from an overall perspective, safe (Baum & Klaus, 2005; Nobles et al., 2013). However, the view that colleges are generally safe has been challenged by threats of violence causing fear among stakeholders (Urbina, 2009).

The rise of crime-related fear on campuses across the United States has been attributed to the 24-hour news cycle and media's obsession with violence on college campuses (Gregory & Janosik, 2006). Faculty are more fearful when media report violent events taking place on campus (Fallahi et al., 2009).

Most campus crime is perpetrated by students currently enrolled in classes (The Violence Project Research Center, 2023) and not strangers (Langford, 2003). Accounts of students sending threatening notes to instructors over low grades or heckling instructors during class are numerous (Dibelka, Jr., 2019). Anderson-Harper (2003) outlined several ways students may disrupt class including the "grade challengers" who use their poor performance to attack professors (p. 110). These students may become belligerent and disrupt class. Students' abuse of faculty, including excessive calls, emails, and letters, is on the rise and largely ignored by administrators (Morgan, 2009).

Generally, faculty lack awareness of how to handle disruptive students in class (Rollings, 2010). While administrators rely on faculty to flag disruptive students, faculty are not trained to do so (Harvey, 2011; Rollings, 2010). Faculty underreport negative student behavior due to lack of administrative support and fear of retaliation (Morrissette, 2001). Many faculty are aware of the various safety related services on campus however, their usage of those services is relatively low (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007).

Faculty are a critical part of the campus community as they teach classes offered by the college and are largely student facing. Research shows that when faculty interact with students, those students have an increased academic motivation (Trolan et al., 2016). In addition to designing and implementing curriculum, faculty must deliver the curriculum to the students, which requires careful communication with the students to be sure they understand the material and expectations of the course. Faculty are different from other campus stakeholders as they are the authority in the classroom, setting classroom boundaries, grading scales, and assignments due. Faculty members are also unique in that this is their job, they are compensated by the college to deliver instruction to the students and in most cases are under contract to do so. In that regard, this is their livelihood.

Previous Research

Dahl et al. (2016) conducted an exploratory study that electronically surveyed 1,889 community college faculty from 18 states using a Likert-type survey regarding their perceptions, opinions, and attitudes about campus safety. Survey responses were quantitatively analyzed. Dahl et al. (2016) concluded most community college faculty felt safe on campus.

Wade (2018) used a quantitative research design to survey 149 faculty at one community college in the Southwest region of the United States. She suggested there is no difference in

crime-related fear based on faculty gender. However, a significant difference was found with the number of years teaching. Wade (2018) further suggested race was a significant variable, with White faculty members reporting higher levels of crime-related fear on campus. Wade (2018) recommended similar studies be conducted at campuses across various locations to “give a better picture of overall faculty fear” (p. 105).

Dibelka, Jr. (2019) used a qualitative phenomenological methodology to study faculty (10) and staff (10) at two community colleges in the Midwest United States regarding their perspectives of campus safety. Participants agreed their community college campus was safe, however they also further discussed times or circumstances they felt unsafe. Two main areas of safety concern emerged, namely parking areas (parking lots and/or parking garages) and disruptive students. Dibelka, Jr. (2019) advocated for future research specific to the perceptions of campus safety among faculty and staff at community colleges.

Sartini et al. (2023) conducted a mixed-methods study using descriptive statistics and in-depth interviews. Using convenience and purposeful sampling, Sartini et al. (2023) electronically surveyed 22 community college presidents in one state. The goal of this research was to assess the perceptions and understanding surrounding campus safety among community college presidents. The authors concluded campus safety is important to community college presidents. They further noted, overall, community colleges presidents believe their institutions are safe, 86% of whom believe staff and faculty perceive the campus environment as safe as well.

Faculty Victims

College faculty have been consistently targeted at shootings on campuses across the country. In 1996, a San Diego State engineering student, while defending his thesis, opened fire, killing three of his professors (National Public Radio, 2007). In 2000, a graduate student, who

had been dropped from the doctoral program, at University of Arkansas, killed his English professor. In 2002, a graduate student, who had been dismissed from Appalachian School of Law, killed three, a dean, a professor, and a student. Later that year, a University of Arizona nursing student killed three of his instructors over frustrations regarding his failing grades (National Public Radio, 2007). More recently, a graduate student was arrested for shooting and killing his faculty advisor at University of North Carolina (Valencia et al., 2023).

Community colleges are not immune to violence. In 2009, a community college student in North Carolina attempted to kill his math teacher due to a failing grade (Urbina, 2009). During an open forum at Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg, Virginia on April 4, 2023, Dr. David Doré, Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) shared his personal experience with being threatened on campus at Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona by a student who had been expelled (Doré, 2023).

Gap in the Literature

When researchers study perceptions of safety among college faculty, they generally lump the faculty population in with staff and/or students (Turnbull, 2015; Wicker, 2016). Turnbull (2015) found student and faculty crime-related fear are similar. However, Schafer et al. (2018) asserted faculty should not be presumed to have identical views as students, as they are generally in different life phases and have different relationships with other campus members and the campus environment. Very few studies have examined perceptions of safety by focusing upon the faculty population as an independent group and only two authors studied perception of safety solely among community college faculty (Dahl et al., 2016; Rollings, 2010; Trawalter et al., 2021; Wade, 2018). While many campus goers reported feeling safe on campus (Dahl et al., 2016; Nobles et al., 2013; Sartini et al., 2023; Wicker, 2016) community college faculty are not

immune to crime-related fear on campus, and the research has largely ignored this population. There is a lack of research specific to perceptions of safety among college faculty (Jordan et al., 2007), and this research serves to fill the gap by focusing on the community college faculty population. In that sense, this research is novel.

Importance

Violence perpetrated against instructors is prevalent and has the potential to adversely affect teachers' efficacy and longevity in the profession (Anderman et al., 2018). Fear of aggressive students can disrupt class, negatively impact the general learning environment (Dibelka, Jr., 2019), and infringe on academic freedom (Carr, 2005). According to Bye (2021), many faculty do not fully understand the parameters of free speech in the classroom. In that regard, faculty may self-censor out of fear the topic may elicit negative responses from students or create a volatile classroom environment. As a result, this controversial yet valuable information may be left untaught.

Individuals who are fearful at work burn out sooner and seek other employment more frequently (Deery et al., 2011). When occupational health and safety increases workplace performance and productivity also increases (Lamm et al., 2006).

Sartini et al. (2023) called for additional research to “advance the knowledge of campus safety” (p. 16). Furthermore, Dibelka, Jr. (2019) wrote continued research around campus safety is important due to both the prominence of the issue and because the issue “appears to evolve over time” (Dibelka, Jr., 2019, p. 93). Hignite et al. (2018) suggested future research on campus safety is needed to identify specific campus locations or events that heighten fear. Wade (2018) researched faculty perceptions of fear at a single institution and recommended similar studies be

conducted at campuses across various locations to “give a better picture of overall faculty fear” (p. 105).

Problem Statement

Many authors call for more research regarding campus safety on community colleges (Dahl et al., 2016; Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018) indicating this research is necessary because each college setting involves nuances and varying populations cannot be completely understood without additional research. Understanding the subtleties of campus safety is paramount and points directly to fulfilling the mission of many institutions of higher education. “Although campus safety usually does not appear in writing in a community college’s mission statement, it certainly is implied that those who go there to learn and work should feel safe” (Sartini et al., 2023, p. 4). Furthermore, community colleges are largely ignored in the research, especially regarding perceptions of safety among faculty (Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this nonexperimental quantitative study was to examine perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Research Questions

I sought to answer the following research questions related to faculty perceptions of campus safety within the Virginia Community College System (VCCS):

1. What crimes are faculty at Virginia community colleges most concerned about being victims of while on campus?
2. Are there statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty:
 - a. Age

- b. Gender
 - c. Race
 - d. Years of experience
3. Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty:
- a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Race
 - d. Years of experience

Definitions

The following definitions provide operational explanations of how these terms are used in this dissertation:

Extra-large Community College. As defined by Carnegie Classification (2023), an *extra-large community college* has a Fall FTE of 9,999+. One VCCS college meets this definition (see APPENDICES

APPENDIX A).

Full-time enrollment (FTE). *FTE* is an enrollment calculation based on total credit hours taken (SCHEV, 2023, p. 1).

Guardian. A capable *guardian* is defined as any person (or human element) who “serves by simple presence to prevent crime and by absence to make crime more likely” (Felson, 1995, p. 53).

Large Community College. As defined by Carnegie Classification (2023), a *large community college* has a Fall FTE of 5,000–9,999. One VCCS college meets this definition (see APPENDICES

APPENDIX A).

Mass Shooting. A *mass shooting* will be defined as an incident that kills four or more individuals, excluding the assailant, during a single event.

Medium Community College. As defined by Carnegie Classification (2023), a *medium community college* has a Fall FTE of 2,000–4,999. Eight VCCS colleges meet this definition (see APPENDICES

APPENDIX A).

Small Community College. As defined by Carnegie Classification (2023), a *small community college* has a Fall FTE of 500–1,999. Twelve VCCS colleges meet this definition (see APPENDICES

APPENDIX A).

Virginia Community College. A *Virginia community college* is defined as a member of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). Twenty-three colleges meet this definition, spanning 40 campuses, and serving over 250,000 students annually (VCCS, 2022).

Significance

Virginia Community College system (VCCS) administrators or administrators at any of the 23 Virginia community colleges may use the results of this research to learn more about perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Community colleges are public institutions that operate in part on limited funds allocated by the General Assembly of Virginia (Mazzariello, 2022). Community college presidents within the VCCS further agreed appropriate resources are needed to ensure campus safety with many respondents noting how declining budgets and inadequate funding negatively impacts campus safety programs (Sartini et al., 2023). With a limited budget, it is critical to know how to best allocate funds to improve campus safety and address crime-related fear on campus. This study can provide guidance for administrators as to where to allocate these limited funds to improve perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Findings may also be used to revamp best practices or enact policy changes related to campus safety. Furthermore, actions taken by administrators resulting from the findings of this study could have the potential to boost employee engagement, satisfaction, and length of employment. Many college faculty will find the results of this study useful. Some may use this information to validate their own perceptions of safety on campus. Community college administrators and human resource departments may use the findings from this study to support hiring and training practices.

Since faculty underreport negative student behavior due to lack of administrative support and fear of retaliation (Morrissette, 2001), the findings from this study may help begin a sensitive conversation between faculty and administrators. While protecting the anonymity of faculty members, this level of privacy can bring important conversations to the forefront without jeopardizing employee relations.

Delimitations

Certain boundaries have been set to ensure this study is manageable and generalizable to a specific population. These parameters include:

- Quantitative methodology
- Colleges within the Virginia Community College System (VCCS)
- Full-time faculty participants

Full-time faculty members are required to teach a specific number of credit hours per semester, hold mandatory weekly student contact (office) hours, and attend required campus engagements (convocation, graduation, etc.) among other duties (serving on committees). These similarities among full-time faculty provide a general baseline of campus safety related

experiences including exposure to the campus environment and students. Since adjunct faculty may not have these same job requirements, they were not included in the sample.

Chapter One Summary

While individuals have the right to work in a safe environment (Cooper et al., 2011), there is a lack of research specific to perceptions of safety among college faculty (Jordan et al., 2007). In part due to media's influence (Gregory & Janosik, 2006), the opinion colleges are generally safe has been challenged by threats of violence causing fear among stakeholders (Urbina, 2009). Researchers have reported numerous student abuses of faculty (Anderson-Harper, 2003; Dibelka, Jr., 2019) most of which are largely ignored (Morgan, 2009). Researchers also note faculty lack awareness on how to handle disruptive students in class (Rollings, 2010). Faculty underreport negative student behavior due to lack of administrative support and fear of retaliation (Morrissette, 2001).

The purpose of this nonexperimental quantitative study was to examine perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges. Previous researchers have consistently advocated for more research in this area. Additional research is needed to "advance the knowledge of campus safety" (Sartini et al., 2023, p. 16). Continued research around campus safety is important due to both the prominence of the issue and because the issue "appears to evolve over time" (Dibelka, Jr., 2019, p. 93). Hignite et al. (2018) suggested future research on campus safety is needed to identify specific campus locations or events that heighten fear. Wade (2018) researched faculty perceptions of fear at a single institution and recommended similar studies be conducted at campuses across various locations to "give a better picture of overall faculty fear" (p. 105).

In the next chapter, I discuss the history of safety on college campuses throughout the United States, with a focus on community colleges. I make the case for health and safety as a human right. A human right that all college or university faculty should be granted. I outline the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (20 U.S.C. §1092), Title IX (20 U.S.C. §1681 - §1688), and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) amendments (42 U.S.C. § 13701). I further highlight violent crimes, mass shootings, and crime against faculty on colleges campuses. I showcase previous research on the topic of campus safety and further advocate that additional research is crucial to growing the field of knowledge about perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the literature, showcasing historical examples which have major implications on safety at institutions of higher education (IHE).

Health and Safety

Health is a fundamental human right (Amartya, 2008; Ghebreyesus, 2017) and feeling safe is a basic human need (Ceccato & Abraham, 2022; Gao & Taormina, 2013). Violating these fundamental rights can have negative health consequences: in 1948, the United Nations (UN) passed a declaration stating, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person” (Hyder et al., 2003 p. 161). Furthermore, humans have the right to work in a safe environment (Cooper et al., 2011).

A healthy campus community supports healthy living (Baker et al., 2006; Baker & Boland, 2011). The American College Health Association (ACHA), founded in 1920, works in partnerships with over 700 colleges nationwide to advance the health and well-being of faculty, staff, and students (ACHA, 2022). The ACHA’s Healthy Campus 2020 initiative is built on four pillars, one of which focuses on creating a campus that promotes health (ACHA, n.d.).

Safety is integral to protecting human rights and maintaining the health status of individuals. “Clearly the safer a campus is, the more productive students and faculty can be” (Wade 2018, p.103). As such, steps toward making campuses safe havens should be a priority for all. The future of society depends on the education and health of the next generation (Fonagy et al., 2010). College campuses are expected to be safe and secure places for students to learn, faculty to teach, administrators and staff to manage, and others to visit.

Fear of Crime

Crime-related fear has emotional, behavioral, and cognitive components (Burruss et al., 2010; Jordan et al., 2007). Fear responses can be healthy or unhealthy. For example, fear can be a motivator to be more cautious (Schafer et al., 2018) or lead to crippling anxiety (Pearson & Breetzke, 2014).

There is a difference in actual victimization and crime-related fear (Jordan et al., 2007). The gap between actual victimization and crime-related fear is growing as actual crime rates decline quicker than rates of crime-related fear. Crime-related fear may also have a negative effect on life satisfaction beyond the fear itself (Ambrey et al., 2013).

Crime-related fear is higher after high profile violent events (Chekwa et al., 2013; Schafer et al., 2018). The rise of crime-related fear on campuses across the United States has been attributed to the 24-hour news cycle and media's obsession with violence on college campuses (Gregory & Janosik, 2006). Exposure to news coverage of local crimes significantly increases crime-related fear for all demographics (Callanan, 2012; Wade, 2018). Consumption of media coverage of crime can impact risk perception and perception influences behavior (Callanan, 2012). When people regularly see violence, they do not feel safe (Fonagy et al., 2010).

Fear of Crime in America

This section provides information on fear of crime in America overall and provides some overarching insight as to how Americans respond to fear of crime in various spaces. The community attachment model and social disorganization theory are also outlined. Crime myths are dissected as Rader (2023) takes us through the evolution of crime related fear among White women in the United States.

Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) developed the community attachment model which suggests the length of time an individual resides in a community positively correlates to the social bonds they experience, resulting in more community cohesion over time. In these environments, the level of violence is reduced because communities act as their own guardians.

Lee (2000) used the international victimization survey to test the social disorganization theory by telephone surveying (and in some cases face-to-face surveying) over 19,000 individuals from 15 different countries. Lee (2000) asserted people who reside in communities they perceive as cohesive are less likely to experience violent victimization. Specifically, tight-knit communities have more guardianship, and those informal guardians intervene more often when help is needed. "Guardianship is not simply an individual level phenomenon, but in fact refers to the constellation of networks and social interaction with other individuals and groups" (Lee, 2000, p. 687). Social disorganization theory suggests strong community ties are proof of high levels of guardianship, which results in reduced levels of victimization (Lee, 2000). Lee (2000) further stated, "The consistency of the results suggest that community cohesion may be a major determinant of victimization risk" (p. 689).

More recently, Ceccato and Abraham (2022) conducted a systematic analysis on crime and safety in rural areas. Much of their research was specific to northern America, except a handful of studies cited from Australia. They highlighted many scenarios that complicate the belief individuals living in rural areas have lower crime-related fear than their urban counterparts. For example, Ceccato and Abraham (2022) noted the challenge individuals living in a rural environment face due to the distance between settlements, inferring that rurality increases isolation which is known to increase fear. They further concluded "Rural dwellers may overall experience less victimization and fear of crime than urbanites but note that this trend can vary

disproportionately between different countries and within different socioeconomic groups and perhaps therefore offer a limited basis for safety interventions” (p. 117).

Three myths have continued to perpetuate fear of crime for generations: 1) the stranger danger myth, 2) the White woman crime victim myth, and 3) the victim-centered crime prevention myth; these are learned from our family, authority figures (e.g., teachers), and the media and they impact our behavior, especially for women (Rader, 2023). Society’s perception is White women are more likely to be victims of crime than women of color, when in fact actual victimization rates show the opposite (Moody et al., 2009; Rader, 2023). However, women of color have also bought into the myth that White women are more vulnerable and therefore in need of protection (Slakoff & Brennan, 2019). Many women take daily precautions (carrying mace, holding keys defensively, not walking alone at night) against crime even though they will likely never be victimized (Rader, 2023). Black men have the highest rates of victimization among all groups and while women fear all men, men only fear larger men (Rader, 2023; Semenza et al. 2022). Women transfer their “fear work” onto their fathers, husbands, or another significant man in their lives. Instead of dealing with their own fears, they instead “transfer” that responsibility onto a man they find trustworthy (Rader, 2023, p. 72).

While violent crime at school is rare, educational policies highlight school shootings as the primary crime to combat in the educational setting (Rader, 2023). However, according to Gallup, one in three Americans still fear for their child’s safety at school (Brenan, 2019). Fear functions as a social control, reinforcing gender roles even among independent career minded women (Rader, 2023; Tittle, 2018). Avoidance is a privilege and not all demographics have the privilege to avoid settings due to fear. Society should therefore, “teach fear of crime better” (Rader, 2023, p. 148). In essence, fear should be based on actual chances of victimization instead

of crime myths. Society should promote reality-based images of crime and victimization to equip individuals with the tools necessary to make more factual decisions about safety measures.

School campuses are the place to start debunking these crime myths (Park, 2020; Rader, 2023).

Campus Safety

Historically, crime rates on college campuses have been lower than societal crime rates (Baum & Klaus, 2005). This notion has given rise to IHEs being viewed as sanctuaries, secure atmospheres where young minds explore grand ideas in an academic environment and cultivate lifelong friendships (Langford, 2003).

In partnership with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the U.S. Department of Education (DoEd) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ), Wang et al. (2022) compiled *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*, a report from the most up to date data on student safety and school crime and concluded that crime on colleges campuses continues to decline. Specifically, between 2009 and 2019, the on-campus crime rate declined from 23.0 to 18.7 occurrences per 10,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. In an earlier report (Wang et al., 2020), the authors noted institutions without residence halls, such as most community colleges, report lower rates of crime overall.

Institutions of higher education are responsible to ensure a safe educational environment for students (Chekwa et al., 2013). To make this claim, they cite *People v. Wheaton College* (1866) and the *in loco parentis* outcome of the case that put institutions in charge of student's safety "in place of parents" while they are on campus (Chekwa et al., 2013, p. 326). "Doctrine made it possible for universities to self-govern in providing care to students who have been entrusted to them and to provide safety for students in the absence of their parents" (p. 326).

Institutions of higher education are required by law to act regarding student safety by 1) warning students of known risks and 2) providing students with adequate security (Chekwa et al., 2013).

Langford (2003) also highlighted court decisions that indicated a growing expectation for IHE to take a proactive approach to campus safety arguing that leadership support is needed for campus safety efforts to be prioritized: “college presidents must establish campus violence prevention as a priority and to that end provide support and funding for planning, implementation, and evaluation processes” (Langford, 2003, p. 6).

Faculty express the need for more dialogue with administrators regarding campus safety (Rollings, 2010). However, administrators are reluctant to disclose crucial incidents with faculty due to concern over creating more fear (Wade, 2018). This non-disclosure of crime enhances the school’s reputation of a safe environment. Yet, faculty acknowledge their lack of involvement in campus safety training which limits their awareness of safety policies and initiatives (Rollings, 2010).

The Clery Act

Most campus crimes are perpetrated by students currently enrolled in classes (The Violence Project Research Center, 2023) and not strangers (Langford, 2003). While most crime on college campuses is non-violent (Whalen, 2022), one of the more notable violent crimes on a college campus was the rape and murder of Lehigh University student, Jeanne Clery (Clery Center, 2023). After their daughter was killed, Jeanne’s parents, Connie and Howard Clery, lobbied to require colleges and universities to report their on-campus crime statistics annually. According to the Clery’s, they would have never sent their youngest child, Jeanne, to Lehigh University had they known of the violent crimes that happened on campus leading up to her attendance (Clery Center, 2023). Connie and Howard Clery were so focused on campus safety,

they refused to send Jeanne to Tulane University, where her brother attended, because they heard news reports about a murder near campus. Due to these safety concerns, they instead sent Jeanne to Lehigh University (Peterson, 2011).

The *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act* was passed in 1990 under the administration of President George H. W. Bush (20 U.S.C. §1092). Today, Clery Act compliance is required by all colleges and universities that receive federal funding, including federal financial aid (Clery Center, 2023). The Clery Act (20 U.S.C. §1092) represents one of the major efforts to mandate transparency regarding campus crime (Gregory, 2004).

The goal of the legislation is: (a) to provide consistent crime information so that parents, potential students, and potential employees will be better able to evaluate an institution before they make a commitment to it, (b) educate students and employees about campus crime so they might better protect themselves from the risks in their campus environment, and (c) to reduce crime. (Janosik, 2004, p. 43)

The Clery Act (20 U.S.C. § 1092) has been amended five times over the last several decades (Schuller Lee, 2017). Specifically, the amendments outline the timeline for reporting requirements and mandate the crime statistics report be submitted to the Department of Education (DoEd; Schuller Lee, 2017). Furthermore, in 2000, an amendment passed broadening the reporting requirements to include crime location. The Clery Act also now requires institutions to include hate crime in their reporting (Schuller Lee, 2017). Further amendments insisted institutions provide students information regarding the public sex offender registry specific to the state (Schuller Lee, 2017).

Title IX

Together, Title IX (20 U.S.C. §1681 - §1688), which became federal law in 1972 prior to the Clery Act, and the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. §1092), seek to inform individuals about crimes involving sexual violence happening on college or university campuses (Schuller Lee, 2017). The Clery Act requires college officials to report crimes involving sexual violence, which led to the publicizing of the information (Schuller Lee, 2017; 20 U.S.C. §1092). There are also new guidelines on how institutions are required to handle student proceedings when they are accused of a violation of sexual misconduct. Further, the exact definitions of crimes of sexual violence are also mandated. This helps institutions use a uniform definition for such crimes.

Violence Against Women Act

One of the most notable changes to the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. §1092) was provided by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) amendments (42 U.S.C. § 13701) in 2013 (Schuller Lee, 2017). These amendments require institutions to include statistics on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in the annual crime reports. Recent amendments also have more inclusive language, including classifications for men and people who identify as transgender to report crimes of sexual violence. Prior to these amendments, the focus of the Clery Act was women and crimes against women (Schuller Lee, 2017; 20 U.S.C. §1092).

Perhaps more importantly, these amendments also include policies and procedures regarding the implementation of prevention and awareness programs to prevent these crimes. This is especially important because campus safety programs and materials are perceived to have a much greater impact on campus safety than crime reports (Gregory & Janosik, 2006). “These programs and strategies appear to result in higher rates of awareness and behavioral change particularly for women students” (Janosik & Gehring, 2003 p. 89).

Violent Crime on Campus

Since the death of Jeanne Clery, there have been other violent criminal acts on college campuses throughout the United States. At Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI) in 2007, a gunman claimed the lives of 32, in the single deadliest mass shooting event on a college campus (Welding, 2023). At Northern Illinois University in 2008, five people were killed in a lecture hall (Welding, 2023). At Oikos University in 2012, seven people were killed (Welding, 2023). More recently, at Michigan State University in 2023, a shooter opened fire killing three students (Welding, 2023).

In response to these and other events, court decisions have set a precedent, and campuses are expected to deal proactively with any foreseeable risks to students (Langford, 2003; *Mullins v. Pine Manor*, 1983). A comprehensive approach to campus safety includes both preventative methods and consistent interventions and, in some cases, moves beyond standard policing to include policy changes such as revising admission requirements or revamping the physical environment of campus (Langford, 2003).

Crime Against Faculty

Faculty members have been consistently targeted at shootings on campuses across the country. The first of which occurred on November 11, 1991, at the University of Iowa. In part due to frustration over not receiving an award, a former University of Iowa graduate student killed five university employees: two professors of physics and astronomy, the physics and astronomy department chair, a postdoctoral researcher, and the associate vice president (AVP) for academic affairs (Des Moines Register, 2024). The assailant was described as going from office to office specifically looking for his intended victims. Some witnesses recounted him

leaving passersby unharmed as he hunted for his intended faculty victims (Des Moines Register, 2024).

In 1996, a San Diego State engineering student, while defending his thesis, opened fire, killing three of his professors (National Public Radio, 2007). As indicated in Chapter One, in 2000, a graduate student, who had been dropped from the doctoral program, at University of Arkansas, killed his English professor. In 2002, a graduate student, who had been dismissed from Appalachian School of Law, killed three, a dean, a professor, and a student. Later that year, a University of Arizona nursing student killed three of his instructors over frustrations regarding his failing grades (National Public Radio, 2007).

While most rapes occur in living quarters (Westat, 2020), which community colleges generally do not have, community colleges are not immune to violence. In North Carolina, a community college student attempted to kill his math teacher due to a failing grade (Urbina, 2009). In 2015, on the Umpqua Community College campus, a current student shot and killed nine people; eight students and an assistant professor (Vanderhart et al., 2015).

Task Force on Campus Safety

Wisconsin Governor, Jim Doyle, created a task force on campus safety. The 23-member force reviewed campus safety practices and provided recommendations and best practices to be shared nationwide. The task force asserted that a culture of compassion is the greatest tool colleges can have toward fostering a safer campus (Shepard & Leque, 2007). They expanded:

An environment must be fostered where students, faculty and staff are aware of the needs of their peers and help them when appropriate. Campus safety can no longer simply be delegated to some particular office or staff but, rather, must become the responsibility of all. (Shepard & Leque, 2007, p. 4)

The task force further noted that a culture of care, where individuals look out for each other, was key to campus safety. They recommended colleges work to destigmatize resources that may help students in need. Relationships defined by mutual respect must be a core component to higher education (Nalla et al., 2018; Shepard & Leque, 2007).

Mass Shooting Defined

A large-scale analysis of mass shootings in all public spaces across in the United States found mass shootings are on the rise (The Violence Project Research Center, 2023). Kaminski (2010) noted the same: “There has been a substantial increase in the number of mass shooting incidents on college campuses in the United States in recent years.” (p. 88). However, since there is no universal definition of what constitutes a *mass shooting*, the statistics and trends can be difficult to track (The Violence Project Research Center, 2023).

Government agencies, advocacy organizations, researchers, and news outlets have various, and sometimes conflicting ideas on how to define *mass shooting*. Some groups define *mass shooting* based on the number of resulting fatalities, while others define *mass shooting* based on the number of resulting injuries. The numbers of fatalities or injuries that must occur to qualify as a *mass shooting* also varies, most agree that number is three to four victims. One universal belief does hold true in that almost all exclude the assailant from the victim count. The United States government has not established a definition of the term, *mass shooting*. However, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) does define *mass murder* as a single incident where four or more are killed (Krouse & Richardson, 2015). Furthermore, in 2013, Congress defined *mass killing* as an incident where three or more people are killed (Investigative Assistance for Violent Crimes Act of 2012, 112 H.R. 2076, 2013). However, both *mass murder* and *mass killing* imply the use of any weapon, not just guns.

The advocacy group, Gun Violence Archive, defines *mass shooting* as an incident where four or more individuals are shot, either killed or injured, during the event (Gun Violence Archive, 2024). News outlets, like USA Today and The Associated Press, define *mass killing* for reporting purposes (instead of *mass shooting*) as an incident where four or more people are killed, using any weapons. Such weapons may include guns, knives, fire, vehicles, and other weapons (USA Today et al., 2022).

According to the National Institute of Justice (2020),

Among the 44 studies analyzed, the most common definition of a mass shooting is an incident in which four or more victims are killed with a firearm in a public place (48%). Several studies defined the offense as an event during which as few as two (5%) or three (9%) victims are killed, whereas more than one-third of the studies more broadly defined the term as an incident in which multiple victims are killed (38%). Others either defined a mass shooting incident as having a minimum of five victims or did not specify a victim threshold. (National Institute of Justice, 2020, para. 7)

Using these various definitions when reporting or researching *mass shootings* can complicate the understanding of criminology and victimization trends related to *mass shootings*. For purposes of this study, a *mass shooting* is defined as an incident that kills four or more individuals, excluding the assailant, during a single event.

Mass Shootings on College Campuses

While numerous other violent acts, even killings, have occurred on campuses throughout the United States since the first mass shooting in 1966, nine incidents meet the above definition of a mass shooting. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s there was one mass shooting on a college or university campus in the United States roughly every decade (Duzor,

n.d.) with colleges seeing an increase in multi-victim shootings of 61.8% in the last 50 years (Langman, 2016). For four years in a row, between 2012-2015, there was a mass shooting on a college or university campus in the United States every year (Duzor, n.d.).

In 1966, the first mass shooting at a college or university took place at University of Texas at Austin where 15 people were killed and another 31 were injured (Welding, 2023). This incident is also referred to as the Texas Tower Shooting because the former marine turned gunman position himself on the observation deck of the main tower on campus and fired at unsuspecting victims below. Ten years later, in 1976, a custodian who worked at California State University in Fullerton, California killed seven in the University library (Welding, 2023). He later turned himself in and was committed to a state mental facility. Then, as mentioned earlier, in 1991, a mass shooting occurred at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa where a former graduate student killed five university employees (Des Moines Register, 2024).

Sixteen years went by with no mass shootings on college or university campuses, until April 16, 2007 (Welding, 2023). The deadliest mass shooting to ever occur on a college or university campus took place at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg, Virginia. During this incident, a current student killed 32 people: 27 students and five faculty members (History Channel, 2011). This mass shooting is not only the deadliest mass shooting to occur on a college or university campus but is also the third deadliest mass shooting in United States history (History Channel, 2011).

After the Virginia Tech shooting, there was an uptick in mass shootings on college and university campuses, with another occurring the following year at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where a graduate student killed five people and injured 16 more (Welding, 2023). Then in 2012, a student at Oikos University in Oakland, California opened fire killing

seven (Wollan & Onishi, 2012). In 2013, an incident that began as a domestic altercation turned into an on-campus shoot-out between campus police and the gunman. Ultimately, the gunman entered the campus library and shot 70 rounds of ammunition. Five people were killed that day and three others injured (Welding, 2023). The following year, in 2014, another mass shooting occurred, this time at University of California in Santa Barbara. A gunman drove through the streets of student housing firing at students and the public alike, he killed six and injured seven more (Pengelly & Williams, 2017). For the fourth consecutive year in a row, in 2015, a current student at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon shot and killed nine people; eight students and an assistant professor (Vanderhart et al., 2015).

While the 2015 mass shooting at Umpqua Community College was the most recent shooting that meets the definition of a *mass shooting* by the definition outlined above, there have been many other shootings in recent years on college and university campuses. For example, the Michigan State University shooting on February 13, 2023, where three students were killed and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas shooting on December 6, 2023, where three people were killed and another three were wounded (Welding, 2023). However, because the fatality counts for these more recent campus shootings fall below four, they are not classified as mass shootings. The lower fatality count may be due to quicker police response times during active shooter incidents and/or campus police being better trained to handle active shooters incidents overall (alerts being sent sooner, quicker evacuations, better life-saving aid provided).

Community Colleges

Open access has been a hallmark of the American community college (Isserles, 2021; Vaughan, 1985). In the 1930s, the idea was introduced that junior colleges should serve the needs of the community through education, vocation, and recreation and allow their grounds to be used for community purposes (Vaughan, 1985).

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill, (P.L. 78-346, 58 Stat. 284m) was signed into law on June 22, 1944, by President Roosevelt. The G.I. Bill established significant federal funds for the education of war veterans (Vaughan, 1985). This allowed access to higher education for many otherwise marginalized citizens. This was a major step forward in advancing the philosophy that no one should be denied access to a higher education due to affordability (Vaughan, 1985). The Truman Commission on Higher Education emphasized these foundational functions of community colleges as providing education for all people, regardless of sex, race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or religion (Zook, 1947). The community college is often the only opportunity millions of Americans have to earn a higher education (Isserles, 2021; Vaughan, 1980).

During this enrollment boom, community members became increasingly concerned that community police officers might not be able to handle coverage of both community and campus crime. This is especially important because this gave rise to college campuses employing their own police officers and, in many cases, housing a full police department on campus (Bridgeman, 1978; Nelson, 2015).

When asked how to improve campus safety, 58% of community college faculty and staff mentioned open access as a campus safety issue (Dibelka, Jr., 2019). These faculty and staff further suggested limiting ways to enter campus, reconfiguring the campuses main entrance,

equipping offices with panic buttons, providing a police presence at the main entrance, and locking down buildings as ways to improve the campus safety issues that come from having an open access college campus (Dibelka, Jr., 2019). “This openness has the potential for allowing people on campus who may be problematic at some point” (Dibelka, Jr., 2019, p. 84). However, there is still a need for more research on campus safety policies, particularly at community colleges (Sartini et al., 2023).

Campus Police

Campus police being more accessible and visible helps reduce crime-related fear on campus (Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Patton & Gregory, 2014; Wicker, 2016). Faculty expressed the desire for a personal relationship with campus police, indicating relationships make a difference (Wicker, 2016). Wade (2018) agreed, further noting a trend of faculty desiring more law enforcement on campus. Faculty and staff are grateful for the assistance of the police in keeping their campus safe (Dibelka, Jr., 2019). Many faculty and staff noted campus police enhance campus safety by providing training, offering escorts, patrolling, and responding to calls for assistance (Dibelka, Jr., 2019).

Students attending a campus with no campus police or campus security presence reported the highest levels of concern regarding campus safety (Patton & Gregory, 2014). Seeing police officers may make community members feel safer, however some community members believe the presence of officers is a sign of danger which could incite fear (Balakian, 2016). Campus police at public IHE have a uniquely difficult job, as multi-functional venues, such as community colleges, attract a continuous flow of people, day, and night. In some cases, individuals with a valid reason to be on campus do not have a student identification (ID) card, making campus difficult to police (Brawer & Cohen, 2003). Community colleges are also limited in “guardians”

as, for the most part, they have no guard shack or fences requiring individuals to be screened before entering campus (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 588). Motivated criminals take advantage of suitable guardians' inability to be at all places at once (Wade, 2018). Furthermore, campus police may not be considered suitable guardians based on their quality and response times (Wade, 2018).

College Student Perceptions of Campus Safety

An individual's actions are based on personal perceptions (Ambrey, 2013). Perceptions of safety can influence student success, retention, and enrollment (Ambler et al., 2008; Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008). While the research described below is regarding student safety, some of the same issues impact faculty.

Age

Several studies reported contradictory results concerning the relationship between crime-related fear and age. Some found, student's age does not influence levels of crime-related fear on campus (Agubokwu, 2016; Braaten, 2020). However, Patton and Gregory (2014) disagree claiming age negatively influences crime-related fear on campus, which could be due to isolation (Patton & Gregory, 2014). More specifically, students aged 18–24 reported feeling safer on campus than older students (Patton & Gregory, 2014). Furthermore, commuter students, who are generally older, have higher levels of crime-related fear than residential students (Austin & Steinmetz, 2013).

Gender

Gender has a key role in crime-related fear (Fisher & May, 2009) with women generally reporting higher levels of crime-related fear (Braaten et al., 2020; Gover et al., 2011; Jordan et al., 2007; Turnbull, 2015). Similarly, female students at universities report higher crime-related

fear than their male counterparts (Fox et al., 2009). The threat of sexual assault may explain this increase in fear among women (Azevedo et al., 2022; Fisher & May, 2009; Mellgren & Ivert, 2018). Some authors have ascribed the perceived increase in crime-related fear among women to men underreporting their crime-related fear due to social desirability (Sutton & Farrall, 2005). Women perceive they are victimized more than men which is not true (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007). In fact, victimization rates are similar across genders (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007; Gover et al., 2011). While men and women both modify their behavior based on fear, women specifically restrict their activities to locations they perceive as safe (Ambrey, 2013; Austin & Steinmetz, 2013). Some authors noted female students had overall heightened levels of crime-related fear (Maier & DePrince, 2019); however, Patton and Gregory (2014) claimed otherwise.

Race

Non-White students fear crime on campus more than their White peers (Boateng & Adjekum-Boateng, 2017). Due in part, because Non-White and White students may have different levels of access to resources needed post victimization. Furthermore, some races are exposed to environments where crime is more likely to happen (Boateng & Adjekum-Boateng, 2017). While Austin and Steinmetz (2013) agreed, indicating demographic variables such as race impacts levels of crime-related fear; others claim all students have similar levels of crime-related fear regardless of race (Agubokwu, 2016; Maier & DePrince, 2019).

Environment

Campuses where students reported the highest levels of campus safety were in rural settings while campuses where students reported the lowest levels of campus safety were in urban settings (Agubokwu, 2016; Patton & Gregory, 2014; Wade, 2014). Students feel safest in labs, then the library, classrooms, and student lounge (Patton & Gregory, 2014). While most

students feel safe on campus (72%; Maier & DePrince, 2019) out of all campus crime, students fear being robbed the most (Patton & Gregory, 2014). Rightfully so, as most student victimizations were personal property thefts (52%), followed by vehicle vandalization or thefts from vehicles (20%), and harassment (8%; Hignite et al., 2018). In response to this fear, students reported engaging in multiple protective behaviors, including carrying a weapon like mace (55%), a knife (38%), multiple weapons (11%), or a gun (8%) on campus (Hignite et al., 2018). Most students who reported carrying a gun on campus indicated they worked in law enforcement. Other techniques college students use to avoid crime include, walking around campus in a group, or using the campus escort service (Hignite et al., 2018; Maier & DePrince, 2019).

College students feel less safe on campus alone on campus at night, when lighting was poor, when campus was in a high crime location, when there were no campus officers on call, or when officers had a slow or delayed response time (Braaten et al., 2020). More specifically, parking lots are the area on campus where students have the highest levels of concern for their safety, then walkways, and finally bathrooms (Patton & Gregory, 2014). Twenty-eight percent of respondents indicated avoiding certain areas of campus during the day out of fear, while 62% avoided these areas of campus at night (Patton & Gregory, 2014).

While prior victimization does not significantly impact student's perceptions of campus safety (Braaten, 2020), Hignite et al. (2018) suggested the victimization of others plays a large role in predicting protective behaviors. Maier and DePrince (2019) claim, "Students' fear of crime and perception of safety should be important to universities not only because it could influence students' academic careers and success but could also influence student enrollment and retention" (p. 74).

Campus Police

Students attending a campus with no campus police or campus security presence reported the highest concern for campus safety (Patton & Gregory, 2014). However, when it comes to the ability to prevent crime on campus, students reported nearly as much confidence in their peers as campus security (Hignite et al., 2018). Sixty-five percent of student respondents said they felt safer having buildings require identification badge access and 55% agreed they felt safer with increased campus officer patrols (Maier & DePrince, 2019). Student protective behaviors decrease when confidence in campus police and security officers increases (Hignite et al., 2018; Kyle et al., 2016). Braaten et al. (2020) concluded students who perceive adequate campus safety measures are in place, feel safer. Some suggest the realities of campus crime should be woven into curriculum, including freshman orientation, self-defense courses, assignments, and class discussions (Hignite et al., 2018).

Faculty Perceptions of Campus Safety

Some assert crime-related fear among students, faculty, and staff is similar (Schafer et al., 2018), however there is a lack of research specific to faculty perceptions of campus safety to support this claim (Jordan et al., 2007). When researchers study faculty perceptions of crime-related fear on campus, generally they lump the faculty population in with staff and students (Wicker, 2016). Very few studies have examined perception of safety by focusing on the faculty population as an independent group (Dahl et al., 2016; Rollings, 2010; Trawalter et al., 2021; Wade, 2018). These few studies suggest nearly all faculty (Dahl et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2013; Woolfolk, 2013) and community college presidents (Sartini et al., 2023) feel their campuses are safe and are confident about the safety systems in place on their campus. Wicker

(2016) further noted that while faculty generally feel safest in their classrooms or labs on campus, they do become concerned during emergencies (Baker & Boland, 2011).

Faculty have reported being stalked and threatened by students, including students trying to manipulate a faculty member into changing their grade, students sending repeated unwanted messages, students following or obsessively watching faculty, or students reporting or threatening to report faculty members to their supervisor (Morgan, 2009). Many faculty reported being physically or verbally threatened by a student (Morgan, 2009) and some claimed swearing or obscenities have been directed at them (Baker & Boland, 2011). Furthermore, faculty at campuses attended by mostly commuter students, like the community college, reported even higher levels of stalking (Morgan, 2009). However, faculty also report they do not know what to do in campus safety situations (Rollings, 2010). These reported student abuses of faculty, including excessive calls and emails, is on the rise and largely ignored by administrators (Morgan, 2009).

For this and other reasons, community college faculty are overwhelmingly not in favor of campus goers carrying concealed guns on campus (Dahl et al., 2016). Furthermore, faculty expressed that having guns on campus would make the environment feel threatening or hostile. These findings support the research on this topic done at 4-year institutions by Thompson (2013). The Dahl et al. (2016) study solidifies that there is a consensus among faculty at postsecondary institutions (2-year and 4-year alike) regarding not allowing conceal carry on public college campuses.

In response to fear of crime, faculty modify their behavior including carrying their keys defensively, locking their car doors when driving alone, and checking the car for intruders before

getting in (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007). Faculty feelings of fear are exacerbated by media reports of campus violence (Fallahi et al., 2009); however, Wade (2018) found contrasting information.

While faculty admit they too need to help with campus safety, they do not feel like a clear role has been outlined for them regarding campus safety and they instead rely on administration to keep the campus community safe (Rollings, 2010). Faculty further questioned if there was a written policy outlining faculty role in campus safety measures (Rollings, 2010). While faculty members acknowledge their lack of involvement in campus safety efforts has limited their awareness of safety initiatives and policies, they desire more dialogue with administrators to help with campus safety (Rollings, 2010). Administrators do not believe faculty have a defined role in terms of campus safety and faculty should let the administration know of troubled students (Rollings, 2010). Campus safety plans developed are consistently not read or understood by employees and faculty only minimally participate in emergency preparedness training (Harvey, 2011). While many faculty are aware of the various safety related services on campus, the usage of those services is relatively low (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007) and they still feel unsafe in their classrooms and offices even after (some) campus safety training (Fowler & Raymond, 2019). Furthermore, faculty are less involved than their staff or administration colleagues on issues related to campus safety (Corradi & Popham, 2022; Fletcher & Bryden, 2007). However, community college presidents believe community college employees are more aware than students of what actions to take in case of emergency (Sartini et al., 2023). Wicker (2016) observed less organizational communication on safety made faculty feel less knowledgeable, which made them feel less prepared and the feeling of unpreparedness made them feel less safe. The research also indicates, faculty who knew what to do in the case of gunfire were 21 times more likely to report feeling safe on campus (Wade, 2018). This finding suggests trained faculty

who know the emergency plan feel significantly safer. Wade (2018) further explained how crucial it is for faculty to get extensive training on how to handle violent incidents on campus.

While campus safety is important to community college presidents, less than half (45.5%) agree that the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. §1092) is effective in promoting campus safety (Sartini et al., 2023). Community college presidents believe they should proactively promote and prioritize campus safety; however, they noted how declining budgets and inadequate funding negatively impacts campus safety programs (Sartini et al., 2023).

Gender

While women faculty, and staff have higher levels of fear than men faculty and staff during both the day and night (Gover et al., 2011) female faculty members were found to have higher rates of victimization than female staff members (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007). However, levels of on-campus victimization among respondents were consistent across genders, implying male and female respondents both experienced the same level of actual victimization even though women reported higher levels of crime-related fear (Gover et al. 2011). For example, male (46%) and female (54%) faculty members reported being stalked at similar rates (Morgan, 2009).

Trawalter et al. (2021) showcased how safety concerns for women in academia, especially women in Science Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), can hinder their professional opportunities for growth, research funding, and advancement, by highlighting how safety concerns among women faculty can restrict their work. While women faculty in other fields may have the opportunity to work remotely, STEM women faculty generally do not have the option to avoid on campus work as the bulk of their work takes place in the laboratory setting (Trawalter et al., 2021). Although many faculty members feel safe in labs (Baker & Boland,

2010), lab work is often done at night after hours which is known to elicit more fear. Female faculty were found to be more concerned regarding classroom safety than their male counterparts (Fowler & Raymond, 2019). Therefore, women faculty often modify their schedule or behavior to avoid working on campus late at night (Trawalter et al., 2021). Trawalter et al. (2021) asserts this behavior modification coupled with safety concerns, widens the opportunity gap many women faculty in the STEM field already experience.

Other Demographics

Very little research has been done studying faculty demographics beyond gender. However, Wade (2018) did note faculty who had been teaching between 6-10 years had increased levels of fear and after ten or more years vested, crime-related fear among faculty decreased dramatically. Wade (2018) further suggested race was a significant variable, with White faculty members reporting higher levels of crime-related fear on campus than Non-White faculty.

Environment

Faculty report higher levels of crime-related fear at night (Gover et al., 2011) and as a result some faculty refuse to work at night (Wade, 2018). This could impact night classes offered and subsequently the career pathways of night students. Faculty have reported fearing for their safety when walking on campus at night (Rollings, 2010) and often walk with others out of fear (Wade, 2018). If they must enter a building late at night, or go to the parking lot/garage, they request an escort (Rollings, 2010; Wade, 2018). Furthermore, some faculty report dissatisfaction with campus safety features including lighting, signage, and emergency phone access (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007).

Commuter students have higher stress levels than residential students (Morgan, 2009), which may escalate the risk to faculty who teach on community college campuses. Dibelka, Jr. (2019) advocated for future research specific to the perceptions of campus safety among faculty and staff at community colleges. Extant literature is scarce and much more research is needed to comprehensively understand the issue (Dibelka, Jr., 2019). Thompson et al. (2013) noted “Aggressive efforts are needed to help maintain the uniquely safe environment of college campuses” (p. 366). Some faculty experience emotional distress such as fear and anxiety on campus, which can adversely affect their job performance and their longevity in the profession (Anderman et al., 2018; Baker & Boland, 2011). Preventing fear and anxiety provoking incidents will allow colleges to focus on the primary purpose of facilitating life-long learning (Baker & Boland, 2011).

Campus Police

Some faculty mentioned receiving safety trainings, including Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate (ALICE) active shooter training, Title IX training (20 U.S.C. §1681 - §1688) and Clery training (20 U.S.C. §1092; Dibelka, Jr., 2019). However, even with training, “Community college faculty were more concerned with becoming a victim of violence on campus than their [4-year] counterparts” (Dibelka, Jr., 2019, p. 32). Having uniformed police officers on campus was generally well-received (Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Woolfolk, 2013), with some faculty expressing their trust for campus police (Rollings, 2010). In fact, faculty expressed the desire for a personal relationship with campus police, indicating this relationship makes a difference (Wicker, 2016). Wade (2018) also noted a trend of faculty desiring more law enforcement on campus. Faculty feel students (94%) are just as responsible as faculty (93%) to report suspicious behavior observed on campus (Wade, 2018). Several safety concerns were

identified among community college presidents, namely the importance of having sworn police officers on campus to help not only legitimize campus police but also to keep up with the numerous safety reporting mandates (Sartini et al., 2023).

Occupational Health and Safety

An organization's commitment to safety is the greatest positive influence on employee perception of safety, which influences employee decision making (O'Toole, 2002). Occupational health and safety increases workplace performance and productivity (Lamm et al., 2006). Individuals who are fearful at work burn out sooner and seek other employment more frequently (Deery et al., 2011). Organizations who build a culture of health by focusing on the well-being and safety of their workforce yield greater value for their stakeholders (Dreger et al., 2013).

Chapter Two Summary

This research serves to fill the gap in existing literature by focusing on the community college faculty population. Past research on community college perceptions of safety rarely investigated perceptions of safety among faculty (Dahl et al., 2016; Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018; Wicker, 2016). Six studies were found regarding fear of crime on community college campuses, only two of which explored perceptions of safety solely among community college faculty (Dahl et al., 2016; Wade, 2018). While many campus goers reported feeling safe on campus (Dahl et al., 2016; Nobles et al., 2013; Sartini et al., 2023; Wicker, 2016) community college faculty are not immune to crime-related fear on campus, and the research has largely ignored this population. In that sense, this research is novel.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Problem Statement

Many authors call for more research regarding campus safety on community colleges (Dahl et al., 2016; Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018) indicating this research is necessary because each college setting involves nuances and varying populations cannot be completely understood without additional research. Understanding the subtleties of campus safety is paramount and points directly to fulfilling the mission of many institutions of higher education. “Although campus safety usually does not appear in writing in a community college’s mission statement, it certainly is implied that those who go there to learn and work should feel safe” (Sartini et al., 2023, p. 4). Furthermore, community colleges are largely ignored in the research, especially regarding perceptions of safety among faculty (Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this nonexperimental quantitative study is to examine perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Research Questions

I sought to answer the following research questions related to faculty perceptions of campus safety within the Virginia Community College System (VCCS):

1. What crimes are faculty at Virginia community colleges most concerned about being victims of while on campus?
2. Are there statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty:
 - a. Age

- b. Gender
 - c. Race
 - d. Years of experience
3. Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty:
- a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Race
 - d. Years of experience

Significance

Virginia Community College system (VCCS) administrators or administrators at any of the 23 Virginia community colleges may use the results of this research to learn more about perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Community colleges are public institutions that operate in part on limited funds allocated by the General Assembly of Virginia (Mazzariello, 2022). Community college presidents within the VCCS further agreed appropriate resources are needed to ensure campus safety with many respondents noting how declining budgets and inadequate funding negatively impacts campus safety programs (Sartini et al., 2023). With a limited budget, it is critical to know how to best allocate funds to improve campus safety and address crime-related fear on campus. This study can provide guidance for administrators as to where to allocate these limited funds to improve perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Findings may also be used to revamp best practices or enact policy changes related to campus safety. Furthermore, actions taken by administrators resulting from the findings of this

study could have the potential to boost employee engagement, satisfaction, and length of employment. Many college faculty will find the results of this study useful. Some may use this information to validate their own perceptions of safety on campus. Community college administrators and human resource departments may use the findings from this study to support hiring and training practices.

Since faculty underreport negative student behavior due to lack of administrative support and fear of retaliation (Morrissette, 2001), the findings from this study may help begin a sensitive conversation between faculty and administrators. While protecting the anonymity of faculty members, this level of privacy can bring important conversations to the forefront without jeopardizing employee relations.

Research Paradigm

A quantitative nonexperimental survey research design was used for this study. Quantitative survey research design models allow the researcher to gather data on a sample of the larger population being studied. This allows the findings to be generalized to the larger matching population (Creswell, 2014).

Setting

The setting for this study was Virginia community colleges as defined by being a member of the VCCS. Twenty-three colleges meet this definition, spanning 40 campuses, and serving over 250,000 students annually (VCCS, 2022). Many of these community colleges have multiple campuses and off-site centers, where classes are taught in a location more rural than their main campus location. These off-site centers are important to note because full-time faculty teach at these locations but in many cases these off-site centers are not routinely patrolled by campus police. However, any crime reported at these centers must be included in the Clery Annual

Security Report. It is also important to note that Virginia is a permissive open-carry state, with all state higher education institutions banning firearms on campus.

Population

The target population for the study was full-time faculty employed at a Virginia community college at the time the survey was disseminated. There are roughly 2,060 full-time faculty members throughout the 23 Virginia community colleges (NCES, 2022). Of this population, full-time faculty members from seven of the 23 Virginia community colleges were used as the study sample.

Data Collection

Seven of the 23 Virginia community colleges were purposively selected as the research sample. The sample size of seven was chosen because of time and feasibility constraints with conducting a larger sample. The seven community colleges were comprised of: three small institutions and four medium institutions. Basing the sample on community college size was chosen to collect data from a variety of colleges throughout the VCCS, which can strengthen generalizability.

After these seven colleges were selected, the researcher reached out to a representative at each college, explained the purpose of this study, and requested their colleges participation (see APPENDIX H).

See APPENDICES

APPENDIX A for a full list of the 23 Virginia community colleges with their corresponding Fall 2022 full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers. This was the list used to purposively select the seven sample colleges. The seven sample colleges selected were Central Virginia Community College, Rappahannock Community College, and Southside Community

College for the small category, and Germana Community College, New River Community College, Virginia Peninsula Community College, and Virginia Western Community College for the medium category.

After obtaining written consent from each participating college, full-time faculty employed at each participating college were used as the population sample. Once seven colleges, three small, and four medium, confirmed participation, the email addresses for all full-time faculty employed at each institution were requested. However, all but one participating college required all research related requests be sent internally to full-time faculty members at their institution. Therefore, a representative from each of those institutions was tasked with working directly with me to send all communication to their full-time faculty members, including the invitation email, survey link, and follow-up emails. Internal communication likely has a higher response rate because the invitation email, survey link, and follow-up emails would not get blocked by external spam filters and therefore this data collection method was deemed satisfactory if not desirable.

For the one college who opted not to send the research communication internally, they emailed a listing of their full-time faculty names and corresponding email address so I could reach out directly to their faculty and request participation. After those email addresses were obtained, the invitation email, survey link, and follow-up emails were sent out inviting each current full-time faculty member to participate in the study.

The initial invitation email explained the purpose of the study and outlined Human Subjects Review Board exemption and informed consent (see APPENDIX I). This initial email also included a link to the electronic survey instrument and requested participation (see

APPENDIX I). The second and final email was sent ten days after the initial email, thanking those who participated and offering one last opportunity for participation (see APPENDIX J).

Upon hiring, faculty at Virginia community colleges are assigned a college email address. This email address is typically a combination of the first letter of the faculty member's first name and all or a portion of their last name. This college email address was the one used to disseminate the research communication and survey link.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was designed using a compilation of survey questions from several previous studies on campus safety (Burruss et al., 2010; Patton & Gregory, 2014; Thompson et al., 2013). The compilation design helped ground this study in campus safety literature and further builds upon the foundation already set by previous scholars.

Written permission was received from each of the originators of these foundational works (Burruss et al., 2010; Patton & Gregory, 2014; Thompson et al., 2013; APPENDICES APPENDIX B, APPENDIX C, and APPENDIX D). After being granted permission, the current survey instrument was designed using parts of each previous instrument to develop a final survey instrument.

It is also important to note some of these survey instruments (Dahl et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2013) have been used multiple times to measure perceptions of campus safety. In that regard, some of these survey questions have become somewhat standard in the field. Thompson et al. (2013) and Dahl et al. (2016) both focused on perceptions of concealed carry on college campuses, however, the preliminary survey questions pertain to this study. While Thompson et al. (2013) developed their survey instrument originally to study perceptions of

conceal carry on 4-year college campuses, Dahl et al. (2016) made simple modifications to the survey instrument to later study perceptions of conceal carry on 2-year college campuses.

Survey respondents self-reported experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and demographic information by responding to the forced completion 4-point Likert-type scale survey. The first page of the survey included a brief description of the study, offered informed consent, outlined the time requirements of participation, and explained all responses are voluntary and private (see APPENDIX E). The survey instrument was composed of 27 questions, 22 regarding experiences, perceptions, and attitudes about campus safety and 5 covered demographic information (see APPENDIX G).

When participants clicked into the email link, they were greeted with a statement where they must click acknowledging informed consent. This statement further requested participants not discuss their survey responses with their colleagues for 30 days. This time frame was offered as a buffer so the data could be collected without tainting the sample. This statement also provided my contact information in the event participants wished to contact me directly for any reason.

Sample Size

In this research design, quantitative data were collected by electronic survey. Data were collected from seven colleges in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), with a total sample size of 472 full-time faculty members.

Of the seven participating community colleges, Central Virginia Community College had 62 full-time faculty members, Germanna Community College had 126 full-time faculty members, New River Community College had 48 full-time faculty members, Rappahannock Community College had 30 full-time faculty members, Southside Community College had 50

full-time faculty members, Virginia Peninsula Community College had 77 full-time faculty members, and Virginia Western Community College had 79 full-time faculty members at the time the electronic survey was disseminated.

Response rate percentages were calculated to ensure an appropriate sample size was collected to address the research questions as outlined above. After consultation with the dissertation chair and committee members, a minimum response rate of 25% ($n = 118$) was deemed an appropriate sample size to answer the research questions.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 29.0 analysis software. Descriptive statistics were collected and used to answer both Research Question One by identifying 1) what crimes faculty at Virginia community colleges are most concerned about being victims of while on campus and Research Question Three by detecting 2) which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization among faculty at Virginia community colleges among various faculty demographics such as gender, age, race, and years of experience.

A one-way ANOVA (between groups) and Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons was used to help answer Research Question Two by detecting if a statistically significant relationship exists between perceptions of campus safety among faculty and various faculty demographics such as gender, age, race, and years of experience. Given that only the faculty demographic variable is changing, ANOVA was appropriate to use in answering this research question.

Reliability

Self-reported survey data are recognized as a reliable method of gathering data (Echeverria et al., 2004). Likert-type scale surveys are commonly used to measure perceptions of safety in the literature (Manning et al., 2016; Patton & Gregory, 2014). It is further noted, self-assessment is a valid form of data collection in many circumstances and in some cases the only feasible or ethical way to collect information (Linfield & Posavac, 2018). However, self-reporting is noted below as a limitation because respondents who self-report may or may not introduce bias into their responses. This possibility, and how this is being controlled, is discussed more in the limitations section.

Validity

Polit and Beck (2004) describe validity as a quality criterion that indicates the degree of accuracy of study conclusions. A threat to validity in any form can alter the research outcome, in worst cases, leading researchers to wrong conclusions. It is important to know there are a variety of variables beyond the variables being examined, that may sway the findings. Common threats to validity include maturation, and diffusion of treatment.

In this study, maturation was not a threat to validity as a pre-test/post-test model was not used. The forced completion element of the survey helped control maturation. Participants did not have the opportunity to log-out, mature, and then log back in to complete the survey. So, maturation was not a threat to validity (Linfield & Posavac, 2018).

Diffusion of treatment could have threatened validity. To control this threat, participants were directed not to discuss the survey for 30 days. This time frame allowed for data collection to be completed before any treatment diffusion occurred.

Instrument Content Validity

To assess content validity, Thompson et al. (2013), the original developer of some survey questions used in the compilation had,

three experts in survey research and three experts in public policy/law enforcement reviewed the questionnaire for content validity. Experts were defined as those individuals who had published articles in professional journals in firearms injury/policy or survey research. Experts were asked to review the questionnaire in relation to its [sic] ability to measure perceptions and practices regarding carrying concealed handguns on university campuses. Minor changes were made to the instrument based on the suggested revisions. Using the final responses to the questionnaire internal reliabilities for the advantages and disadvantages subscales were calculated using Cronbach alphas and were found to be 0.78 and 0.83, respectively. (Thompson et al., 2013, p. 367)

To assess the content validity of the final survey instrument, three *experts* in quantitative research on campus safety reviewed the survey instrument for content validity. *Experts* were defined as individuals who hold doctoral degrees, have an intimate knowledge of quantitative research, and are published in the field of campus safety. Experts were asked to assess the survey instrument's ability to collect measurable data that answer the research questions. Each expert either recommended no changes be made or advised minor revisions to the original survey instrument. All suggested revisions were made, and the final survey instrument can be viewed in APPENDIX G.

Dr. George W. Burruss served as one of the experts to assess the survey instrument for content validity. Dr. Burruss earned his doctorate in criminology and criminal justice from the

University of Missouri St. Louis. He is currently a Professor and Associate Chair of the Department of Criminology at the University of South Florida. He is affiliated with the Center for Cybersecurity at the University of South Florida and founder of the Cybercrime Interdisciplinary Behavioral Research Laboratory. He is also a Senior Faculty Fellow of the *Global National Security Institute* and *Rapid 7 Cybersecurity*. Dr. Burruss's main research interests include criminal justice organizations and cybercrime. Dr. Burruss reviewed both the survey instrument and the research questions and further assessed the survey instrument's ability to collect measurable data that answer the research questions. He concluded that the survey instrument does in fact collect measurable data that answer the research questions and he made no suggestions for revisions.

Dr. Robert "Chad" C. Patton served as one of the experts to assess the survey instrument for content validity. Dr. Patton earned his doctorate in Community College Leadership from Old Dominion University. He is currently the Dean of Career and Occupational Technology at Southside Virginia Community College in Alberta, Virginia. Dr. Patton's main research interests include community college safety and student safety. Dr. Patton reviewed both the survey instrument and the research questions and further assessed the survey instrument's ability to collect measurable data that answer the research questions. He suggested several revisions to strengthen the validity of the survey. He advised an option "prefer not to disclose" be added for gender and that "ballfields/sports venue" and "open spaces" be added to question ten. He further suggested under question eight, "being shot at" be replaced with "being threatened with a firearm". All of Dr. Patton's suggested revisions were made and the final version of the survey instrument can be found in APPENDIX G.

Dr. Frances “Fran” P. Reddington served as one of the experts to assess the survey instrument for content validity. Dr. Reddington is now in retirement after serving as a Professor of Criminal Justice at the University of Missouri (UOM) for nearly thirty years. She also served as the director of the Criminal Justice Institute in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at UOM. Prior to retirement, in 2021, she was awarded the University of Missouri’s highest award bestowed upon a faculty member, the Byler Distinguished Faculty Award. Dr. Reddington helped launch the inaugural chapter of the American Correctional Association (ACA) in the United States and worked with them for more than a decade. Even in retirement, Dr. Reddington remains active in her research and her main research interests include criminal justice, criminology, juvenile criminology, and sexual assault. Dr. Reddington reviewed both the survey instrument and the research questions and further assessed the survey instrument’s ability to collect measurable data that answer the research questions. She concluded that the survey instrument does in fact collect measurable data that answer the research questions and she made no suggestions for revisions.

Limitations

Self-assessment is a valid form of data collection in many circumstances and in some cases the only feasible or ethical way to collect information (Linfield & Posavac, 2018). However, when participants are asked to self-report opinions or attitudes participant bias can be introduced (Linfield & Posavac, 2018).

Participant Bias

Especially when surveying social issues like campus safety, there is a level of individual experience and interpretation that may influence participant responses, which could lead to bias. Participants may have had a previous experience in life that influences their responses. For

example, maybe they had been involved in campus safety training recently and are feeling particularly positive about campus safety, or maybe they taught at a college or university where one of the mass shootings previously mentioned took place and they still experience trauma from that incident. These and other experiences faculty may have encountered could influence how they perceive the world around them and in turn how they responded to the survey questions in this study.

Time Constraints

The sample size of seven VCCS colleges was chosen because of time and feasibility constraints with conducting a larger sample. However, if I had an additional academic year to complete this study, I could have completed the internal review board (IRB) process with additional colleges and surveyed a much larger sample, which may have strengthened generalizability.

Selection Bias

Selection bias is when the sample is not an accurate representation of the population being studied (Linfield & Posavac, 2018). Findings cannot be generalized beyond the study population. In this study, nearly 7% ($n = 8$) of respondents reported having been victimized while on campus. I think this percentage is high. However, I believe faculty who were previously a victim of a crime on campus were more likely to volunteer to participate in this study, yielding more responses from faculty who have directly experienced crime on their campus. Therefore, bias may have been unknowingly introduced in this way.

Response Rates

One of the more practical limitations of the current study is low response. Furthermore, one institution required all study communication including the survey instrument be

disseminated by the researcher. This institution had one of the lowest response rates, with only 18% ($n = 14$) of their full-time faculty participating in the study. Since all communication regarding the study was coming from an external email address, some communication likely got blocked by external spam filters or was simply discounted by the recipients as junk mail. Therefore, this data collection method had a much lower response rate overall than participating institutions that sent the research communication to their faculty internally.

Another limitation was low response rates for faculty from some subpopulations. For example, the response rate for Non-White racial groups was incredibly low at 13.3% ($n = 18$). Specifically, responses from African American/Black at 6.6% ($n = 9$), Hispanic/Latino at .7% ($n = 1$), Asian/Asian American at 1.5% ($n = 2$), Native American/Alaska Native at 1.5% ($n = 2$) and prefer to self-disclose at 3% ($n = 4$) faculty were all extremely low and therefore inappropriate to compare. Even after collapsing all Non-White groups together in hopes of getting enough respondents for a subgroup comparison, the response rates were still low making for a difficult comparison between faculty groups based on race. Similarly, response rates were also very low for respondents who choose “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender ($n = 7$).

Based on NCES data from Fall 2022, the actual full-time faculty at participating colleges ($n = 455$) were 9.23% ($n = 42$) African American/Black, 1.76% ($n = 8$) Hispanic/Latino, 4% ($n = 18$) Asian/Asian American, .7% ($n = 3$) Native American/Alaska Native and 1.1% ($n = 5$) are two or more races (NCES, 2022). The actual demographic statistics have slightly higher counts of the various racial groups than what was represented in this study (NCES, 2022).

Confounding Variables

Confounding variables are variables other than the variables being measured that may influence participant responses (Linfield & Posavac, 2018). For example, participants could begin the survey, leave some (or all) of the survey questions unanswered or exit the survey before completion, which could cause important data to go unreported. Another confounding variable is that we do not know the status of police or security officer presence at these institutions, which may have influenced respondents' perceptions of campus safety.

Linfield and Posavac (2018) suggest these limitations can be improved by increasing the size of the sample, providing participants clear instructions regarding participation, and using standard practices such as scales and instruments common to the field of study.

Position Statement

I am a current full-time faculty member at Central Virginia Community College (CVCC) in Lynchburg, Virginia. CVCC is a member of the VCCS. Therefore, I fell into the population sample for this study. However, I did not participate in the study. Beyond what has been shared with the sample, I did not discuss the study with colleagues or other full-time faculty employed at a VCCS member college.

Chapter Three Summary

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology for a nonexperimental quantitative study examining perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Many authors call for more research regarding campus safety on community colleges (Dahl et al., 2016; Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018). These authors say this research is necessary because each college setting involves nuances and varying populations that cannot be completely

understood without additional research. The findings may help begin a sensitive conversation between faculty and administrators, while protecting the anonymity of faculty members.

Purposive sampling was used for data collection. An electronic survey was disseminated to all full-time faculty at participating colleges. The email was sent to full-time faculty, requesting their participation, outlined Human Subjects review board exemption (APPENDIX F), informed consent, as well as included a link to the Likert-type survey regarding perceptions of campus safety. The following statistical analysis were performed to answer the appropriate research questions; descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA (between groups) and Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons. Instrument reliability and common threats to validity such as selection bias, maturation, and diffusion of treatment were also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Data were collected from seven colleges in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). Three of the sample colleges were small and four of the sample colleges were medium based on enrollment size as outlined by the Carnegie Classifications in Chapter One. At the time of this study, there were 472 full-time faculty members employed across the seven sample colleges. Of those, 28.7% ($n = 135$) voluntarily participated in this study.

Due to minimal participant responses in several demographic categories, some groups were collapsed for better comparison. The age demographic was collapsed into two categories: under 49 years old and 49 years old or older. The gender demographic consisted of three categories: male, female, and non-disclosed. The race demographic was collapsed into two categories: White and Non-White. The years of experience demographic was collapsed into two categories: under ten years and ten years or more.

Furthermore, it is important to note, not all Community Colleges in the VCCS have sports venues on campus. Therefore, I removed the sports venue location from the results due to the data not being comparable across all participating institutions.

Demographic Response Rates

Regarding age, 36.7% ($n = 47$) of respondents identified as being under 49 years old and 63.3% ($n = 81$) of respondents identified as being 49 years old or older. Concerning gender, 60% ($n = 78$) of respondents identified as women, 34.6% ($n = 45$) of respondents identified as men, and 5.4% ($n = 7$) of respondents either selected “prefer not to disclose” or “prefer to self-disclose”. Pertaining to race, 85.9% ($n = 110$) of respondents identified as White, and 14.1% ($n = 18$) of respondents identified as Non-White. Regarding years of experience, 45.7% ($n = 59$) of

respondents reported their years of experience as being under ten years, and 54.3% ($n = 70$) of respondents reported their years of experience as being ten years or more.

While it may seem like the high level of response rates from a narrow demographic in this study would weaken generalizability, in fact, based on NCES data from Fall 2022, the demographic percentages for actual full-time faculty from the seven participating institutions is representative of the sample. In this study, 85.9% ($n = 110$) of respondents were White and 14.1% ($n = 18$) of respondents were Non-White. Which is comparable to the actual full-time faculty at participating colleges of which 84.4% ($n = 379$) are White and 15.6% ($n = 76$) are Non-White (NCES, 2022). Furthermore, regarding gender, in this study 60% ($n = 78$) of respondents were women, 34.6% ($n = 45$) of respondents were men, and 5.4% ($n = 7$) of respondents selected “prefer not to disclose” or “prefer to self-disclose”. Which is again comparable to the actual full-time faculty at participating colleges of which 58% ($n = 269$) are women and 42% ($n = 186$) are men (NCES, 2022). While there are some differences because NCES data does not have a third gender option for “prefer not to disclose” or “prefer to self-disclose”, so those individuals would have been grouped in one of the other categories, making the men and women percentages slightly higher. The actual demographic statistics are representative of the demographics of the participants of this study, which strengthens generalizability (NCES, 2022).

Victimization

Of those who responded to the question “Have you ever been a victim of a crime on your campus?”, 6.6% ($n = 8$) responded “yes”, and 93.4% ($n = 114$) responded “no”. Thirteen participants did not answer this question. Of the participants who responded “yes” to this question, 25% ($n = 2$) were male, 62.5% ($n = 5$) were female, and 16.7% ($n = 1$) selected “prefer

to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose”. Furthermore, all were White, half had less than ten years of experience, and half had ten years or more experience, 37.5% ($n = 3$) were under 49 years old, and 50% ($n = 4$) were 49 years old or older, and one victim opted not to share their age.

Research Question One

In response to Research Question One, “What crimes are faculty at Virginia community colleges most concerned about being victims of while on campus?”, descriptive statistics were used to analyze what crimes faculty are most concerned about. Respondents reported they were most concerned about being threatened with a firearm, having something stolen, and being verbally threatened. Moreover, 30.9% ($n = 43$) of respondents reported they were either concerned or very concerned about being threatened with a firearm on campus. Furthermore, 28.1% ($n = 39$) of respondents reported they were either concerned or very concerned about having something stolen, and 25.9% ($n = 36$) of respondents reported they were either concerned or very concerned about being verbally threatened.

Respondents indicated they had the least concern of being raped or sexually assaulted, being beat-up, and having their property vandalized. Only 4.3% ($n = 6$) of respondents reported they were either concerned or very concerned about being raped or sexually assaulted on campus. Furthermore, 13.7% ($n = 19$) of respondents indicated they were either concerned or very concerned about being beaten up, and 14.4% ($n = 20$) of respondents reported they were either concerned or very concerned about having their property vandalized.

Research Question Two

To answer Research Question Two, “Are there statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety among faculty at Virginia community colleges as

differentiated by faculty: age, gender, race, years of experience”, a one-way ANOVA (between groups) and Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons were performed in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 29.0 analysis software to test for statistically significance differences within the sample. The significance level for alpha for the post hoc test was .05, with a confidence interval of .95%. The number of respondents in some demographic subgroups may not be enough to formally claim significance, however, I am describing the findings within the context of the sample I have.

Age

For age, a one-way ANOVA (between groups) and Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons were performed in SPSS to test for statistically significance differences within the sample and subpopulation for age. The significance level for alpha for the post hoc test was .05, with a confidence interval of .95% and no statistically significant differences were found between faculty groups; under 49 years old and 49 years or older. Table 1 shows the one-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty age. This was an unexpected finding because I anticipated age, and years of experience to yield similar results because in most cases older faculty have also been employed longer at their institutions. However, that was not the case.

Table 1

One-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty age

	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Concern overall	0.15419	0.08095	0.141	-0.0376	0.3460
Concerned about having something stolen	0.04439	0.08179	0.850	-0.1494	0.2382
Concerned about having your property vandalized	0.04518	0.06447	0.763	-0.1076	0.1980
Concerned about being stalked	0.06987	0.06684	0.550	-0.0885	0.2283
Concerned about being harassed	0.06094	0.07084	0.666	-0.1069	0.2288
Concerned about being verbally threatened	-0.03861	0.08063	0.881	-0.2297	0.1524
Concerned about being raped or sexually assaulted	0.07407	0.03706	0.116	-0.0137	0.1619
Concerned about being robbed	0.10349	0.06652	0.268	-0.0541	0.2611
Concerned about being beaten up	0.08773	0.06319	0.350	-0.0620	0.2375
Concerned about being threaten with a firearm	0.08143	0.08457	0.602	-0.1190	0.2818
How safe do you feel overall	-0.02049	0.06361	0.944	-0.1712	0.1302
How safe do you feel in the classroom	-0.06304	0.05858	0.530	-0.2019	0.0758
How safe do you feel in the lab	-0.07880	0.06424	0.439	-0.2310	0.0734
How safe do you feel in the hallway	-0.10008	0.06266	0.250	-0.2486	0.0484
How safe do you feel in your office	-0.05411	0.06167	0.655	-0.2002	0.0920
How safe do you feel in the library	-0.06304	0.05858	0.530	-0.2019	0.0758
How safe do you feel in the bathroom	-0.09115	0.06541	0.347	-0.2462	0.0639
How safe do you feel in the parking lot	-0.16522	0.07118	0.056	-0.3339	0.0034
How safe do you feel on the sidewalk	-0.08773	0.06138	0.329	-0.2332	0.0577
How safe do you feel at a sports venue	-0.06987	0.06684	0.550	-0.2283	0.0885
How safe do you feel in open spaces	-0.04177	0.06026	0.768	-0.1846	0.1010

* $p < .05$

Gender

Regarding gender, a one-way ANOVA (between groups) and Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons were performed in SPSS to test for statistical significance within the sample and subpopulation for gender. The significance level for alpha for the post hoc test was .05, with a confidence interval of .95% and statistically significant differences were found between faculty groups: male, female, and non-disclosed.

Furthermore, a Tukey post hoc test revealed a statistically significant difference between male respondents and respondents who did not identify as either male or female pertaining to how safe they feel overall on campus ($p = .031$), with those who did not identify as either male or female being more concerned about being victimized on campus. Regarding how concerned respondents were about being victimized on campus by being stalked, Tukey's post hoc test revealed statistically significance differences between male respondents and respondents who did not identify as either male or female ($p = .045$), again with those who did not identify as either male or female being more concerned about being stalked on campus. A Tukey post hoc test further revealed statistically significant differences between male respondents and respondents who did not identify as either male or female concerning how safe respondents feel in the following locations: the lab ($p = .045$), the hallway ($p = .040$), and the library ($p = .016$), with those who did not identify as either male or female consistently feeling less safe in these areas.

Table 2

One-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty gender

						95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
			Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.		
Concern overall	Male	Female	0.06325	0.08574	0.742	-0.1401	0.2666
		Non-disclosed	0.18413	0.18609	0.585	-0.2572	0.6254
	Female	Male	-0.06325	0.08574	0.742	-0.2666	0.1401
		Non-disclosed	0.12088	0.18071	0.782	-0.3077	0.5494
Concerned about having something stolen	Male	Female	-0.05128	0.08667	0.825	-0.2568	0.1543
		Non-disclosed	-0.04762	0.18811	0.965	-0.4937	0.3985
	Female	Male	0.05128	0.08667	0.825	-0.1543	0.2568
		Non-disclosed	0.00366	0.18268	1.000	-0.4296	0.4369
Concerned about having your property vandalized	Male	Female	-0.01453	0.06806	0.975	-0.1759	0.1469
		Non-disclosed	0.13016	0.14772	0.653	-0.2202	0.4805
	Female	Male	0.01453	0.06806	0.975	-0.1469	0.1759
		Non-disclosed	0.14469	0.14346	0.573	-0.1955	0.4849
Concerned about being stalked	Male	Female	0.13846	0.06896	0.114	-0.0251	0.3020
		Non-disclosed	.36190*	0.14966	0.045	0.0070	0.7168
	Female	Male	-0.13846	0.06896	0.114	-0.3020	0.0251
		Non-disclosed	0.22344	0.14534	0.277	-0.1212	0.5681
Concerned about being harassed	Male	Female	0.07179	0.07360	0.594	-0.1027	0.2463
		Non-disclosed	0.29524	0.15975	0.158	-0.0836	0.6741
	Female	Male	-0.07179	0.07360	0.594	-0.2463	0.1027
		Non-disclosed	0.22344	0.15513	0.323	-0.1444	0.5913

Table 2 (continued)

Concerned about being verbally threatened	Male	Female	0.08547	0.08441	0.570	-0.1147	0.2856
		Non-disclosed	0.06349	0.18320	0.936	-0.3710	0.4980
	Female	Male	-0.08547	0.08441	0.570	-0.2856	0.1147
		Non-disclosed	-0.02198	0.17791	0.992	-0.4439	0.3999
Concerned about being raped or sexually assaulted	Male	Female	0.04188	0.03951	0.541	-0.0518	0.1356
		Non-disclosed	-0.02222	0.08575	0.964	-0.2256	0.1811
	Female	Male	-0.04188	0.03951	0.541	-0.1356	0.0518
		Non-disclosed	-0.06410	0.08327	0.722	-0.2616	0.1334
Concerned about being robbed	Male	Female	-0.02393	0.07079	0.939	-0.1918	0.1439
		Non-disclosed	0.10794	0.15364	0.762	-0.2564	0.4723
	Female	Male	0.02393	0.07079	0.939	-0.1439	0.1918
		Non-disclosed	0.13187	0.14920	0.651	-0.2220	0.4857
Concerned about being beaten up	Male	Female	0.02991	0.06562	0.892	-0.1257	0.1855
		Non-disclosed	0.31746	0.14243	0.070	-0.0203	0.6552
	Female	Male	-0.02991	0.06562	0.892	-0.1855	0.1257
		Non-disclosed	0.28755	0.13832	0.098	-0.0405	0.6156
Concerned about being threaten with a firearm	Male	Female	0.12735	0.08828	0.322	-0.0820	0.3367
		Non-disclosed	0.18413	0.19160	0.603	-0.2703	0.6385
	Female	Male	-0.12735	0.08828	0.322	-0.3367	0.0820
		Non-disclosed	0.05678	0.18607	0.950	-0.3845	0.4980
How safe do you feel overall	Male	Female	-0.10000	0.06508	0.277	-0.2543	0.0543
		Non-disclosed	-0.36190*	0.14124	0.031	-0.6969	-0.0269
	Female	Male	0.10000	0.06508	0.277	-0.0543	0.2543
		Non-disclosed	-0.26190	0.13716	0.140	-0.5872	0.0634
How safe do you feel in the classroom	Male	Female	-0.13504	0.06396	0.092	-0.2867	0.0166
		Non-disclosed	-0.24127	0.13883	0.195	-0.5705	0.0880
	Female	Male	0.13504	0.06396	0.092	-0.0166	0.2867
		Non-disclosed	-0.10623	0.13481	0.711	-0.4259	0.2135

Table 2 (continued)

How safe do you feel in the lab	Male	Female	-0.13846	0.06896	0.114	-0.3020	0.0251
		Non-disclosed	-.36190*	0.14966	0.045	-0.7168	-0.0070
	Female	Male	0.13846	0.06896	0.114	-0.0251	0.3020
		Non-disclosed	-0.22344	0.14534	0.277	-0.5681	0.1212
How safe do you feel in the hallway	Male	Female	-0.12564	0.06774	0.156	-0.2863	0.0350
		Non-disclosed	-.36190*	0.14702	0.040	-0.7106	-0.0132
	Female	Male	0.12564	0.06774	0.156	-0.0350	0.2863
		Non-disclosed	-0.23626	0.14278	0.227	-0.5749	0.1023
How safe do you feel in your office	Male	Female	-.16068*	0.06656	0.045	-0.3185	-0.0028
		Non-disclosed	-0.24127	0.14447	0.221	-0.5839	0.1013
	Female	Male	.16068*	0.06656	0.045	0.0028	0.3185
		Non-disclosed	-0.08059	0.14030	0.834	-0.4133	0.2521
How safe do you feel in the library	Male	Female	-0.12222	0.06316	0.133	-0.2720	0.0276
		Non-disclosed	-.38413*	0.13709	0.016	-0.7092	-0.0590
	Female	Male	0.12222	0.06316	0.133	-0.0276	0.2720
		Non-disclosed	-0.26190	0.13313	0.125	-0.5776	0.0538
How safe do you feel in the bathroom	Male	Female	-0.10342	0.06944	0.299	-0.2681	0.0613
		Non-disclosed	-.48254*	0.15071	0.005	-0.8399	-0.1251
	Female	Male	0.10342	0.06944	0.299	-0.0613	0.2681
		Non-disclosed	-.37912*	0.14636	0.029	-0.7262	-0.0320
How safe do you feel in the parking lot	Male	Female	-0.12308	0.07753	0.255	-0.3069	0.0608
		Non-disclosed	-0.29524	0.16828	0.189	-0.6943	0.1038
	Female	Male	0.12308	0.07753	0.255	-0.0608	0.3069
		Non-disclosed	-0.17216	0.16342	0.545	-0.5597	0.2154
How safe do you feel on the sidewalk	Male	Female	-0.09060	0.06760	0.376	-0.2509	0.0697
		Non-disclosed	-0.19683	0.14672	0.375	-0.5448	0.1511
	Female	Male	0.09060	0.06760	0.376	-0.0697	0.2509
		Non-disclosed	-0.10623	0.14248	0.737	-0.4441	0.2317

Table 2 (continued)

How safe do you feel at a sports venue	Male	Female	-0.14188	0.07225	0.125	-0.3132	0.0295
		Non-disclosed	-0.19683	0.15682	0.423	-0.5687	0.1751
	Female	Male	0.14188	0.07225	0.125	-0.0295	0.3132
		Non-disclosed	-0.05495	0.15229	0.931	-0.4161	0.3062
How safe do you feel in open spaces	Male	Female	-0.11282	0.06585	0.204	-0.2690	0.0433
		Non-disclosed	-0.21905	0.14293	0.279	-0.5580	0.1199
	Female	Male	0.11282	0.06585	0.204	-0.0433	0.2690
		Non-disclosed	-0.10623	0.13880	0.725	-0.4354	0.2229

Note: Statistically significant p values denoted by a rectangular border.

* $p < .05$

Pertaining to how safe respondents feel in the campus bathrooms, Tukey's post hoc test revealed statistically significant differences between respondents who did not identify as either male or female and respondents who identified as male ($p = .005$) or female ($p = .029$). In all cases, respondents who do not identify as either male or female, felt significantly less safe than their colleagues who identify as male or female. Tukey's post hoc test further showed a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents specifically for how safe they feel in their office ($p = .045$), with female faculty feeling significantly less safe. One-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty gender can be found in Table 2.

Race

For race, a one-way ANOVA (between groups) and Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons were performed in SPSS to test for statistically significance differences within the

Table 3

One-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty race

	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Concern overall	0.05152	0.11365	0.893	-0.2178	0.3208
Concerned about having something stolen	-0.09596	0.11324	0.674	-0.3643	0.1724
Concerned about having your property vandalized	0.01212	0.08956	0.990	-0.2001	0.2243
Concerned about being stalked	-0.00606	0.09306	0.998	-0.2266	0.2145
Concerned about being harassed	-0.02424	0.09847	0.967	-0.2576	0.2091
Concerned about being verbally threatened	0.00505	0.11189	0.999	-0.2601	0.2702
Concerned about being raped or sexually assaulted	0.07475	0.05174	0.321	-0.0479	0.1974
Concerned about being robbed	-0.00606	0.09306	0.998	-0.2266	0.2145
Concerned about being beaten up	-0.03434	0.08818	0.920	-0.2433	0.1746
Concerned about being threaten with a firearm	0.00606	0.11767	0.999	-0.2728	0.2849
How safe do you feel overall	-0.03030	0.08819	0.937	-0.2393	0.1787
How safe do you feel in the classroom	0.01616	0.08157	0.979	-0.1771	0.2094
How safe do you feel in the lab	-0.01212	0.08956	0.990	-0.2243	0.2001
How safe do you feel in the hallway	0.04343	0.08762	0.873	-0.1642	0.2511
How safe do you feel in your office	0.09899	0.08533	0.479	-0.1032	0.3012
How safe do you feel in the library	0.08081	0.08128	0.582	-0.1118	0.2734
How safe do you feel in the bathroom	-0.00303	0.09135	0.999	-0.2195	0.2134
How safe do you feel in the parking lot	0.05152	0.10054	0.865	-0.1867	0.2898
How safe do you feel on the sidewalk	-0.03030	0.08571	0.933	-0.2334	0.1728
How safe do you feel at a sports venue	0.13535	0.09233	0.311	-0.0834	0.3542
How safe do you feel in open spaces	0.02525	0.08368	0.951	-0.1730	0.2236

* $p < .05$

sample and subpopulation for race. The significance level for alpha for the post hoc test was .05, with a confidence interval of .95% and no statistically significant differences were found between White and Non-White faculty groups. One-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty race can be found in Table 3.

It is important to note, statistically significant differences may not have been found due to the response rate for Non-White participants being small ($n = 18$) compared to White participants ($n = 110$). However, based upon this study we cannot tell there are statistically significance differences between racial groups.

Years of Experience

Regarding years of experience, a one-way ANOVA (between groups) and a Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons were performed in SPSS analysis software to test for statistically significance differences within the sample and subpopulation for years of experience. The significance level for alpha for the post hoc test was .05, with a confidence interval of .95% and statistically significant differences were found between faculty groups; less than ten years, and ten years or more.

A Tukey post hoc test revealed a statistically significant difference between respondents who have been employed at the college for less than ten years and respondents who have been employed at the college for ten years or more regarding how concerned they are overall about being a victim of crime on campus ($p = .015$), with those who have been employed by their college for ten years or more being more concerned about being victimized on campus.

Furthermore, pertaining to how concerned respondents are about being threatened with a firearm, Tukey's post hoc test revealed a statistically significance difference ($p = .044$) with

Table 4

One-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty years of experience

	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Concern overall	0.12252	0.07846	0.266	-0.0634	0.3085
Concerned about having something stolen	0.05738	0.07890	0.748	-0.1296	0.2443
Concerned about having your property vandalized	0.03584	0.06222	0.833	-0.1116	0.1833
Concerned about being stalked	0.06441	0.06450	0.579	-0.0884	0.2173
Concerned about being harassed	0.06174	0.06830	0.639	-0.1001	0.2236
Concerned about being verbally threatened	0.03148	0.07783	0.914	-0.1529	0.2159
Concerned about being raped or sexually assaulted	0.05448	0.03595	0.287	-0.0307	0.1397
Concerned about being robbed	0.06441	0.06450	0.579	-0.0884	0.2173
Concerned about being beaten up	0.10097	0.06074	0.223	-0.0430	0.2449
Concerned about being threaten with a firearm	.19395*	0.08022	0.044*	0.0038	0.3840
How safe do you feel overall	-.16344*	0.05797	0.015*	-0.3008	-0.0261
How safe do you feel in the classroom	-0.11792	0.05734	0.103	-0.2538	0.0180
How safe do you feel in the lab	-0.08136	0.06316	0.404	-0.2310	0.0683
How safe do you feel in the hallway	-0.12954	0.06130	0.091	-0.2748	0.0157
How safe do you feel in your office	-0.05278	0.06083	0.662	-0.1969	0.0914
How safe do you feel in the library	-0.08668	0.05775	0.294	-0.2235	0.0502
How safe do you feel in the bathroom	-.15811*	0.06330	0.036*	-0.3081	-0.0081
How safe do you feel in the parking lot	-0.15012	0.06978	0.084	-0.3155	0.0152
How safe do you feel on the sidewalk	-.14649*	0.05969	0.041*	-0.2879	-0.0050
How safe do you feel at a sports venue	-0.07869	0.06554	0.455	-0.2340	0.0766
How safe do you feel in open spaces	-0.10097	0.05901	0.205	-0.2408	0.0389

Note: Statistically significant p values denoted by a rectangular border.

* $p < .05$

respondents who have been employed at the college for less than ten years and respondents who have been employed at the college for ten years or more, with those who have been employed by their college for ten years or more being more concerned about being threatened with a firearm on campus.

A Tukey post hoc test revealed a statistically significant difference between respondents that have been employed at the college for less than ten years and respondents who have been employed at the college for ten years or more concerning how safe respondents feel in the following locations; bathrooms ($p = .036$), and sidewalks ($p = .041$), with those who have been employed by their college for ten years or more feeling less safe. One-way ANOVA and Tukey post hoc test results for statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety based on faculty years of experience can be found in Table 4.

Research Question Three

To answer Research Question Three, “Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty: age, gender, race, years of experience”, descriptive statistics was used to analyze the various faculty groups.

Faculty Overall

Overall, faculty respondents indicated they felt safest in the classroom and the library, with 80.6% ($n = 112$) of respondents reporting they felt either safe or very safe in these areas. The third location faculty respondents indicated they felt safest was open spaces, with 79.9% ($n = 111$) of respondents reporting they felt either safe or very safe in this area, open spaces include outdoors areas such as a quad or picnic area.

Respondents indicated they felt least safe in campus parking lots, with 27.3% ($n = 38$) of respondents reporting they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. The second location faculty respondents indicated they felt least safe was bathrooms with 23.0% ($n = 32$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe.

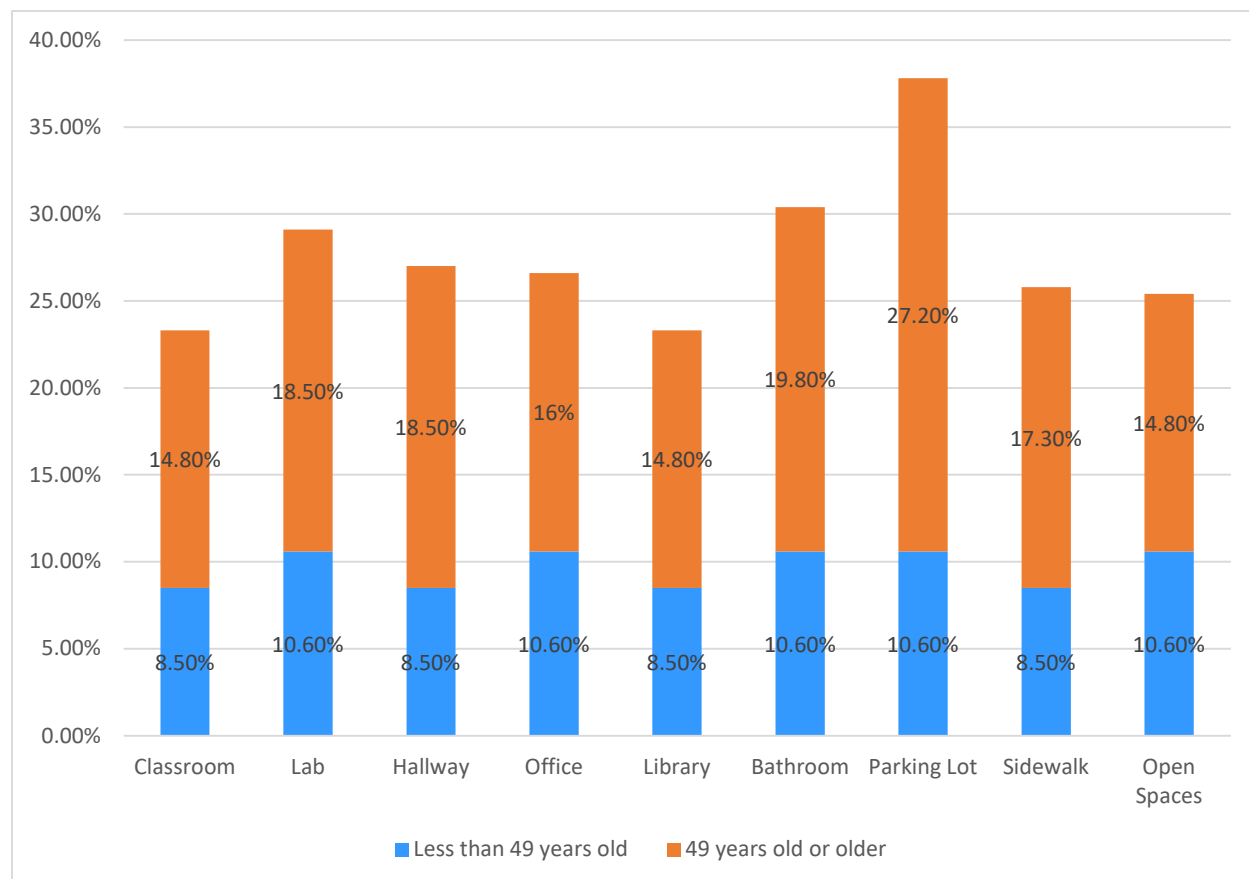
Age

Regarding age, faculty respondents under 49 years old felt safest in the classroom, hallway, library, and sidewalk, with 91.5% ($n = 43$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in these areas. While faculty respondents 49 years old or older felt safest in the classroom, library, and open spaces, with 85.2% ($n = 69$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in these areas.

Furthermore, faculty respondents under 49 years old felt least safe in labs, their office, bathrooms, parking lot, and open spaces, with 10.6% ($n = 5$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in these areas. Faculty respondents 49 years old or older felt least safe in the parking lot, with 27.2% ($n = 22$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. Other areas of concern for this age group were bathrooms, with 19.8% ($n = 16$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. Figure 1 shows which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty age.

Figure 1

Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty age



Gender

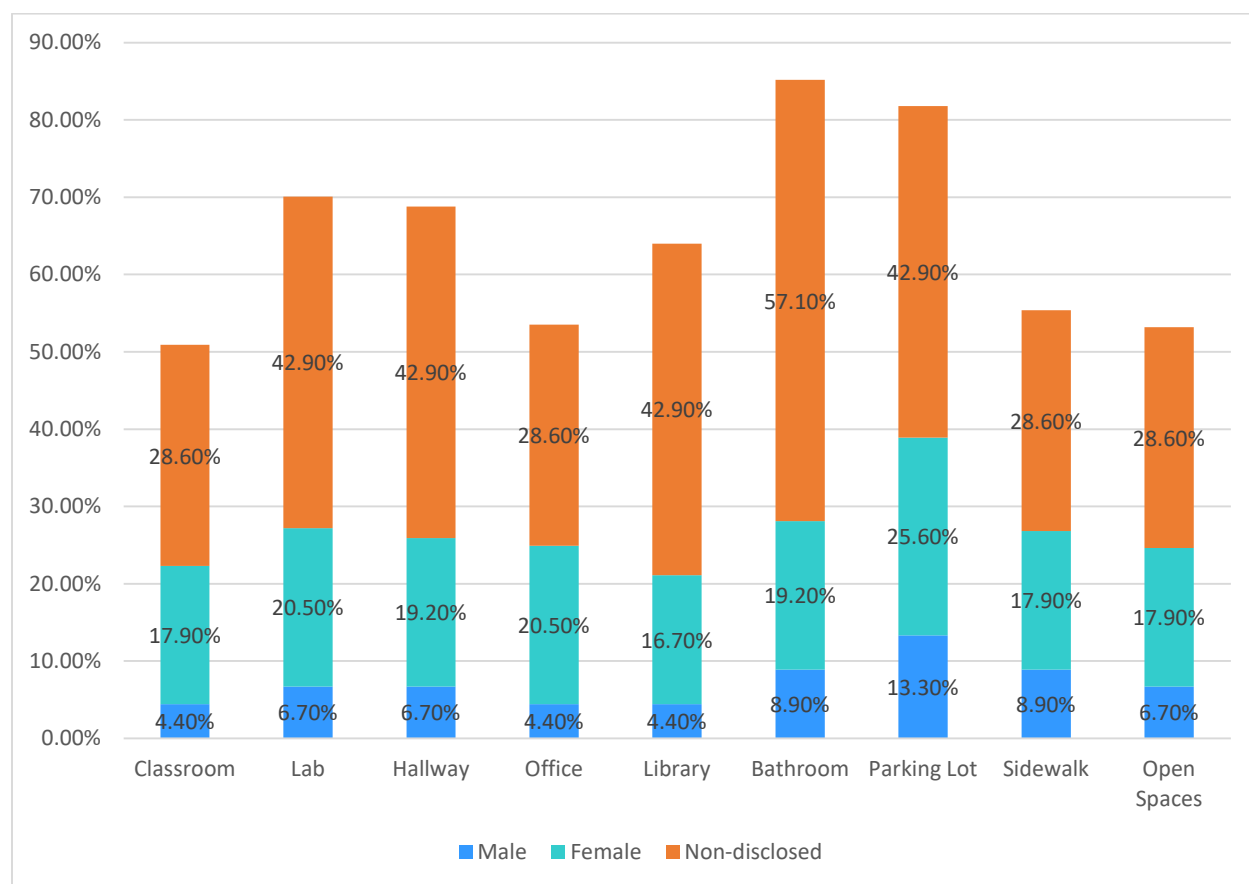
Regarding gender, female faculty respondents felt safest in the library, with 83.3% ($n = 65$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in this area. After the library, female faculty felt safest in the classroom, sidewalks, and open spaces, with 82.1% ($n = 64$) of respondents reporting they felt either safe or very safe in these areas. Male faculty respondents felt safest in the library, classroom, and their office, with 95.6% ($n = 43$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in these areas. Faculty respondents who selected

“prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender felt safest in the classroom, their office, sidewalks, and open spaces, with 71.4% ($n = 5$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in these areas.

Furthermore, female faculty respondents felt least safe in the parking lot, with 25.6% ($n = 20$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. Other areas of concern for female faculty were their office, and labs both with 20.5% ($n = 16$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in these areas. While male faculty respondents felt least safe in the parking lot, with 13.3% ($n = 6$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. Other areas of concern for male faculty were sidewalks, and bathrooms, with 8.9% ($n = 4$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in these areas. Faculty respondents who selected “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender felt least safe in the bathroom, with 57.1% ($n = 4$) indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. Other areas of concern for respondents who selected “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender were labs, hallway, library, and parking lot, with 42.9% ($n = 3$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in these areas. Figure 2 shows which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty gender.

Figure 2

Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty gender



Race

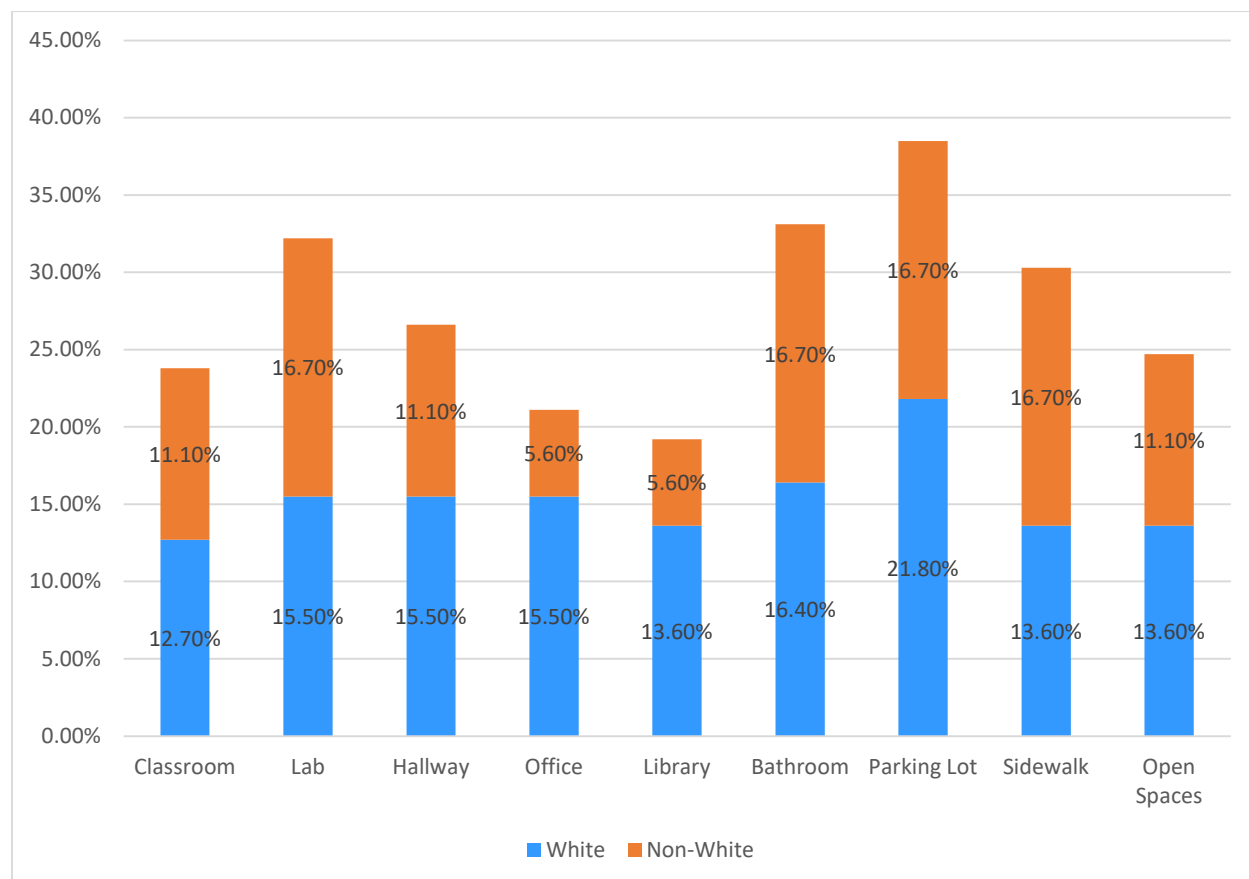
Regarding race, White faculty respondents felt safest in the classroom, with 87.3% ($n = 96$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in this area. After the classroom, White faculty felt safest in the library, sidewalks, and open spaces, with 86.4% ($n = 95$), of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in these areas. Non-White faculty

respondents felt safest in their office and library with 94.4% ($n = 17$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in this area.

Furthermore, White faculty respondents felt least safe in the parking lot, with 21.8% ($n = 24$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. Other areas of concern for White faculty were bathrooms, with 16.4% ($n = 18$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in these areas. Non-White faculty respondents felt least safe in labs, bathrooms, parking lot, and sidewalks, with 16.7% ($n = 3$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area. Figure 3 shows which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty race.

Figure 3

Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty race



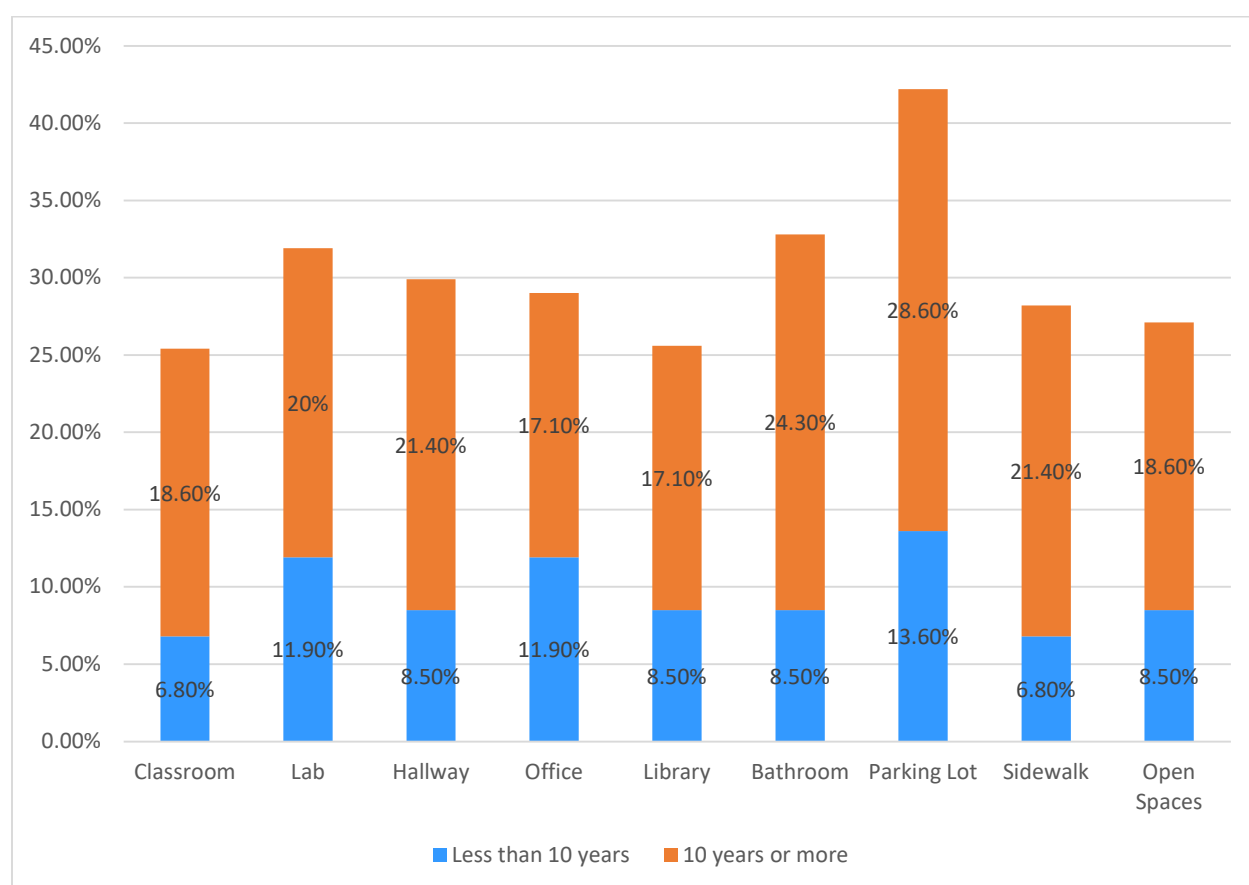
Years of Experience

Regarding years of experience, faculty respondents employed at their college less than ten years felt safest in the classroom, and sidewalk, with 93.2% ($n = 55$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in these areas. Faculty respondents employed at their college ten years or more felt safest in their office, and library, with 82.9% ($n = 58$) of respondents indicating they felt either safe or very safe in these areas. Figure 4 shows which

place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty years of experiences.

Figure 4

Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization based on faculty years of experience



Furthermore, faculty respondents employed at their college less than ten years felt least safe in the parking lot, with 13.6% ($n = 8$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or

very unsafe in these areas. Faculty respondents employed at their college ten years or more felt least safe in the parking lot, with 28.6% ($n = 20$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe. Other areas of concern for this demographic were bathrooms, with 24.3% ($n = 17$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in this area, followed by the hallway and sidewalk, with 21.4% ($n = 15$) of respondents indicating they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in these areas.

Chapter Four Summary

Overall, faculty respondents ($n = 135$) indicated they felt safest in the classroom, the library, and open spaces and felt least safe in campus parking lots, and bathrooms. Faculty are most concerned about being threatened with a firearm, having something stolen, and being verbally threatened on campus. The nuances of various faculty demographics are discussed in this chapter. While no statistically significant differences were found between faculty groups based on age or race, statistically significant differences were found between faculty groups based on gender and years of experience.

In the next chapter, I discuss the implications of these findings. I highlight reasons why female faculty may feel less safe in their offices than their male faculty peers. I further discuss why faculty are most concerned about being threatened with a firearm on campus, even though based on Clery reports from Virginia Community Colleges, other crimes are much more likely to happen on campus. In addition, I share the details of conflicting research regarding individuals with ten or more years of experience having increased fear in certain instances. I discuss the nearly 7% of faculty respondents who indicated they had been a victim of a crime on their campus. I also highlight changes that can be made to help improve faculty perceptions of campus safety.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This chapter summarizes the study and highlights important conclusions drawn from the data outlined in Chapter Four. It further examines the implications around the perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

Problem Statement

Many authors call for more research regarding campus safety on community colleges (Dahl et al., 2016; Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018) indicating this research is necessary because each college setting involves nuances and varying populations cannot be completely understood without additional research. Understanding the subtleties of campus safety is paramount and points directly to fulfilling the mission of many institutions of higher education. “Although campus safety usually does not appear in writing in a community college’s mission statement, it certainly is implied that those who go there to learn and work should feel safe” (Sartini et al., 2023, p. 4). Furthermore, community colleges are largely ignored in the research, especially regarding perceptions of safety among faculty (Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this nonexperimental quantitative study was to examine perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

Research Questions

I sought to answer the following research questions related to faculty perceptions of campus safety within the Virginia Community College System (VCCS):

1. What crimes are faculty at Virginia community colleges most concerned about being victims of while on campus?
2. Are there statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty:
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Race
 - d. Years of experience
3. Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty:
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Race
 - d. Years of experience

Methodology

A quantitative nonexperimental survey research design was used for this study. The target population for the study was full-time faculty across the VCCS ($n = 2,060$; NCES, 2022). Seven of the 23 Virginia community colleges were purposively selected, and full-time faculty from those colleges were used as the research sample ($n = 472$). An electronic survey was disseminated to all full-time faculty at participating colleges. The email sent to full-time faculty, requesting their participation, outlined Human Subjects review board exemption (APPENDIX F), informed consent, as well as included a link to the Likert-type survey regarding perceptions of campus safety. The survey instrument was designed using a compilation of survey questions

from several previous studies on campus safety (Burruss et al., 2010; Patton & Gregory, 2014; Thompson et al., 2013). Three experts in quantitative research on campus safety reviewed and revised the survey instrument to strengthen content validity.

Data Collection/Analysis

Respondents self-reported experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and demographic information by responding to a forced completion 4-point Likert-type scale survey. Statistical analysis was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 29.0 analysis software. Descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA (between groups), and Tukey post hoc test for multiple comparisons were used to help answer the appropriate research questions.

Key Findings

In response to Research Question One, “What crimes are faculty at Virginia community colleges most concerned about being victims of while on campus?”, respondents reported they have the highest levels of concern about being threatened with a firearm (30.9%), having something stolen (28.1%), and being verbally threatened (25.9%).

In Virginia, all community colleges have a policy prohibiting guns on campus, therefore the probability of having a firearm on campus is low. However, the finding that faculty are most concerned about being threatened with a firearm on campus may be attributed to the 24-hour news cycle and media’s obsession with violence on college campuses (Gregory & Janosik, 2006). Previous research shows faculty are more fearful when media report violent events taking place on campus (Fallahi et al., 2009). While violent crime on college campuses is rare, educational policies highlight school shootings as the primary crime to combat in the educational setting (Rader, 2023), leaving this crime foremost in the minds of many faculty. Clery reports from participating institutions highlight the most frequent crime on campus as theft (including

vehicle theft), with 12 incidents of theft occurring in total between 2020 – 2022 across these seven institutions (CVCC, 2023; GCC, 2023; NRCC, 2023; RCC, 2022; SVCC, 2023; VPCC, 2023; VWCC, 2023).

Regarding Research Question Two, “Are there statistically significant differences between perceptions of campus safety among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty: age, gender, race, years of experience”, no statistically significant differences were found within the sample subpopulations for age or race, however, statistically significant differences were found within the sample subpopulations for gender and years of experience.

Gender

A statistically significant difference was found between male and female respondents specifically for how safe they feel in their office, with female faculty feeling significantly less safe. Specifically, over 20% ($n = 16$) of female respondents indicated they felt either unsafe or very unsafe in their office. This may be in part due to most offices being small, isolated, and without a secondary escape route (window, back door, etc.). It may also simply be based on the sheer number of individuals feared. For example, while women fear all men, men only fear larger men (Rader, 2023; Semenza et al. 2022), therefore women statistically fear a greater number of individuals. However, this would be true across all locations and therefore does not fully explain the statistically significant difference related to offices. In some cases, office locations are extremely isolated due to the nature of faculty setting their own office hours and being away from their offices during classroom or lab hours. This level of isolation may contribute to female faculty’s concern. Furthermore, offices can be incredibly small, with only one entrance, and therefore very little room for escape if necessary. Also, in part due to the

temporary transfer to remote work for faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic, many community colleges now use a computer-based telephone system and no longer provide physical in-office telephones which, without a quick way to call for help, could heighten concern among women faculty. These ideas align with previous research on the topic, as Fletcher and Bryden (2007) noted faculty dissatisfaction with campus safety features such as emergency phone access. Furthermore, Dibelka, Jr. (2019) mentioned faculty and staff suggested equipping offices with panic buttons to improve campus safety.

In several areas, statistically significant differences were found between male respondents ($n = 45$) and respondents who selected “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender ($n = 7$). Specifically, respondents who selected “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender felt significantly less safe on campus overall, and significantly more concern about being victimized on campus by being stalked, than their male colleagues. Furthermore, respondents who did not identify as either male or female felt significantly less safe in the lab, hallway, and library, than their male peers.

Similarly, respondents who did not identify as either male or female ($n = 7$) felt significantly less safe in campus bathrooms, than their male or female colleagues. Naming bathrooms the place on campus that elicits the highest level of fear of victimization on campus among this gender demographic. While respondents who selected “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender did not specifically identify as transgender, those who are transgender would fall into this category. Over 60% of individuals who are transgender avoid using the bathroom at work, at school, or in public out of fear, with discrimination and verbal harassment noted as some of the strongest reasons for bathroom avoidance (Lerner, 2021). Therefore, these findings align with previous research on the topic.

Years of Experience

Statistical significance was found in several instances when comparing faculty by years of experience. Faculty employed by their college for ten years or more reported significantly greater concern about being victimized on campus by being threatened with a firearm. They further reported feeling significantly less safe in campus bathrooms and sidewalks.

Maybe faculty employed ten or more years have lost confidence in campus safety programs or police response times and / or capabilities. Furthermore, they may be more aware of crimes that have happened on campus, leading to heightened fear. It is also possible they consume more news related to campus safety. However, comparing these findings with previous research is somewhat difficult because the years of experience scale varied between studies. Wade (2018) claimed faculty who had been teaching between 6-10 years had increased levels of fear on campus and that after ten or more years vested, crime-related fear among faculty decreased dramatically. However, with this study, the ten years of experience mark straddles two subgroups, making it difficult to compare with previous research.

Concerning Research Question Three, “Which place(s) on campus elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization among faculty at Virginia community colleges as differentiated by faculty: age, gender, race, years of experience”, the following campus location(s) elicit(s) the highest level of fear of victimization for the various faculty groups:

Age

Faculty respondents under 49 years old felt least safe in labs, their office, bathrooms, parking lot, and open spaces. Faculty respondents 49 years old or older felt least safe in the parking lot.

Gender

Both female and male faculty respondents felt least safe in the parking lot. While faculty respondents who selected “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender felt least safe in the bathroom.

Race

White faculty respondents felt least safe in the parking lot. Non-White faculty respondents felt least safe in labs, bathrooms, parking lot, and sidewalks.

Years of Experience

Both faculty respondents employed at their college less than ten years and those employed at their college ten years or more felt least safe in the parking lot.

Every faculty demographic surveyed selected campus parking lots (which in some cases was tied with other locations) as the place on campus where they feel the least safe, except for faculty respondents who choose “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender, for them, they feel least safe in the campus bathrooms.

This dissertation research supports much of the previous research. For example, Patton and Gregory (2014) found community college students feel similar in that they also had the highest levels of concern for their safety in campus parking lots. Moreover, Dibelka Jr. (2019) found parking lots and/or parking garages to be one of the only areas of concerns on campus among community college faculty and staff in the Midwest United States. Rollings (2010) and Wade (2018) also noted that out of fear, some faculty reported requesting an escort when going to campus parking lot and/or parking garages.

Furthermore, over 80% of faculty respondents indicated they felt safest in the classroom and the library, which somewhat aligns with previous research by Wicker (2016) who found faculty generally feel safest in their classrooms or labs.

Limitations

Self-assessment is a valid form of data collection in many circumstances and in some cases the only feasible or ethical way to collect information (Linfield & Posavac, 2018).

However, when participants are asked to self-report opinions or attitudes participant bias can be introduced (Linfield & Posavac, 2018).

Participant Bias

Especially when surveying social issues like campus safety, there is a level of individual experience and interpretation that may influence participant responses, which could lead to bias. Participants may have had a previous experience in life that influences their responses. For example, maybe they had been involved in campus safety training recently and are feeling particularly positive about campus safety, or maybe they taught at a college or university where one of the mass shootings previously mentioned took place and they still experience trauma from that incident. These and other experiences faculty may have encountered could influence how they perceive the world around them and in turn how they responded to the survey questions in this study.

Time Constraints

The sample size of seven VCCS colleges was chosen because of time and feasibility constraints with conducting a larger sample. However, if I had an additional academic year to complete this study, I could have completed the internal review board (IRB) process with

additional colleges and surveyed a much larger sample, which may have strengthened generalizability.

Selection Bias

Selection bias is when the sample is not an accurate representation of the population being studied (Linfield & Posavac, 2018). Findings cannot be generalized beyond the study population. In this study, nearly 7% ($n = 8$) of respondents reported having been victimized while on campus. I think this percentage is high. However, I believe faculty who were previously a victim of a crime on campus were more likely to volunteer to participate in this study, yielding more responses from faculty who have directly experienced crime on their campus. Therefore, bias may have been unknowingly introduced in this way.

Response Rates

One of the more practical limitations of the current study is low response. Furthermore, one institution required all study communication including the survey instrument be disseminated by the researcher. This institution had one of the lowest response rates, with only 18% ($n = 14$) of their full-time faculty participating in the study. Since all communication regarding the study was coming from an external email address, some communication likely got blocked by external spam filters or was simply discounted by the recipients as junk mail. Therefore, this data collection method had a much lower response rate overall than participating institutions that sent the research communication to their faculty internally.

Another limitation was low response rates for faculty from some subpopulations. For example, the response rate for Non-White racial groups was incredibly low at 13.3% ($n = 18$). Specifically, responses from African American/Black at 6.6% ($n = 9$), Hispanic/Latino at .7% ($n = 1$), Asian/Asian American at 1.5% ($n = 2$), Native American/Alaska Native at 1.5% ($n = 2$) and

prefer to self-disclose at 3% ($n = 4$) faculty were all extremely low and therefore inappropriate to compare. Even after collapsing all Non-White groups together in hopes of getting enough respondents for a subgroup comparison, the response rates were still low making for a difficult comparison between faculty groups based on race. Similarly, response rates were also very low for respondents who choose “prefer to self-disclose” or “prefer not to disclose” regarding their gender ($n = 7$).

Based on NCES data from Fall 2022, the actual full-time faculty at participating colleges ($n = 455$) were 9.2% ($n = 42$) African American/Black, 1.76% ($n = 8$) Hispanic/Latino, 4% ($n = 18$) Asian/Asian American, .7% ($n = 3$) Native American/Alaska Native and 1.1% ($n = 5$) were two or more races (NCES, 2022). The actual demographic statistics have slightly higher counts of the various racial groups than what was represented in this study (NCES, 2022).

Confounding Variables

Confounding variables are variables other than the variables being measured that may influence participant responses (Linfield & Posavac, 2018). For example, participants could begin the survey, leave some (or all) of the survey questions unanswered or exit the survey before completion, which could cause important data to go unreported. Another confounding variable is that we do not know the status of police or security officer presence at these institutions, which may have influenced respondents’ perceptions of campus safety.

Linfield and Posavac (2018) suggest these limitations can be improved by increasing the size of the sample, providing participants clear instructions regarding participation, and using standard practices such as scales and instruments common to the field of study.

Implications

Since community colleges are public institutions that operate in part on limited funds allocated by the General Assembly of Virginia (Mazzariello, 2022), these findings could help guide administrators on how to best allocate funds to improve perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

The findings from this study may also affect future practice by helping administrators pin-point best practices or policies that need to be revamped to boost faculty feelings of safety on campus. If administrators use this study to make changes on campus that increase faculty feelings of safety, the findings of this study could have the potential to indirectly boost employee engagement, satisfaction, and length of employment. Community college administrators and directors of human resource departments may also use the findings from this study to support hiring and training practices. For example, including additional training on a zero-tolerance policy for hostility in gender specific bathrooms, or cluster office spaces of female full-time faculty by staff who hold regular office hours so female faculty are not isolated during office hours.

This study has begun a sensitive, yet necessary, conversation between faculty and administrators. A conversation that may not have taken place if it were not for the anonymous nature of the study. While previous research indicates faculty underreport negative student behavior due to lack of administrative support and fear of retaliation (Morrissette, 2001), faculty participated in this study anonymously and therefore were able to be completely transparent without jeopardizing employee relations or fear of retaliation.

Implications for Practice

One recommendation is for administrators to take a closer look at these findings and structure a plan that helps faculty feel safer on campus. For example, having the realities of

campus crime woven into onboarding, convocation, annual campus safety related trainings, and faculty meetings could help combat the narrative that being threatened with a firearm on campus is of primary concern. Administrators need to provide faculty with a step-by-step guide on how to best handle disruptive students (Harvey, 2011; Rollings, 2010), so faculty know what to do in these instances. Additionally, maybe hardwire telephones need to be reinstalled in offices for women to regain their sense of safety in their offices. Furthermore, offices of women faculty could be clustered around the offices of staff or administrators who work more regular hours, so women faculty are not as secluded while in their offices. Another recommendation is for campus police to more frequently patrol near the offices of women faculty. Campus police could also offer services (personal escort or shuttle) to escort faculty to their vehicles to help alleviate any fear associated with the parking lot location (Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Wade, 2018). Furthermore, maybe gender-neutral bathrooms need to be designated in certain areas on campus so individuals who do not identify as male or female can use the bathroom in an environment they perceive as non-hostile. In addition, maybe additional police presence or increased lighting in campus parking lots need examination so changes can be made for these areas to be perceived as safe by more faculty.

I think faculty as a whole need to take some ownership, by becoming more involved with campus safety planning. If faculty become more involved with campus safety planning, their interests will be better represented overall. I believe if faculty were required to participate in campus safety training, those faculty may report feeling safer on campus. Therefore, administrators should strongly consider making faculty participation mandatory for campus safety related training or services.

Recommendations for Future Research

Additional research is imperative to get a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at community colleges. I would like to see a qualitative or mixed-methods study on the topic, to help get a sense for the reasons behind these significant findings. For example, why exactly do women faculty feel significantly less safe in their offices than their male peers and why do faculty with ten or more years of experience feel less safe in many instances? A qualitative focus group or interview research design could add to the knowledge in this area.

I would like to see more research on faculty perceptions of campus safety specifically from Non-White faculty. Maybe studying the large or extra-large Virginia community colleges could provide enough data for a comparison among the various racial demographics.

Another recommendation for future research is studying faculty perceptions of campus safety as it relates to campus police officers. Previous research concluded campus police being more accessible and visible helped reduce crime-related fear on campus (Dibelka, Jr., 2019; Patton & Gregory, 2014; Wicker, 2016). Wade (2018) further noted a trend of faculty desiring more law enforcement on campus. Many faculty and staff noted campus police enhance campus safety by providing training, offering escorts, patrolling, and responding to calls for assistance (Dibelka, Jr., 2019). Moreover, when students were surveyed, students attending a campus with no campus police or campus security presence reported the highest levels of concern regarding campus safety (Patton & Gregory, 2014). While this current study did not cover faculty perceptions of campus safety as it relates to campus police, increased police presence or building faculty/police relations could be a real solution to reducing faculty fear on campus. However, additional research needs to be done to add to the knowledge in this area.

Research like this study but using a years of experience scale that better aligns with previous research, should also be done to get a more comprehensive picture of faculty perceptions of campus safety based on faculty years of experience. While this study noted some statistical significance related to faculty years of experience, it was difficult to ground these findings in previous research due to the scale inconsistencies across the studies.

Chapter Five Summary

While faculty should feel safe on college campuses where they teach, over 30% of full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges are concerned about being threatened with a firearm on campus, and almost every faculty demographic most fear the location of campus parking lots. Moreover, female full-time faculty feel significantly less safe in their offices than their male full-time faculty peers. These findings and others need to be researched further so we can comprehensively understand how to best make changes to improve faculty perceptions of campus safety.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM MEMBER COLLEGES

Table 5

VCCS member colleges for Fall 2022 listed by full-time enrollment (FTE) in order from least to greatest

Community College	Fall 2022 FTE
Eastern Shore	368
Mountain Gateway	529
Paul D. Camp	642
Mountain Empire	1,215
Wytheville	1,226
Virginia Highlands	1,249
Danville	1,359
Patrick Henry	1,414
Southwest Virginia	1,432
Rappahannock	1,459
Southside Virginia	1,820
Central Virginia	1,915
Blue Ridge	1,996
New River	2,361
Piedmont Virginia	2,567
Virginia Western	3,210
Laurel Ridge	3,377
Virginia Peninsula	3,377
Germanna	4,132
Reynolds	4,286
Brightpoint	4,453
Tidewater	8,866
Northern Virginia	26,000
Total VCCS FTE	79,253

APPENDIX B
EMAIL FROM DR. BURRUSS GRANTING PERMISSION FOR USE OF HIS SURVEY
INSTRUMENT

Hailey,

You can certainly use it. Best of luck with your research!

-George

George W. Burruss, Ph.D.
Professor and Associate Chair
Department of Criminology
CIBR Lab, The Cybercrime Interdisciplinary Behavioral Research Laboratory
University of South Florida
Tampa, Florida

APPENDIX C
EMAIL ON BEHALF OF DR. THOMPSON GRANTING PERMISSION FOR USE OF
HER SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Hailey,

Provost Thompson gives you her permission to use her survey work, however, she no longer has the survey information. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further assistance.

Regards,

Diana

Diana Schaefer

Executive Assistant to Provost/Sr. Vice President of Academic Affairs

Wright State University | 3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy | Dayton, OH 45435

258 University Hall

tel: 937-775-2029

Diana.Schaefer@wright.edu

APPENDIX D
EMAIL FROM DR. PATTON GRANTING PERMISSION FOR USE OF HIS SURVEY
INSTRUMENT

Good morning,

Yes, by all means. Good luck. You have my permission. I am honored to help you with the validation of the work.

Have a great day,
Chad

Dr. Chad Patton
Dean of Career and Occupational Technology
Southside Virginia Community College
109 Campus Drive
Alberta VA 23821
office: 434-949-1038
cell: 434-774-6312

APPENDIX E

COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY CAMPUS SAFETY SURVEY INFORMED

CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

PROJECT TITLE: An Examination of the Perceptions of Campus Safety Among Full-time Faculty at Virginia Community Colleges

INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES. An Examination of the Perceptions of Campus Safety Among Full-time Faculty at Virginia Community Colleges research is conducted online.

RESEARCHERS

Dr. Dennis Gregory, Associate Professor, Ed.D., Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Higher Education and Community College Leadership
Hailey Hermosa, PhD Candidate, Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, Community College Leadership

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

Several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of perceptions of campus safety. However, only one of them researched perceptions of campus safety among faculty at a community college, and that researcher specifically called for more research in this area. The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of campus safety among full-time faculty at Virginia community colleges.

If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research of an electronic survey composed of 27 questions, 22 regarding experiences, perceptions, and attitudes about campus safety and 5 covering demographic information. If you say YES, then your participation will last about 15-20 minutes and will be strictly online. Approximately 600 full-time faculty employed at community colleges across Virginia will be participating in this study.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA

To the best of your knowledge, you should be employed as a full-time faculty member at a Virginia Community College, if you are not, that would keep you from participating in this study.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

RISKS: If you decide to participate in this study, then you may face a risk of recalling potentially traumatic events and thinking about your perceptions around campus safety. The researcher tried to reduce these risks by providing a 4-point Likert-type scale to choose from. And, as with any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

BENEFITS: The main benefit to you for participating in this study is contributing to the knowledge in the area of faculty perceptions of campus safety.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS

The researchers want your decision about participating in this study to be absolutely voluntary. Yet the researchers are unable to give you any payment for participating in this study.

NEW INFORMATION

If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The researchers will take reasonable steps to keep private information, such as survey responses, confidential. The researcher will maintain data on a password-protected computer that will only be available to the researchers. Any results will be provided in aggregate form to maintain participant confidentiality. Data will be destroyed no later than 5 years after completion of the study. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications; but the researcher will not identify you. Of course, your records may be subpoenaed by court order or inspected by government bodies with oversight authority.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study -- at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with your community college, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY

If you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of harm, injury, or illness arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact Dr. Dennis Gregory, Principal Investigator, at 757-683-3702 or Hailey Hermosa, Investigator, at 434-420-8824, Dr. John Baaki, Chair of the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies Human Subjects Committee, at 757-683-5491 at Old Dominion University, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research at 757-683-3460 who will be glad to review the matter with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them:

Dr. Dennis Gregory, Principal Investigator at 757-683-3702
Hailey Hermosa, Investigator at 434-420-8824

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should reach out to Dr. John Baaki, Chair of the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies Human Subjects Committee, at jbaaki@odu.edu or 757-683-5491.

And importantly, by consenting below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. You are welcome to retain a copy of this form for your records.

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

By sharing this survey, I certify that I have explained the nature and purpose of this research, including benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human subjects and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I will answer the subject's questions and have encouraged them to ask questions at any time during the course of this study.

APPENDIX F
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE, EXEMPT LETTER

Please note that Old Dominion University Education Human Subjects Review Committee has published the following Board Document on IRBNet:

Project Title: [2158443-1] An Examination of the Perceptions of Campus Safety Among Full-time faculty at Virginia Community Colleges
Principal Investigator: Dennis Gregory, Ed.D

Submission Type: New Project
Date Submitted: February 4, 2024

Document Type: Exempt Letter
Document Description: Exempt Letter
Publish Date: March 4, 2024

Should you have any questions you may contact John Baaki at jbaaki@odu.edu.

Thank you,
The IRBNet Support Team

APPENDIX G**COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY CAMPUS SAFETY SURVEY**

Please tell us about your college campus.

1. Where do you work?

Eastern Shore Community College
Mountain Gateway Community College
Paul D. Camp Community College
Mountain Empire Community College
Wytheville Community College
Virginia Highlands Community College
Danville Community College
Patrick Henry Community College
Southwest Virginia Community College
Rappahannock Community College
Southside Virginia Community College
Central Virginia Community College
Blue Ridge Community College
New River Community College
Piedmont Virginia Community College
Virginia Western Community College
Laurel Ridge Community College
Virginia Peninsula Community College
Germanna Community College
Reynolds Community College
Brightpoint Community College
Tidewater Community College
Northern Virginia Community College

Please tell us about yourself.

2. Gender:

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Prefer to self-disclose: _____

d. Prefer not to disclose: _____

3. Age:

- a. 18 – 24
- b. 25 – 32
- c. 33 – 40
- d. 41 – 48
- e. 49 – 56
- f. 57 or over

4. Race:

- a. White
- b. African American/Black
- c. Hispanic/Latino
- d. Asian/Asian-American
- e. Native American/Alaska Native
- f. Prefer to self-disclose: _____

5. How long you have been employed by your college?

- a. < 1 year
- b. 1 – 3 years
- c. 4 – 6 years
- d. 7 – 10 years
- e. 11 – 15 years
- f. 16 – 19 years
- g. 20+ years

6. Have you ever been a victim of crime while on your campus?

a. Yes

b. No

Please indicate how concerned you are about being a victim of crime while on campus.

1 - Very concerned, 2 - Concerned, 3 - Not Concerned, 4 - Not concerned at all

7. How concerned are you about being a victim of crime while on your campus?

1

2

3

4

8. How concerned are you about being victimized on campus by,

a. having something stolen?

1

2

3

4

b. having your property vandalized?

1

2

3

4

c. being stalked?

1

2

3

4

d. being harassed?

1

2

3

4

e. being verbally threatened?

1

2

3

4

f. being raped or sexually assaulted?

1

2

3

4

g. being robbed?

1

2

3

4

h. being physically beaten up?

1 2 3 4

i. being threatened with a firearm?

1 2 3 4

Please indicate how safe you feel in the following areas while on campus.

1 - Very safe, 2 - Safe, 3 - Unsafe, 4 – Very Unsafe

9. How safe do you feel on your campus overall?

1 2 3 4

10. Please indicate how safe you feel in the following areas while on campus.

Classroom: 1 2 3 4

Lab: 1 2 3 4

Hallway: 1 2 3 4

Office: 1 2 3 4

Library: 1 2 3 4

Bathroom: 1 2 3 4

Parking Lot: 1 2 3 4

Sidewalk: 1 2 3 4

Sports Venue: 1 2 3 4

Open Spaces: 1 2 3 4

APPENDIX H
EMAIL SENT TO PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPATING COLLEGES, REQUESTING
PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

Good Morning--

I am writing to request your college's participation in a study aimed at gauging faculty perceptions of campus safety. This is the sister study to two previous studies that were also focused on creating a safer environment on Virginia community college campuses (Patton & Gregory, 2016; Sartini et al., 2023).

Participation in the study includes, 1) allowing access to the email addresses for all full-time faculty at your institution and 2) granting permission to survey your full-time faculty with one 25-question Likert scale electronic survey.

This study has already passed the Human Subjects Review Committee at Old Dominion University which ensures the rights and safety of all participants are protected. Even after your college agrees to participate in this study, survey participation is voluntary for individual faculty members. Furthermore, participants will remain private as no personally identifiable information will be collected.

Six colleges throughout the VCCS will participate in this study and data will be reported as a group. Participating colleges are welcome to use the results of this research.

During an open forum at Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg, Virginia on April 4, 2023, Dr. David Doré, Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) said, "keeping our employees safe is one of my highest priorities and I am sure that it's your president's priority as well". Dr. Doré went on to share about a scare he experienced personally at Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona.

Understanding the subtleties of campus safety is paramount and points directly to fulfilling the mission of many institutions of higher education. Furthermore, studying community colleges is crucial as they are largely ignored in the research.

Please let me know if your college is open to joining this effort to promote campus safety. Thank you!

All the best,
Hailey Hermosa
PhD Candidate, ODU

APPENDIX I

**INITIAL EMAIL SENT TO FULL-TIME FACULTY AT PARTICIPATING
COMMUNITY COLLEGES, REQUESTING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY**

COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY CAMPUS SAFETY SURVEY

I am writing to request your participation in a study aimed at gauging faculty perceptions of campus safety. This is the sister study to two previous studies that also focused on creating a safer environment on Virginia community college campuses, Patton & Gregory (2016) studied community college students and Sartini et al. (2023) studied community college presidents.

Now it is our turn to have our voices be heard and share our experiences regarding campus safety. I say “our” because while I am a doctoral student at Old Dominion University, I am also a full-time faculty member at Central Virginia Community College (CVCC), in Lynchburg, VA.

I know firsthand how incredibly busy this time of year is, but if you could please take a few minutes to complete this survey regarding your perceptions of safety at work I would greatly appreciate it.

This study has already been approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee at Old Dominion University which ensures the rights and safety of all participants are protected. Participation in this survey is VOLUNTARY. Furthermore, no personally identifiable information is being collected therefore this survey is completely PRIVATE. You will find the complete informed consent document outlined at the start of the survey.

Click [HERE](#) to begin. Please have your responses submitted by March 25th.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this research. Understanding the subtleties of campus safety is paramount and points directly to fulfilling the mission of our institutions of higher education.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this survey or if you would like a copy of the results, please contact me directly at 434-420-8824 or HHerm001@odu.edu.

All the best,
Hailey Hermosa, PhD Candidate
Old Dominion University
Darden College of Education and Professional Studies

APPENDIX J

**FOLLOW-UP EMAIL SENT TO FULL-TIME FACULTY AT PARTICIPATING
COMMUNITY COLLEGES, REQUESTING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY**

Good Morning--

Sending a quick reminder about the campus safety survey for full-time faculty.

I am leaving the survey open for a few more days in hopes of getting some more responses. If you haven't already completed this survey (only takes about 10 mins) and would like to, **please click [HERE](#) to begin and have your responses submitted by March 29th.**

A huge THANK YOU to those who have already participated.

Understanding the subtleties of campus safety is paramount and points directly to fulfilling the mission of our institutions of higher education.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this survey or if you would like a copy of the results, please contact me directly at 434-420-8824 or HHerm001@odu.edu.

All the best,
Hailey Hermosa, PhD Candidate
Old Dominion University
Darden College of Education and Professional Studies

VITA

Hailey Ann Hermosa
4100 Education Building
Norfolk, VA 23529

Background: I was born in Lynchburg, VA. In 2003, I earned a Bachelor of Arts in both Biology and International Affairs from Sweet Briar College. I went on to study at Old Dominion University (ODU) for graduate school, subsequently earning a Master of Arts in Community and Environmental Science from ODU in 2008. I continued my education at ODU and completed the graduate certificate in Community College Leadership in 2021. I successfully defended my dissertation in July 2024 and now have a Ph.D. in Community College Leadership from Old Dominion University.

2003	B.A., Biology Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, VA
2003	B.A., International Affairs Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, VA
2008	M.A., Community and Environmental Health Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA
2012-19	Adjunct Faculty, Health Sciences Central Virginia Community College, Lynchburg, VA
2019-present	Program Head / Assistant Professor, Health Sciences Central Virginia Community College, Lynchburg, VA
2020-22	Coordinator, Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) Program Workforce Development Central Virginia Community College, Lynchburg, VA
2021	Graduate Certificate, Community College Leadership Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA
2022	Faculty Teaching Effectiveness Award Central Virginia Community College, Lynchburg, VA
2024	Doctoral Candidate Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Campus Safety, Faculty Perceptions of Campus Safety, Community College Campus Safety