Image courtesy of Sara Girard and News4Jax.com

UF ALERT SUMMARY
& AFTER-ACTION REPORT
2015

Overview

The University of Florida (UF) strives to provide an effective emergency notification and timely warning system for students, faculty, staff and visitors. The system, branded as UF Alert, is consistently reviewed and measured for performance. When a significant emergency or dangerous situation is immediately occurring or threatening the health and safety of Campus, an emergency notification is issued. A timely warning is issued when the incident represents a serious or continuing, but not immediate, threat to students and or employees. Messages are triggered by reports or confirmations of incidents within the University's Clery Act defined geography. Generally, these boundaries include "reasonably contiguous" areas of Campus as well as public sidewalks, streets and opposite sidewalks along the Campus borders.

This document contains a summary of notification activity for the 2015 calendar year as well as results from the annual UF Alert test. Additionally, *Attachment 1* includes full message contents from all 2015 UF Alerts. Results from a 2015 survey of first-year students conducted by graduate students within the Department of Public Relations in the College of Journalism and Communications is contained in *Attachment 2*. The study focused on perceptions of UF Alerts among first year students.

Summary of Calendar Year 2015 UF Alert Messages

UF issued a total of ninety-two (92) messages covering twenty-nine (29) separate incidents during the year. This number includes three (3) tests and ten (10) timely warnings. Three (3) of the alerts were sent to the Lake Nona Reseach and Academic Center (RAC) recipient group while all others were sent to the Gainesville recipeint group, serving main campus. The table below lists the incidents and number of associated messages. Message language for each of the notifications is documented in *Attachment 1*.

Table 1: UF Alerts Issued During Calendar Year 2015

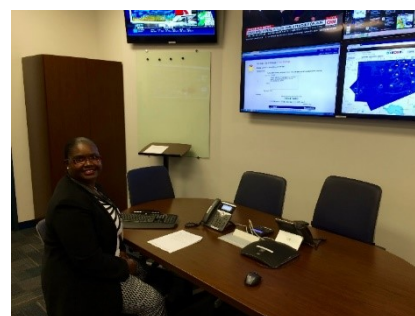| Incident	Number of Messages	Date Issued	UF Alert Recipient Group
UF Alert Test	1	01/13	Lake Nona
Suspicious Package – Lake Nona RAC	2	03/16	Lake Nona
Robbery – W. University Avenue	2	03/29	Gainesville
Timely Warning – SW 5th Avenue	1	04/16	Gainesville
Armed Suspect – Matherly / Lake Alice Area	7	04/23	Gainesville
Timely Warning – SW 16th Court	2	05/07	Gainesville
Timely Warning – JWRU Threat	1	05/11	Gainesville
UF Alert Test	2	06/17	Lake Nona
Armed Robbery – Near Sorority Row	6	08/17	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – SW 20th Avenue	6	08/19	Gainesville
Timely Warning – SW 20th Avenue	1	08/25	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – SW 14th Drive	12	08/28	Gainesville
Timely Warning – SW 2nd Avenue	1	08/29	Gainesville
Timely Warning – NW 3rd Avenue	1	09/05	Gainesville

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Incident	Number of Messages	Date Issued	UF Alert Recipient Group
Armed Robbery – NW 17th Street	3	09/10	Gainesville
Building Fire – Keys Residential Complex	5	09/19	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – NW 4th Avenue	5	10/09	Gainesville
HazMat – Communicore	3	10/13	Gainesville
Timely Warning – NW 3rd Place	1	10/28	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – SW 9th Road	5	10/30	Gainesville
Timely Warning – Gator City / Sorority Row	1	10/30	Gainesville
Timely Warning – W. University Avenue	1	11/08	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – SW 9th Road	4	11/08	Gainesville
HazMat – Music Building	4	11/10	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – W. University Avenue	5	11/17	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – SW 3rd Avenue	4	11/17	Gainesville
UF Alert Test	1	11/19	Gainesville
Timely Warning – NW 15th Terrace	1	12/11	Gainesville
Armed Robbery – SW 33rd Place	4	12/23	Gainesville
	Total = 92		

UF Alert Users Training

Users of the UF Alert system, who are authorized to send messages, are provided regular education and training opportunities. For Univeristy Relations, UF Department of Emergency Management (UFDEM) conducts training on a quarterly basis, requiring users to long-in and initiate a test message from the InformaCast portal. UF Police Department dispatchers complete a monthly test administrated by the Police Communications Manager. Dispatchers must demonstrate proficiency on InformaCast as well as Blackboard Connect. All new dispatchers are presented with an overview training, outlining the UF Alert program and specific details of sending a message. Following an actual UF Alert, the sending dispatcher is provided with a written quality assurance review of performance and message wording. The purcpose of the regular testing and training is to address and improve the human component behind commencing an emergency notification.

UF Alert Annual Test Results

In accordance with UF's Annual Security and Fire Seacty Report, _Together for a Safe Campus_, as well as the _Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Secuirty Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act_, a coordianted test of the UF Alert system was conducted during the fall semester. The announced test occurred on November 19th and activated each notification

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method – text messaging, email, VoIP mass notification, social media, web and RSS. The test message was sent via the integrated InformaCast portal. Specifically, this test activated messages directed to subscribers of "UF Alert-Gainesville." The Police Communications Manager initiated the message, including recording the audio portion.
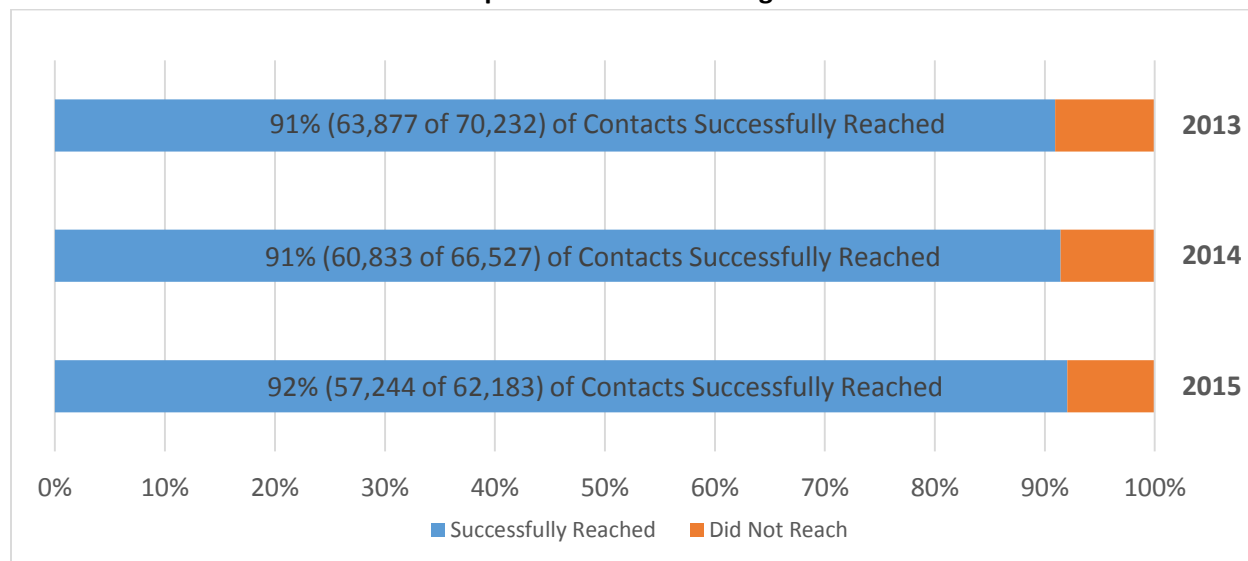
Text Messaging

Text messaging is provided through an interface with vendor Blackboard Connect. The system attempted to deliver to 62,405 contacts. The text was sent at 11:39 AM and completed by 11:57 AM. Ninety-two percent (92%), or 57,244 contacts, were successfully reached by the test message. The majority of the eight percent (8%) of the individuals who did not receive the test message have either opted out of receiving text messages through Blackboard or have entered an invalid phone number in the MyUFL emergency contact registry. This performance is inline with previous years, as depicted in Table 3. A detailed report of the delivery results is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Text Message Detailed Delivery Results

	Number of Contacts	Percentage of Total
Text Email Sent	2,597	4%
Sent to Carrier	2,981	5%
Delivery Confirmed	51,666	83%
Text Opted-Out	3,772	6%
Text Pending Opt-In	101	0%
Invalid Text Phone	920	1%
International Text Not Enabled	146	0%
	Total = 62,183	

Table 3: Annual Test Performance Comparision of Text Message Device Deliveries

2013 — 91% (63,877 of 70,232) of Contacts Successfully Reached
2014 — 91% (60,833 of 66,527) of Contacts Successfully Reached
2015 — 92% (57,244 of 62,183) of Contacts Successfully Reached

■ Successfully Reached   ■ Did Not Reach

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Email

The email performance benchmark employed is ninety-percent (90%) delivery rate within twenty minutes. Performance during the test significantly exceeded the benchmark. Over ninety-nine percent (99%), 63,756 of 63,897 emails, were delivered by the end of the first minute. Table 4 compares email delivery performance from previous annual tests.

Table 4: Annual Test Performance Comparision of Email Deliveries During First Five Minutes

	Minute 1	Minute 2	Minute 3	Minute 4	Minute 5
2015	63,756	109	4	0	3
2014	21,673	29,186	10,227	14	1
2013	14,933	42,024	15,545	1,703	1,372

VoIP Mass Notification

The test message was sent to IP devices (speakers and telephones) maintained by all three campus providers: Network Services-Telecommunications, HealthNet and Housing & Residence Educaiton. At

the time of the test, UF maintained 16,085 IP devices connected to the InformaCast system. This total is a slight increase from the 15,455 devices during the 2014 annual test. Both Network Services and Housing & Residence Education performed well against acceptable benchmarks with successful device activations of ninety-nine percent (99%) and ninety-six percent respectively. Despite on-going corrective actions, HealthNet only slightly improved from the previous annual test with seventy-two percent (72%) of devices reporting a successful broadcast of the message. HealthNet is currently researching potential solutions to increase performance. A survey of audio quality from the outdoor speakers was conducted with the help of student volunteers from the Gator Emergency Medical Response club. Members were stationed at various locations around campus to complete a survey form regarding the audio portion of the test.

Table 5: Detailed Results of IP Device Performance during 2015 Test

	Network Services-Telecommunications	HealthNet	Housing & Residence Education
Number of activation attempts	9,458	6,162	465
Number of activation successes	9,358	4,449	445
Number of activation failures	100	1,173	20
Authentication errors	89	257	16
Network errors	10	447	1
Unknown errors	1	0	0
Average time to activate a device	0.994 seconds	1.933 seconds	0.552 seconds
Maximum time to activate a device	10.423 seconds	28.766 seconds	1.896 seconds
Minimum time to activate a device	0.003 seconds	0.015 seconds	0.007 seconds

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	Network Services-Telecommunications	HealthNet	Housing & Residence Education
Broadcast initiated (HHMMSS)	11:36:07	11:39:21	11:39:21
Broadcast finished (HHMMSS)	11:40:56	11:43:43	11:40:18

Table 6: Annual Test Performance Comparision of IP Device Device Deliveries

	Network Services-Telecommunications			HealthNet			Housing & Residence Education		
	2015	2014	2013	2015	2014	2013	2015	2014	2013
Total Number of Devices	9,458	8,954	8,572	6,162	6,086	5,879	465	415	406
Number of Successful Activations	9,358	8,848	8,273	4,449	4,284	2,719	445	407	387
Percentage of Successful Device Activations	99%	99%	97%	72%	70%	46%	96%	98%	95%

Social Media

The test message was successfully posted to the UF Alert Facebook account: www.facebook.com/ufalert. However, a techincal issue prevented immediate posting to the UF Alert (@ufalert) and University (@uf) Twitter accounts. The initial test message included a URL scripted as www.ufalert.ufl.edu. Twitter automatically appends "http://" to all included website addresses, even when not appearing in the message, and includes those characters in the 140 limit. The error resulted in rejection of the post. Staff ajusted the message and successfully posted to the Twitter accounts. UF Alert currently has 5,557 followers on Twitter and 3,557 likes on Facebook.

Web

The message was succesfully posted on the UF homepage (www.ufl.edu) during the test. The University's homepage provides an easily avaliable outlet for those internal or external to the institution to view UF Alerts.

RSS

An RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feed was created when the test message was initiated, as is the case with all UF Alerts. These feeds allow anyone with a third-party RSS reader, such as Microsoft Outlook or most web browsers, to receive UF Alert messages.

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Areas for Improvement

The University efforts to improve the emergency notification process and evaluate performance following each UF Alert distribuiton. Enhancements, both tehcnical and training, are continually occuring. From the 2015 exercise, one area was noted for improvement:

Issue – Only seventy-two percent (72%) of IP devices on the HealthNet system reported a successful delivery of the UF Alert test message.

Status – While a slight improvement from the 2014 test, the issue is ongoing and performance does not match that experienced by Network Services or Housing & Residence Education. HealthNet continues to research solutions and has an open case with the vendor, Singlewire.

UF Alert Program Goals and Sucesses

Several long-terms goals are in place to drive enhancements and the future direction of the Unviersity's emergency notification program. These aspirations were developed and will be carried out through the UF Alert Working Group. The group is coordinated by the Department of Emergency Management and normally meets on a monthly basis. Below are the desired improvements over the next five year period:

- **Inclusion of Shands employees** – Currently, UF Health at Shands Hospital employees are not included in the UF Alert program. However, Idenity and Access Management changes have been completed to allow incorporation into SMS/text messaging and email list components. This process will be finalized with the expected lauch of *UF Alert-Shands* in 2016.

- **Evaluation of WEBS Talk-A-Phone** – In 2015, UF installed a few Talk-A-Phone (blue light) towers with Wide-Area Emergency Broadcast System (WEBS) which features speakers for outdoor notifications. If the units perform as desired, UF will evaluate further expansion of WEBS devices on campus.

- **Continued formalization of UF Alert-Lake Nona** – In 2015, Lake Nona completed an annual test of their emergncy notification system as well as issued a message in response to a suspicious package. Emergency Management will continue to work with Lake Nona staff regarding notification procedures and training.

- **Integration of UF Alert-Jacksonville** – The emergency notification system for the UF Health Science Center in Jacksonville is not incorporated into the UF Alert program. Ideally the systems would share the same Identity and Access Mnagement process for subscribing as well as branding and notificaiton methods.

- **Automation of tornado warnings** – In 2015, Emergency Management implemented an automated process to initiate UF Alert messages when the National Weather Service issues an applicable tornado warning.

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UF Alert-Lake Nona
Tuesday, January 13, 2015, 11:30AM
This is a test of the UF Lake Nona notification system. No action is required. Learn more at
http://ufalert.ufl.edu/lakenona.

UF Alert-Lake Nona
Monday, March 16, 2015, 5:41PM
The UF Research and Academic Center in Lake Nona is currently closed due to a suspicious package and
the building has been evacuated. Students, faculty and staff should not travel to the property if currently
off-site. Police and emergency officials are on scene. A follow-up message will be sent when the facility
has resumed normal operations. Thank you.

Monday, March 16, 2015, 6:26PM
Police and emergency officials determined the package does not pose a threat. The UF Research and
Academic Center in Lake Nona has returned to normal operations. Thank you.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Sunday, March 29, 2015, 12:53AM
1 of 2 Armed robbery occurred at 1400 W University 3 black males in hoodies one armed with a gun

Sunday, March 29, 2015, 12:54AM
2 of 2 suspects fled north from campus call 911 with any information

UF Alert-Gainesville
Thursday, April 16, 2015, 2:34PM
The following information was reported from the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) today and is
being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of
Florida campus:

The GPD is currently investigating an incident of prowling and exposure of sexual organs that took place
on Thursday April 16, 2015 at approximately 7:30 A.M.   According to information provided by the GPD,
the victim saw the subject looking in the window of her apartment.

The suspect is described as a black male in his 50's with a beard. He was wearing gray/blue plaid Blue
Jeans and a red t-shirt. Subject left the area westbound on SW 5th Ave.

Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the man's identity is asked to call the
Gainesville Police Department at 352.955.1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES).
Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352.372.STOP (7867).

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The UFPD recognizes that crimes of this nature are not the fault of the victim and is highly unusual. Consequently, the UFPD would like to remind everyone of these basic safety considerations:

Report suspicious activities or individuals immediately using 9.1.1

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. This is particularly true if you are wearing headphones and may not be able to hear someone near or behind you.

If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

Avoid walking alone. On campus, use the Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol (SNAP), a safe campus escort service by calling 352.392.7627 (SNAP).

Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, and entryways.

If someone stops you and asks for directions, avoid getting close to the individual.

For questions regarding information contained in this release, please contact Major Brad Barber at (352) 273-3309. If after hours, please call (352) 392-1111 (# UFPD (#8373) and ask to speak to a Patrol Supervisor. I can also be reached via e-mail at: [log in to unmask] or see the UFPD webpage at http://www.police.ufl.edu.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Thursday, April 23, 2015, 1:04AM
Part 1 of 2 Armed subject spotted in Matherly area. No direction of travel. Black male with hand gun

Thursday, April 23, 2015, 1:05AM
part 2. All dark clothing. Tank top with dark pants, black banana white lettering on face. Call 352-392-1111 with info.

Thursday, April 23, 2015, 1:18AM
Updated Description. Black male medium build, shorter. Dark clothing, Tank top. black bandanna with white lettering.

Thursday, April 23, 2015, 1:52AM
believe subject is now in lake alice area / heading towards hume. Gpd is assisting. Call with 352-392-1111 with info

Thursday, April 23, 2015, 2:03AM
Part 1 of 2 We have a perimeter set up around lake alice area. If within half mile of area, stay inside.

Thursday, April 23, 2015, 2:05AM
Part2 Description Black male, medium build, short. Dark clothes with short hair, about 5ft 7. Dark bandanna over face.

Thursday, April 23, 2015, 3:08AM

Subject is in custody, we are clearing the call. Normal activity can resume.

UF Alert-Gainesville

Thursday, May 7, 2015, 10:08AM

The following information was reported to the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) and is being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of Florida campus:

The GPD is currently investigating an armed robbery that took place early Thursday morning at approximately 5:45am at the 1700 block of SW 16th Court. This location is south of campus and the University of Florida Health Shands Cancer Hospital.

According to information provided by the GPD, the victim indicated that he was walking to his workplace when two individuals approached him and robbed him at gunpoint. The suspects then left on foot and the victim continued to his workplace where he notified GPD of the incident. A search perimeter was established by the GPD, however, the suspect was not located. The GPD will release any further information pertaining to this incident.

The first suspect was described by the victim as black male, approximately 5'10"-6' tall, 150-170 pounds, 20-30 years of age, with 1-2 inch dreadlocks. This suspect was last seen wearing a black shirt and khaki pants. The second suspect was described as a black male, 5'8"-5'10", 200-230 pounds. This suspect was last seen wearing a black Nike hat, black shirt, and black pants.

Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the suspects' identity is asked to call the Gainesville Police Department at 352.955.1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES). Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352.372.STOP (7867).

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community:

Avoid walking alone

Report suspicious activities or individuals immediately to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. This is particularly true if you are wearing headphones and may not be able to hear someone near or behind you

If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, and entryways.

Walk on the side of the street facing traffic

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If a driver stops to ask directions, avoid getting close to the individual or vehicle

If a vehicle appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction. You should go to a location where other people are and get assistance.

Always try to let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

Thursday, May 7, 2015, 4:52PM
Timely Warning Update 5/7/15

After further investigation, the armed robbery reported to the Gainesville Police Department this morning and used as the basis for the Timely Warning issued this date has been deemed to be a false report and did not occur.

As GPD Detectives continued their interview with the victim and brought up some inconsistencies in his story, he finally admitted the incident did not in fact occur. The individual indicated he was having financial difficulties and thought the robbery report would "buy him some time"

The subject, Carnell Leon Gallon, 48 of Gainesville will be charged via sworn complaint for Filing a False Report.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Monday, May 11, 2015, 5:28PM
The University of Florida Police Department (UFPD) was notified of the following information regarding a general threat made against the Gainesville High School Prom taking place at the J. Wayne Reitz Union on Saturday, May 16, 2015 and the Gainesville High School Graduation Ceremony taking place at the Stephen C. O'Connell Center on Saturday, June 6, 2015. Due to the nature of these threats and the locations of these events on the University of Florida campus, the UFPD is providing this Timely Warning.

The UFPD was alerted by staff from Gainesville High School (GHS) and the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) that a letter was mailed to the GHS Administration. The threat contained within the letter, while generic in nature, is considered a bomb threat and is being investigated as such.

While the credibility of this threat is considered to be low, the UFPD takes all such threats seriously. As part of the ongoing investigation into this incident, the UFPD is working closely with the GPD as they continue to seek those responsible for sending the letter. The UFPD is also taking additional security measures to help ensure the safety of all those attending these events.

If you have any information regarding this incident and those responsible for sending this threat, please contact the GPD at (352) 955-1818 or the UFPD at (352) 392-1111.

If you observe any suspicious person or activity, immediately contact law enforcement by calling 9-1-1.

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UF Alert-Lake Nona
Wednesday, June 17, 2015, 2:18PM
Tornado Warning for Lake Nona RAC. Move to interior area away from windows, doors and outside walls. Details at http://ufl.to/lnwx

Wednesday, June 17, 2015, 2:24PM
Please disregard previous UF ALERT. It was a test only.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Monday, July 27, 2015, 3:21AM
Shots fired at Murphree Hall lot poss suspects 2 white males in a blue Mazda truck last seen heading north away from campus. Report info to 352-392-1111

Monday, July 27, 2015, 3:41AM
Suspect with firearm in custody. Poss witnesses in blue Mazda truck location unknown. Report any information to UPD at 352-392-1111

UF Alert-Gainesville
Sunday, August 2, 2015, 3:19PM
The University of Florida Police Department (UFPD) is currently investigating a sexual battery that was reported early this morning. Due to the nature of the incident, the UFPD is providing this Timely Warning.

The 19 year old victim reported that she had been at the Grog House with friends. According to the victim she later left the Grog House with an unknown male. She remembers leaving in the front passenger seat of a vehicle and then later was in a bed. The victim stated that the unknown male drove her back to her residence hall where she was later found outside and assisted by other students concerned for her safety.

It is unknown if the crime actually occurred on the University of Florida campus, but detectives are asking anyone with information regarding this case to contact them at the UFPD at 352-392-1111 or the Gainesville Police Department at 352-955-1818.

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

If you become a victim of crime, please contact law enforcement immediately by calling 9-1-1.

Immediately report any suspicious person or activity to law enforcement.

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

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Be sure to lock the doors and windows of your residence.

Do not "prop" open exterior entry doors to your residence.

Do not allow anyone to follow you in your residence as you enter.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Monday, August 17, 2015, 12:36AM
Part 1

Reported two armed subjects near Sorority row area. UPD and GPD on scene. Report info to 352-392-1111

Monday, August 17, 2015, 12:38AM
Part 2

Armed Robery @ sorority row area. Suspects are 2 black males with short hair and no facial hair. One does have a handgun

Monday, August 17, 2015, 12:39AM
Part 3

suspect Black male with white t-shirt, 6 ft 185 pound. 2nd black male 5 ft 8, 170 pound, striped shirt.
Monday, August 17, 2015, 1:27AM
Armed robbery update 4- one armed suspect in custody but is not the suspect that committed the robbery. PFT

Monday, August 17, 2015, 1:44AM
Robbery update- 5 Law enforcement still on scene. One black male suspect wearing a striped shirt remain at large. If seen call 911.

Monday, August 17, 2015, 2:21AM
Police cleared scene. Increase patrols remain in effect as the investigation continues. Report additional information to 392-1111.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Wednesday, August 19, 2015, 2:06AM
A strong Arm robbery occurred in the area of 4400 SW 20th ave. subject are 2 black male with a silver revolver, more details to follow

Wednesday, August 19, 2015, 2:11AM
Still at large blk male wearing white shorts, low cut hair and no shirt. Residents Shelter in place at Lakeside, UVS and Maguire

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Wednesday, August 19, 2015, 2:16AM

At this time one suspect detained at Hull and Bledsoe Dr. Second Subject at large in the area of Hull and Bledsoe.

Wednesday, August 19, 2015, 2:30AM

All residents of UVS and Maguire stay in your homes. Officers are searching the area. Call 911 if you have information

Wednesday, August 19, 2015, 3:00AM

Ref. armed robbery, officers still searching, residents of Maguire and UVS remain in doors. Call 911 with any information.

Wednesday, August 19, 2015, 3:36AM

Suspect not located in the Maguire, UVS, possibly left campus. Officers clearing scene. Increase patrol will be conducted.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Tuesday, August 25, 2015, 2:06PM

The following information was reported to the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) and is being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of Florida campus:

The GPD is currently investigating an armed robbery that took place Saturday evening at approximately 10:15pm at 3527 SW 20th Ave. (West 20 Apartment Complex) but was not reported until this afternoon. This location is west of campus. According to information provided by the GPD, the victim indicated that he was walking alone to his residence when two individuals approached him in the parking lot near his residence. One suspect then grabbed him by the shoulder and punched him while the second suspect, armed with a knife, stood by. The suspects took money from the victim and fled the incident location in either a silver/gray Toyota Camry or Corolla. The GPD will release any further information pertaining to this incident.

The first suspect was described by the victim as black male, wearing a dark V-Neck shirt and dark jean pants. He was said to have a tattoo around his neck and a design cut into his hair which was otherwise described as short. The second suspect was wearing a black button down shirt and was also wearing dark jean pants. Both suspects were believed to be in their 20s and had medium build.

Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the suspects' identity is asked to call the Gainesville Police Department at 352.955.1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES). Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352.372.STOP (7867).

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

Report suspicious activities or individuals immediately to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1

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Avoid walking alone

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. This is particularly true if you are wearing headphones and may not be able to hear someone near or behind you

If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, and entryways.

Walk on the side of the street facing traffic

If a driver stops to ask directions, avoid getting close to the individual or vehicle

If a vehicle appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction. You should go to a location where other people are and get assistance.

Always try to let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

For questions regarding information contained in this release, please contact Major Brad Barber at (352) 273-3309. If after hours, please call (352) 392-1111 (# UFPD (#8373) and ask to speak to a Patrol Supervisor. I can also be reached via e-mail at: [log in to unmask] or see the UFPD webpage at http://www.police.ufl.edu.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Friday, August 28, 2015, 4:19PM
Armed robbery occurred at 2552 SW 14th Dr. Details to follow.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 4:23PM
Armed robbery at SW 14th Dr. Two black male suspects last seen heading away from campus towards Paramount Hotel on foot.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 4:28PM
Suspect #1; 25 years old, small build, wearing blue shirt, tan pants armed with gun.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 4:29PM
Suspect #2. No clothing or physical description. GPD is on scene.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 4:37PM
Incident occurred at 2552 SW 14th Dr. UPD on scene in area increasing patrol. All residents in area shelter in place.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 5:00PM
Updated description of suspect #1, short dreads and long tan pants.

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Friday, August 28, 2015, 5:04PM

Armed robbery occurred at SW 14th Dr. Call UF Police 352-392-1111 with any information.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 5:08PM

Suspect #1 last seen at Oakbrook Walk apartments 5 minutes ago. Please stay out of the area. GPD and UPD remain on scene.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 5:57PM

Police still on scene. Continue to remain alert. Call 911 or 352-392-1111 with any information.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 6:05PM

Suspects not located. Investigation ongoing. UPD will continue to increase patrol. Please call 911 or 392-1111 with any info.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 7:02PM

As a result of the UF Alerts, a citizen sited suspects and reported information to UPD and GPD. Suspects are now in custody.

Friday, August 28, 2015, 7:04PM

The emergency has ended. No need to avoid area or shelter in place.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Saturday, August 29, 2015, 11:12PM

The following incident was originally reported to the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) and after initial investigation, is now being turned over to the University of Florida Police Department (UFPD). Based on the nature of the incident and the time lapse involved, this information is being distributed to the campus community as a Timely Warning.

The UFPD is investigating the report of a robbery that took place Saturday, August 29, 2015 at approximately 12:15am and believed to have occurred somewhere in the area of SW 2nd Avenue and the wooded area just west of the University of Florida Levin College of Law/Village Drive. According to information provided by the victim, he attended an off-campus party at SW 23rd Terrace where he became intoxicated. After he left the party, he was attempting to walk home when he encountered and confronted six individuals. The victim indicated that the individuals yelled profanities at him and he responded. After the initial verbal confrontation, one of the suspects struck the victim in the face and knocked him to the ground. The victim then gave one of the suspects a sum of money to leave him alone and initially all the individuals left the victim. After the victim began walking home however, the six individuals confronted him, struck him once again, knocked him back to the ground, and one individual reached into the victim's pocket and took another sum of money. The six individuals then left the area on foot and the victim returned to a residence hall. The victim was later treated for his injuries at UF Health Shands Hospital. There were no weapons involved in this incident.

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All six suspects were described by the victim as black males wearing dark clothing. The primary suspect was described as having dark skin, approximately 6'4", 185 lbs., skinny yet muscular build, with short braided hair. The victim described three of the other suspects as having a skinny build but could not provide any description for the remaining two suspects.

Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the suspects' identity is asked to call the University of Florida Police Department at 352.392.1111. Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352.372.STOP (7867) or use the UFPD Silent Witness program at http://www.police.ufl.edu/wp-content/asp/secure_ufpd/silent_witness.aspx.

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

Report suspicious activities or individuals immediately to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1.

Avoid walking alone.

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. This is particularly true if you are wearing headphones and may not be able to hear someone near or behind you.

If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, and entryways.
Never drink alcoholic beverages to excess.

Walk on the side of the street facing traffic.

If a driver stops to ask directions, avoid getting close to the individual or vehicle.

If a vehicle appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction. You should go to a location where other people are and get assistance.

Always try to let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Saturday, September 5, 2015, 9:57AM
The following information was reported from the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) today and is being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of Florida campus:

A 21 year old victim reported to GPD at approximately 5am that an unknown suspect entered her residence and attempted to sexually assault her. Friends who were visiting the victim awoke and chased the suspect out of the residence.

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The suspect is described as a black male 20 – 30 years of age, approximately 6' 4" in height, wearing dark clothing. The suspect was last seen fleeing northbound from the area from NW 3rd Ave and NW 8th St.

GPD will be increasing patrols in an effort to identify/apprehend the suspect.
Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the man's identity is asked to call the Gainesville Police Department at 352.955.1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES). Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352.372.STOP (7867).

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

If you become a victim of crime, please contact law enforcement immediately by calling 9-1-1.
Immediately report any suspicious person or activity to law enforcement.
Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!
Be sure to lock the doors and windows of your residence.
Do not "prop" open exterior entry doors to your residence.
Do not allow anyone to follow you in your residence as you enter.
If you are a University of Florida campus resident, never allow a stranger into your residence hall and ensure you follow established security guidelines.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Thursday, September 10, 2015, 2:28AM
Possible Armed Robbery at 207 NW 17th Street, College Park Apartments. Avoid area or secure in place if nearby. Details to follow.

Thursday, September 10, 2015, 2:32AM
Suspect – black male, about 40 years old, in grey shirt, grey hoodie, black pants, armed with silver revolver.

Thursday, September 10, 2015, 2:46AM
Suspect not located. Police have cleared scene. No need to avoid area or secure in place. Call 352-392-1111 or 911 with any info.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Saturday, September 19, 2015, 4:50PM
Building Fire at KEYS RESIDENTAL COMPLEX. Evacuate immediately if inside. Avoid area. Details to follow.

Saturday, September 19, 2015, 5:47PM
(UPDATE) Fire under control limited to laundry room, ODOM is open for Keys Residents. 1/2

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Saturday, September 19, 2015, 5:51PM
(UPDATE) No residential area affected. No one is allowed in until GFR gives all clear. Update will follow. 2/2

Saturday, September 19, 2015, 6:01PM
(UPDATE) O'CONNELL CENTER is open for Keys Residents.

Saturday, September 19, 2015, 7:41PM
(UPDATE) GFR has cleared scene, all residents can return to their rooms.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Friday, October 9, 2015, 12:00AM
Armed Robbery at off campus at location, 228 NW 4th Ave. Avoid area or secure in place if nearby. Details to follow.

Friday, October 9, 2015, 12:09AM
Gainesville Police still looking for one black male suspect, possibly armed with handgun last seen at 400 NW 19th Street.

Friday, October 9, 2015, 12:11AM
Gainesville Police are out with three possible suspects at 400 NW 19th Street.

Friday, October 9, 2015, 12:57AM
Gainesville Police continuing to look for one black male suspect, unknown description. Call 911 with any information.

Friday, October 9, 2015, 1:06AM
Suspect not located. Police have cleared scene. No need to avoid area or secure in place. Call 352-392-1111 or 911 with any info.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Tuesday, October 13, 2015, 5:26PM
HazMat release at 203 Communicore. Avoid area or shelter in place if nearby. Details to follow.

Tuesday, October 13, 2015, 5:28PM
Odor of natural gas inside room CG83. Evacuate immediately. Gainesville Fire Rescue responding.

Tuesday, October 13, 2015, 5:41PM
Gainesville Fire Rescue has indicated the scene is safe. No further hazard exist.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Wednesday, October 28, 2015

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The following information was reported from the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) today and is being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of Florida campus:

A 21 year old female reported to GPD that at approximately 1:30am, Tuesday, October 27, 2015 she left a midtown bar and began to walk to the Townhouse Apartments located at 1740 NW 3rd Pl. The victim indicated that while she was in a stairwell of the facility, she was approached by an unknown suspect who forced her to the ground and threatened to shoot her if she screamed. As the incident was taking place, the suspect observed a passing motorist and he fled southeast from the scene.

The suspect is described by the victim as a light skinned black or Hispanic male, 21 – 22 years of age, approximately 5', 8" to 6' 0' in height, medium build, wearing a white T-Shirt and blue jeans.

GPD will be increasing patrols in an effort to identify/apprehend the suspect.

Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the man's identity is asked to call the Gainesville Police Department at 352.955.1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES). Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352.372.STOP (7867).

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

If you become a victim of crime, please contact law enforcement immediately by calling 9-1-1.

Immediately report any suspicious person or activity to law enforcement.

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. This is particularly true if you are wearing headphones and may not be able to hear someone near or behind you.

If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

Do not allow anyone to follow you in your residence as you enter.

Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, or entryways.

Always try to let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

If possible, walk with others to your destination.

If you believe you are being followed, try to find the nearest populated location to get assistance and call 9-1-1.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Friday, October 30, 2015, 1:59AM
Armed Robbery at 1240 sw 9th rd off campus Avoid area or secure in place if nearby. Details to follow.

Friday, October 30, 2015, 2:07AM
Update 1 of 2: incident at 1240 SW 9 Rd. Subject description is a black male with short dreads. About 60 years old.

Friday, October 30, 2015, 2:11AM
Update 2 of 2: Subject last seen wearing black short sleeve shirt and khaki pants. Armed with a handgun. Call 911 with information.

Friday, October 30, 2015, 2:14AM
Update to incident subject will be about 20 years old and 6 feet tall.

Friday, October 30, 2015, 2:21AM
Suspect(s) not located. Police have cleared scene. No need to avoid area or secure in place. Call 911 with any info.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Friday, October 30, 2015, 10:56AM
The following information was reported to the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) and is being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of Florida campus:

The GPD is currently investigating an armed robbery that took place early Friday morning at approximately 2:00am between Gator City & Sorority Row areas. This location east of the University of Florida campus. According to information provided by the GPD, the victim indicated that after he left Gator City, he was walking in the area when three to six individuals approached him, robbed him at knifepoint and then left the area. The victim delayed reporting the incident for almost three hours and finally made contact with the GPD at approximately 4:43am. For further updates or details on this incident, please contact the GPD.

The only description the victim was able to provide to the GPD was that all of the suspects were white males.

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Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the suspects identity is asked to call the Gainesville Police Department at 352-955-1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES). Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352-372-STOP (7867).

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

Avoid walking alone

Report suspicious activities or individuals immediately to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. This is particularly true if you are wearing headphones and may not be able to hear someone near or behind you

If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, and entryways.

Walk on the side of the street facing traffic

If a driver stops to ask directions, avoid getting close to the individual or vehicle

If a vehicle appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction. You should go to a location where other people are and get assistance.

Always try to let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

For questions regarding information contained in this release, please contact Captain Jeff Holcomb at (352) 273-3301. If after hours, please call (352) 392-1111 (# UFPD (#8373) and ask to speak to a Patrol Supervisor. Captain Holcomb can also be reached via e-mail at: [log in to unmask] or see the UFPD webpage at http://www.police.ufl.edu.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Sunday, November 8, 2015, 6:14PM
The following information was reported to the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) and is being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of Florida campus:

The GPD is currently investigating an armed robbery that took place early Sunday morning at approximately 3:00 am near the 1400 block of West University Avenue. This location is north of the University of Florida campus. According to information provided by the GPD, the victim indicated that he was walking in the area of University Avenue and 14th Street when he was forced into a vehicle at gunpoint. The victim was driven to a nearby ATM where the suspect demanded he make a withdrawal. The suspect dropped the victim off fleeing the area. There was a significant delay in reporting this

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incident to police as well as limited information due to the victim's level of intoxication. For further updates or details on this incident, please contact the GPD.

The suspect was described to the GPD as a black male, 5'10", 140 lbs., wearing a dark shirt and unknown color shorts driving a white 4 door sedan.

Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the suspects identity is asked to call the Gainesville Police Department at 352-955-1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES). Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352-372-STOP (7867).

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

Avoid walking alone

Report suspicious activities or individuals immediately to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. This is particularly true if you are wearing headphones and may not be able to hear someone near or behind you

If someone bothers you, don't be embarrassed to attract attention to yourself. Yell!

Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, and entryways.

Walk on the side of the street facing traffic

If a driver stops to ask directions, avoid getting close to the individual or vehicle

If a vehicle appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction. You should go to a location where other people are and get assistance.

Always try to let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

For questions regarding information contained in this release, please contact Captain Bart Knowles at (352) 392-1560. If after hours, please call (352) 392-1111 and ask to speak to a Patrol Supervisor. I can also be reached via e-mail at: [log in to unmask], or see the UFPD webpage at http://www.police.ufl.edu.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Sunday, November 8, 2015, 8:38PM
Attempted Robbery off campus at 1142 SW 9thRd Camden Park Apartments. Three black males Subjects described 18-22 years old. Page 1/3.

Sunday, November 8, 2015, 8:40PM
Subjects described as wearing white shirts. Two on BMX style bicycles, third on foot. No weapons seen. Page 2/3.

Sunday, November 8, 2015, 8:43PM
One has "buck" teeth. Two have short hair. GPD has cleared area. Subjects not located. Any information call 352-955-1818. Page 3/3.

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Tuesday, November 10, 2015, 4:40PM
HazMat release at the Music Building. Evacuation in progress as precaution. Avoid area if nearby. Details to follow.

Tuesday, November 10, 2015, 4:53PM
UFPD and Gainesville Fire Rescue Hazmat Team are on scene investigating a strong odor of gas on the second floor.

Tuesday, November 10, 5:05PM
Gainesville Fire Rescue reports the odor was result of a release from a lift station. No further hazards were found.

Tuesday, November 10, 5:29PM
Police and fire have cleared the Music building. No need to avoid area, building is safe and secure to resume normal activity.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 2:39AM
Armed Robbery at 2635 West University Ave. Avoid area or secure in place if nearby. Details to follow.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 2:50AM
Suspects described as two black males, 19-22 years of age, one armed with a handgun. Unknown direction of travel.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 2:53AM
One suspect with short hair, wearing blue sweatshirt. Second with short hair, wearing red shirt, khaki shorts, and brass knuckles.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 2:55AM
Last known location: Village Drive and West Fraternity Drive.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 3:04AM
Suspects not located. Police have cleared scene. UPD will increase patrol in the area. Call 352-392-1111 or 911 with any info.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 8:00PM
Armed Robbery off campus at 1200 SW 3rd Ave. Avoid area or secure in place if nearby. Details to follow.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 8:11PM
Suspects are two black males in their late 20's. One armed with a handgun. Last seen on foot east bound.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 8:12PM
One suspect wearing a brown thick hoodie with squares. Other suspect medium build.

Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 8:17PM
Suspects not located. Police have cleared scene. UPD will increase patrol in the area. Call 352-392-1111 or 911 with any info.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Thursday, November 19, 2015, 11:39AM
This is a test of the UF Alert-Gainesville notification system. No action is required. Learn more at www.ufalert.ufl.edu. Thanks!

UF Alert-Gainesville
Friday, December 11, 2015, 3:34PM
The following information was reported to the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) and is being distributed to the campus community due to the crime's close proximity to the University of Florida campus:

The GPD is currently investigating a residential burglary that took place early Thursday morning at approximately 3:00 am near the 300 block of North West 15th Terrace. This location is north of the University of Florida campus.

According to information provided by the GPD, the victim indicated that she awoke when her dog began to bark and found an individual standing in the doorway of her bedroom. The suspect then walked to the front door of the victim's residence and left on foot after slamming the door as he exited. For further updates or details on this incident, please contact the GPD.

The suspect was described to GPD as a black male, 6'0"-6'1", tall, slightly fat, late 30s or early 40s and bald and was last seen wearing a black hoodie and blue jeans.

Anyone with information about the incident or who may know the suspects identity is asked to call the Gainesville Police Department at 352-955-1818 or text keyword GPDFL plus your tip to 274637 (CRIMES). Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 352-372-STOP (7867).

The UFPD firmly believes that crime is never the fault of the victim. These general safety tips are provided in an effort to assist members of the UF community.

Report suspicious activities or individuals immediately to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1.

Be diligent about locking doors and windows both when you are home and when you leave home.

If you will not be home until after dark, leave a light on outside so you do not come home to a dark house.

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Consider installing automatic timers, motion lights or dawn to dusk lighting on the outside of your home.

Do not "prop" open exterior entry doors to your residence.

Do not allow anyone to follow you in your residence as you enter.

If you are a University of Florida campus resident, never allow a stranger into your residence hall and ensure you follow established security guidelines.

UF Alert-Gainesville
Wednesday, December 23, 2015, 5:40PM
Armed Robbery at 2620 SW 33rd Place. Avoid area or secure in place if nearby. Details to follow.

Wednesday, December 23, 2015, 5:46PM
GPD INVESTIGATING ARMED ROBBERY AT 2620 SW 33 PLACE PHOENIX APARTMENTS. SUSPECTS ARE IN A GRAY CHRYSLER 300. 2 BLACK MALES WITH ASSAULT RIFLES.

Wednesday, December 23, 2015, 5:48PM
ONE SUSPECT WEARING GRAY SHIRT, ONE SUSPECT WEARING WHITE SHIRT, HAND GUN HAS LASER SIGHT. SUSPECTS STILL IN AREA OF PHEONIX APARTMENTS. STAY OUT OF AREA.

Wednesday, December 23, 2015, 6:52PM
Suspects not located. Police have cleared scene. No need to avoid area or secure in place. Call 352-955-1818 or 911 with any info.

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Attachment 2
Survey of First-Year Students' Preceptions of UF Alert Program
Conducted by the College of Journalism and Communications

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First Impressions: The UF Alert Program and First-Year Students' Perceptions of Safety in Gainesville

A research study conducted in cooperation with the University of Florida Police Department and the UF Dean of Students Office

PUR 6005

Public Relations Research

Dr. Mary Ann Ferguson

Dec. 8, 2015

Executive Summary

This study was conducted to determine the effects of the UF Alert system on first-year students at the University of Florida – whether they believe it is a safe community, whether they believe the police are doing a good job of catching criminals and keeping them safe, and whether they know of the resources available to them in the event of a crisis. Researchers designed a survey and distributed it via the survey website Qualtrics to reach first-year students. The results are listed below.

- Most first-year students respond to the UF Alert program by reading the alert.
  - Many students ignore the alert after reading it if isn't close to them.
  - A small number of first-year students ignored the alert altogether.
  - Approximately one-fourth read and actively wait for further updates.
- Most of the population actively engages in the usage of the UF Alert system to different degrees.
  - Females are more likely to read an alert and if the danger is not close by, ignore it.
  - Females ignore the alert altogether more than males.
- Students perceive the University of Florida campus to be a safe place for them.
- First-year students also perceive the university's campus to be safer than the surrounding Gainesville areas.
- Three resources stood out as the majority which first-year students are aware of, in order:
  - The University of Florida Police Department
  - UF Alert
  - The UMatter We Care Program
- First-year students would like to have updates on arrests made following incidents that require an alert. Suggestions on how to follow-up on alert situations included:
    - Incorporate updates on arrests or charges through a feature on the mobile application.
    - Have a monthly round-up push alert or newsletter sent to students that include the arrests updates of any incidents that occurred within a month.
- The second suggestion is for victim advocate services to be highlighted more.
  - Only a little more than half of the participants had knowledge or awareness of victim services.

Table of Contents

Research Team

Akira Asada:

Akira is a sports management Ph D student from Tokyo, Japan. He earned a Bachelor of Sports Science at Waseda University and a Masters in Sports Management from the University of Florida. Aside from being a Ph D student, he is a course instructor for Sports Marketing. He has worked with the Tohoku Free Blades ice hockey team and the NHK Broadcasting Company back home in Tokyo. Akira wants to continue working on public relations research projects as a professor in sports management.

Karsten Burgstahler:

Karsten is a public relations graduate student from Decatur, Illinois, earning his Bachelor of Science in Journalism from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. His goal is to work in public relations for tourism in Central Florida, which is why he decided to pursue a master's degree at the University of Florida. Before coming to UF, Karsten worked as a reporter for the Journal Gazette/Times-Courier in Mattoon, Illinois for a year.

Ziyan Chen:

Ziyan is a public relations graduate student from Beijing, China. She earned a Bachelor's Degree from Beijing Sport University. Her goals are to use her public relations master's degree for crisis management and media. She has also held a part-time job and done volunteer work during her education in China.

Angela A. Farinacci:

Angela is a public relations graduate student from Ft. Pierce, Florida, who earned her Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Public Relations from Florida Gulf Coast University. She is also earning a Fundraising Management Certificate, as her interests include sports relations and nonprofit public relations. She has served as an intern for

SAWYER Agency and John Carroll Catholic High School. Aside from school, Angela works on the public relations team for her hometown's Common Ground Vineyard Church.

Peiyao Li:

Peiyao Li is a public relations graduate student from Beijing, China. She attended the University of Colorado at Denver and earned a bachelor's degree in communication. She aspires to work in public relations for a nonprofit organization in China. Peiyao has completed an internship for a nonprofit institute and foundation in China; her nonprofit interests were sparked as she learned about Chinese nonprofit development and situations. She has also conducted interviews and video production for a group project.

Zhiren Li:

Zhiren is a public relations graduate student from Shenzhen, China who earned a Bachelor's Degree from Wuhan University. He desires to work in corporate, technology, and crisis communication after graduation. Zhiren also has an intense passion for working with SPSS and data analysis.

Meredith Richmond:

Meredith is a public relations graduate student from High Point, North Carolina, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She then worked for two years as an elementary school teacher. Her public relations goals are to work for a company where she would need to travel a lot, as she loves to travel.

Adriana Yurizza:

Adriana is a public relations graduate student from Miami, Florida. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Telecommunications from the University of Florida. Currently, she is interested in sports information as it pertains to public relations. Aside from pursuing a master's, Adriana serves as the secretary for the Graduate Students of Mass Communication Association. After graduation, she hopes to work in the communications department for a sports franchise or sports news station.

Purpose of Research Study

The purpose of the UF Alert study was to aid in improving overall safety on the University of Florida campus. The researchers wanted to explore the opinion and views of first-year students living on and off campus. The researchers were specifically interested in how aware students were of the purpose of UF Alert and if students used the alerts to keep them up-to-date and informed.

The researchers focused on first-year students as a way to get a true representation of students' thoughts when they first arrive on campus. The UF Police Department conducts an annual survey to see how students view the UF Alert system and safety on campus; however, those studies are not focused specifically on first-year students.

The researchers' goal was to determine how students used the UF Alert system in their day-to-day lives. Did they pay attention to them? Did they gain a sense of fear when they received multiple alerts? Do they feel safer having UF Alert? Lastly, do they understand *why* it is the responsibility of the University of Florida to send out alerts when life-threatening situations occur on or around campus?

Ultimately, the researchers' goal for this study was to learn how first-year students responded to the alerts. The researchers believe the results will prove vital in

improving the UF Alert system, and help with keeping students safe and informed.

<u>Review of the Literature[1]</u>

Perception of Campus Safety

According to Owens and Loomes' 2010 interpretation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, safety -- feeling secure and adjusting to a new/no-family environment -- is the second most basic need for students on campus, something new students naturally seek out when they arrive. Safety only ranked behind vital nutrients for the body, such as food (Owens & Loomes).

In a research study on students' perceptions of campus safety at the University of Colorado Denver, Tomsich, Gover and Jennings (2011) discovered students perceived their campus to be low to moderately dangerous, with a higher fear of crime at night rather than day (2011). However, Tomsich et al. found differences in levels of fear when gender is taken into account (2011). The researchers analyzed 339 men's and 658 women's levels of fear and perceived risk of crime, and they found that women were more likely to be concerned about safety in every surveyed measure (levels of fear of crime during the day, levels of fear of crime at night, perceived risk of crime during the day, perceived risk of crime at night, and constrained behavior) except for overall

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[1] References for the literature review are available in the index.

perceived safety, concluding that women were more likely to have a higher level of fear of crime (2011).

Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act

Passed in 1990, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security and Campus Crime Statistic Act, originally known as the Campus Security Act (UF Division of Student Affairs, 2012), is a Federal law that requires all colleges and universities to disclose timely warnings and emergency notifications. Statistics of criminal offenses (including murder, sex offenses, robbery, aggravated assault and other crimes involving bodily injury to any person) should be recorded in reports of campus security authorities (Clery Center, 2008).

UF Alert Emergency Notification System

The UF Alert system is established to send out emergency notifications and timely warnings to the UF students, faculty, and staff members to safeguard the campus community (UF Alert, n.d., About). The program is operated by the Department of Emergency Management in cooperation with the University of Florida Police Department and University Relations (para. 3). Events needing a UF Alert are described as "a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the

health or safety of students or employees occurring on the campus" (para. 2).

The UF Police Department provides various approaches for the UF students, faculty, and staff members to keep updated with UF Alert, including text messaging, email, Facebook and Twitter. Students can obtain the messages sent by UF Alert automatically to the ufl.edu email account, or their cell phone once they've updated their MyUFL account (UF Alert, n.d., Methods).

This research is in collaboration with the University of Florida Police Department and Dean of Students Office, which both take care of the students' well-beings and guarantee the daily normal functioning of the university. A brief introduction to each is provided below:

University of Florida Police Department

University of Florida Police Department (UFPD) is established to preserve campus safety and security (UFPD, n.d., Mission, Values, Vision, and Goals). The UFPD consists of 90 officers and 72 civilian employees. The duties of the department include investigating all crimes committed in its jurisdiction, making arrests, providing crime prevention/community services programs, enforcing traffic laws, and maintaining crowd control for campus special events (UFPD, n.d., Department information).

Dean of Students Office

The mission of the University of Florida Dean of Students Office (DSO) is to "creates a culture of care for students, their families, faculty and staff by providing exemplary programs and services designed to enhance students' academic and personal success" (Dean of Student Office, 2009, Mission). The various programs, including U Matter We Care, from DSO are dedicated to helping the students resolve problems from psychological troubles, physical difficulties, and their personal lives in order to assist students in achieving their best performance.

Research Questions

Based on the collaboration with the UFPD and the DOS, five research questions were developed to guide the data collection and analysis.

In order to determine how students respond to alerts, a question was developed looking at what students do immediately after an alert goes out.

RQ1: How do first-year students respond to a UF Alert once it has been issued?

Reid and Konrad (2004) found that the level of fear of crime is different for those of different genders, depending on different types of crime. Thus, it is necessary to learn whether UF first-year students respond differently based on gender:

RQ2: Do male and female first-year students respond differently to a UF

Alert?

International students have cultural differences from domestic students, and this may also influence on how the international student perceive and respond to the UF Alert messages – as well as how sensitive and concerned they are about campus safety issues:

RQ3: Do first-year students respond differently to a UF alert based on whether they are international or domestic?

The students' perceptions of safety on campus is an important indicator of how UF Alert affects the student population. The next question is focused on determining just how much of an influence UF Alert have on those perceptions of safety.

RQ4: How does a UF Alert affect first-year students' perceptions of the safety of campus and the surrounding community?

This next question was intended to learn which resources the students would turn to, and which they are not aware of. It could be beneficial to the corresponding program officials to know more about the effectiveness and awareness of their services.

RQ5: How many and which resources are UF students aware of to assist in times of crisis?

<u>Methodology</u>

This study of UF Alert and the perceptions of first-year students at the University

of Florida in regards to safety at the university as well as in the surrounding community,

was a quantitative study, conducted via survey methodology. The researchers chose

first-year students because they were the audience with the least experience and

interaction with the UF Alert system.

The University of Florida also has an option for parents to receive alerts.

Because of this feature, the researchers also included questions pertaining to the

perceptions of first year students' parents and how they felt about UF Alert and their

student(s)' safety at the University of Florida as well as in Gainesville, in general.

Survey

Most of the questions in the survey used a five-point Likert-type scale of

agreement, meaning respondents were asked to select which rating -- "strongly disagree,"

"disagree," "neither agree nor disagree," "agree," and "strongly agree" -- was most

closely associated with their feeling toward the statement they were given. One

open-ended question was included to see what sorts of features students would like to

see in a UF Alert app. At the request of the University of Florida Police Department,

another open-ended question was triggered if students responded to the statement "I

think the UF police department is doing a good job of keeping me safe" with either

"strongly disagree" or "disagree." It asked students why they believe the department

was not doing a good job of keeping them safe. Ultimately, these open-ended questions

would add a degree of depth to augment the agreement scale.

Population Studied

First-year students at the University of Florida were the population selected for

study. While the goal was to receive 200 responses from first-year students, about half

of that number responded. 22 students quit the survey before completing the first

screening question – which asked whether they were a first-year student – and the

responses of three non first-year students who completed the survey were not included.

Five surveys were partially completed. In all, 99 surveys were useable.

Method of Sampling

After consulting with the Dean of Students office, the researchers distributed the

survey through the online survey website Qualtrics to the "First Year Florida" course,

which is geared directly toward first-year students. Course administrators emailed the

Qualtrics link to all enrolled students. The researchers also attempted to contact

first-year students via UF Public Safety social media platforms, including Facebook and

Twitter, and posted the survey link on Facebook groups dedicated to 2015-2016

first-year students. The final effort to reach out to students was to post a total of 10

flyers in Weimer Hall, Florida Gym and Turlington Plaza containing a QR code linked

to the survey around campus. This allowed students to complete the survey on their

phones.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

Of the participants, 67.4% (n = 62) were female and 32.6% (n = 30) were male.

A majority of participants were Caucasian (63%, n = 58), followed by Hispanic/Latino

(17.4%, n = 16), African American (7.6%, n = 7), and Asian (6.5%, n = 6). 87.1% (n =

81) of participants were Florida residents and 12.9% (n = 12) were out-of-state US

residents. No international students participated in the survey.

To compare these results to the actual first-year student population, researchers

turned to the UF Institutional Handbook, which shows 3,151 freshmen for 2014, the

most recent year available for research. Females made up 60.5% (n = 1,907) of the class

while 39.4% (n = 1,243) of the class were male. Caucasians made up 43.8% (n = 1,380)

Hispanics/Latinos made up 19.7% (n = 618), African Americans made up 8.8% (n =

276), and 6.7% (n = 209) were Asian. Eighty-six percent were in-state students (n =

2,078) while 14% (n = 443) were out-of-state. The researchers' study fell mostly in line with university demographics, with the exception that Caucasians made up a larger percentage of respondents than they do the student population.

Most of the participants were living in on-campus housing (79.6%, n = 74). Prior to moving to Gainesville, 69.9% (n = 65) of participants lived in suburban areas, 12.9% (n = 12) lived in urban areas, 10.8% lived in small towns, and 6.5% (n = 6) lived in rural areas. Of the participants, 41.5% (n = 39) had parents who also receive the alerts.
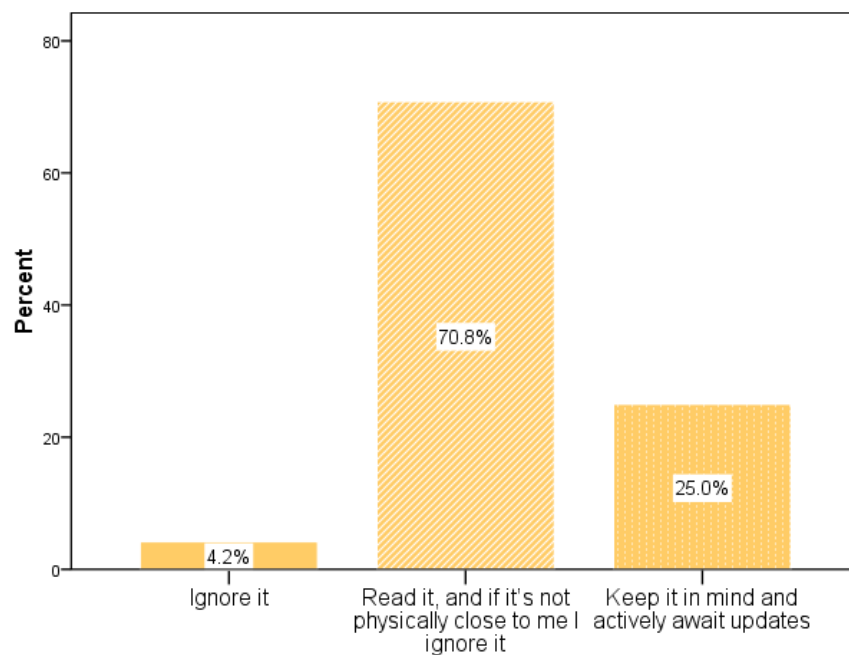
Crime Related Experience

While most of participants (96.8%, n = 90) have never been a victim of crime at the UF campus or in Gainesville, 1.1% (n = 1) have been a victim of crime on the UF campus and 2.2% (n = 2) have been a victim of crime in Gainesville and 16.1% of participants (n = 15) had been a victim of crime before they came to Gainesville. On the other hand, 15.1% of participants (n = 14) knew someone who had been a victim of crime at the UF campus and 47.3% of participants (n = 44) had a family member who has been a victim of crime.
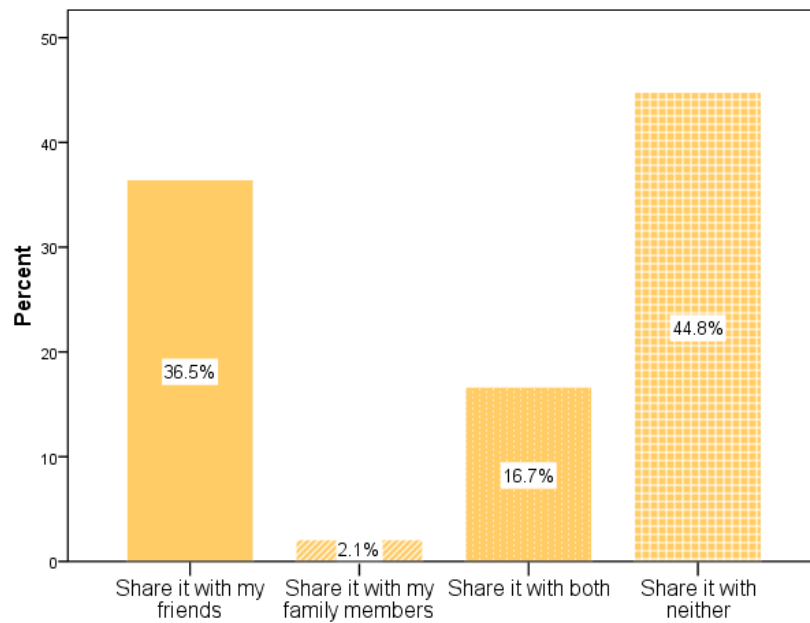
UF Alert

The researchers asked how the participants usually react to an alert and 70.8% (n

= 68) of participants answered that while they read a UF Alert, they ignore it if it is not

close to them. On the other hand, 25.0% (n = 24) read it and actively await updates, and

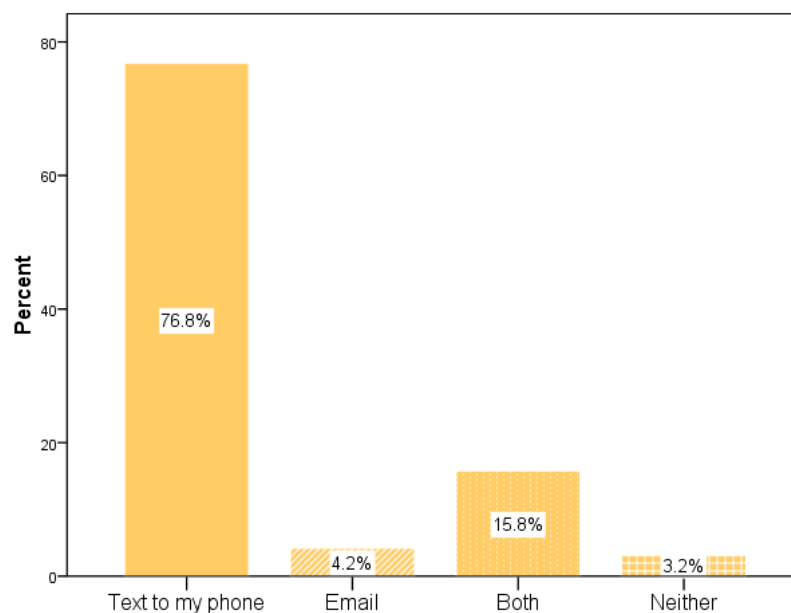4.3% (n = 4) simply ignore it (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Reaction to a UF Alert

Also, 36.5% (n = 35) of participants answered that they tended to share the alerts

with their friends, only 2.1% (n = 2) tended to share them with their family members,

while 16.7% (n = 16) tended to share them with both friends and family members

(Figure 2).

Figure 2. The person with whom participants usually share UF Alert

Also, 76.8% (n = 73) of participants preferred receiving the alerts via text

messages to phone, 4.2% (n = 4) preferred receiving via e-mail, and 15.8% (n = 15)

preferred both (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Preferred media of receiving UF Alert

The researchers asked participants' evaluation of UF Alert using a 5-point Likert type scale (1 = "Strongly disagree"; 5 = "Strongly agree). The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Evaluation of UF Alert

	The language used in UF Alert is understandable.	UF Alert involving break-ins would be helpful.	I appreciate getting continual updates on UF Alert.	UF Alert have sometimes caused my parents to be concerned for my safety at UF.
Mean	4.13	3.88	3.81	3.51
Median	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation	.747	.770	.912	1.144

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3= Neither agree or disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

The researchers also asked an open-ended question: If the University of Florida Police Department were to develop an app focused on UF Alert, what sorts of features would you be interested in seeing included and collected 38 responses. In these responses, the frequently mentioned topics are "map" (14 times), "location" (11 times), "time" (13 times), and "update" (10 times). These data suggest that the first-year students hope to have a map function which can report the real-time location of the crimes. All the open-ended responses to this question were summarized below.

Responses to open-ended questions

Q. If the University of Florida Police Department were to develop an app focused on UF Alert, what sorts of features would you be interested in seeing included?

- In my opinion, information dissemination is already handled through Twitter and UF text alerts. An app is unnecessary and expensive.
- Notifications when something is happening
- A map pin pointing the crime scene
- Areas of high crime, times of high crime
- More detailed information on the UF alert. The text is so minimal and sometimes the links don't work, so it is hard to get accurate information on what is actually going on.
- General location of the suspect
- A safe walk button where you hold down the screen until you reached destination and release the screen if attacked or robbed. They have an app like this currently.
- The ability to filter which alerts and updates I receive so I don't get 10 alerts that only describe the suspects as males in their 20s who are still at large
- Map with location of crimes right after they occur
- A map with the location of the affected area(s), feature allowing quick access to 911 dispatch, real time updates.
- I wouldn't get it
- It should be a location based app, so it lets you know what is happening closest to you. A panic button would also be helpful. It should also have filters so you can choose what category of alerts you want to receive because sometimes some alerts are not relevant to me and I don't need to get them. It should also have a list of available resources for certain situations.
- Text alerts to student cell phone numbers
- Immediate call to 911 and UFPD by one tap. Loud alarm sound that goes off by one tap.
- Maps of where the crimes are happening in relation to where I am at the moment
- Being able to see any crimes that happen near me. A number available to call if I need to speak to someone after a traumatic event. Continuous updates about crimes committed until the person has been arrested.
- Being updated on crimes in the area via notifications instead of text messages.
- Crime Reporting Crime Updates Safety Reporting Safety Updates Map of Dangers Map of Safety (police safe areas, etc)
- A map to show where incidents happened, a list of different incidents (similar to the

texts and emails), active updates

- Alerts
- Map showing where it happened
- Updates (basically how it is now with texts) and a list of classes/workshops and resources provided by the police department and the University of Florida for safety awareness and victims of crimes
- Better descriptions and GPS/location icon
- Daily news like report and texted UF Alert for on campus or close by situations for on campus students
- a map with the location of the crime
- An active call section to be able to see in real time where units are and to which crimes they are responding.
- Reporting incidents, campus map, phone numbers for non-emergency
- Proximity to my location map of crime/police location button to notify others
- If you guys created an app that would be great. I believe this would be more effective than email. I would like to see features such as notifications when something happens. Maybe a panic button..? I think a panic button would nice because you could just pull up the app and it would notify UF police. An interesting feature would be a cop locator. If someone is in need of help or may suspect someone is following them they could walk to the nearest cop and let them know of their situation.
- Dangers near my location. map of past crimes
- A map of where the crime is happening, a place for people to post helpful tips, and updates, and when the person or safety hazard is no longer a threat.
- State what UFPD is trying to do to stop criminals that got away on the UF Alert
- Alerts only if you wanted them.
- Showing how often situations happen in each area
- No idea
- Real time updates, push notifications
- Exact location, areas to keep away from, constant notifications
- Don't do it. The current system is fine.

Perceived Safety of UF Campus

The researchers asked about participants' perceptions of the safety of the UF

campus. Specifically, the researchers asked two questions using a 5-point Likert type

scale (1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree"). As shown in Table 2,

participants tended to feel that the campus is safer than the surrounding community.

Table 2
Perceived safety of the UF campus

	Based on my knowledge of crime in the area, I believe the University of Florida campus is <u>a safe place for me.</u>	Based on my knowledge of crime in the area, I believe the University of Florida campus is <u>safer than the surrounding community of Gainesville.</u>
Mean	3.66	4.21
Median	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation	.971	.841

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3= Neither agree or disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 =
Strongly agree

Next, the researchers examined which crime was perceived as particularly

dangerous by participants. Specifically, the researchers asked participants to rank the

three that make them most concerned for their safety at UF (number 1 is the highest

concern). As shown in Table 3, 63.8% (n = 60) participants ranked "Active shooter" as

the number one threat whereas 21.3% (n =20) participants ranked "Sexual

battery/assault with perpetrator still at large" as the number one threat. The number 2

ranking was highest for "Armed suspect" (38.3%, n = 36) as was the number 3 ranking.

"Sexual battery/assault with perpetrator still at large" was the next highest ranked threat.

Only 3.2% (n = 3) ranked hurricane warning in the top three.

Table 3

Ranking of possible dangers that most concerned participants

Rank	Robbery	Sexual battery/assault with perpetrator still at large	Break-in	Armed suspect	Active shooter	Gas leak	Fire	Hurricane warnings
1	2.1%	21.3%	0%	4.3%	63.8%	1.1%	0%	1.1%
2	5.3%	17.0%	4.3%	38.3%	13.8%	4.3%	11.7%	0%
3	8.5%	20.2%	9.6%	30.9%	9.6%	7.4%	6.4%	2.1%
Total	15.9%	58.5%	13.9%	73.5%	87.2%	12.8%	18.1%	3.2%

Safety Resources

The researchers provided participants with a list of safety related resources and asked them to check the ones that they knew were available to UF students. Table 4 presents those results.

Table 4

Participants' knowledge about safety related resources

	Police Department	Victim Advocates	UMatter We Care Program	UF Faculty and Staff	UF Alert	Gator Times	Twitter
Yes	93.6%	56.4%	86.2%	73.4%	89.4%	26.6%	43.6%
No	6.4%	43.6%	13.8%	26.6%	10.6%	73.4%	56.4%

As shown in Table 4, most of the participants checked "Police Department" (93.6%, n = 88), followed by "UF Alert" (89.4%, n = 84), "UMatter We Care Program"

(86.2%, n = 81), "UF Faculty and Staff" (73.4%, n = 69), "Victim Advocates" (56.4%,

n = 53), "Twitter" (43.6%, n = 41), and "Gator Times" (26.6%, n = 25). Twitter, a

non-UF resource, came at a higher level of recognition compared to Gator Times.

Then, the researchers asked participants to rank the top three they would use if

they had questions or concerns about safety. As Table 5 illustrates, 58.5% (n = 55) of

participants ranked "Police Department" as the number one resource. Also, 85.1% (n =

80) participants ranked "Police Department" in their top three resources followed by

"UMatter We Care Program" (58.5%, n = 55) participants ranked as the top three

resource).

Table 5
*Ranking of resource which participants would use when they have questions or
concerns about safety*

Rank	Police Department	Victim Advocates	UMatter We Care Program	UF Faculty and Staff	UF Alert	Gator Times	Twitter
1	58.5%	4.3%	8.5%	7.4%	7.4%	0%	3.2%
2	16.0%	11.7%	25.5%	19.1%	13.8%	0%	2.1%
3	10.6%	12.8%	24.5%	19.1%	14.9%	2.1%	5.3%
Total	85.1%	28.8%	58.5%	45.6%	36.1%	2.1%	10.6%

Next, the researchers asked participants' opinions about the UF Police

Department. First, the researchers provided participants with two statements (i.e., "If I

or a friend were a victim of a crime, I would feel comfortable reporting it" and "I think

the UF police department is doing a good job of keeping me safe."). Participants

indicated how much they agreed with the statements using a 5-point Likert type scale (1

= "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree"). As shown in Table 6, participants tended

to agree that they would feel comfortable reporting it if they or their friends were a

victim of a crime. Also, participants tended to agree that the UF police department is

doing a good job of keeping them safe.

Table 6
Evaluation of UF Police Department

	If I or a friend were a victim of a crime, I would feel comfortable reporting it.	I think the UF police department is doing a good job of keeping me safe.
Mean	4.27	3.73
Median	4.00	4.00
Mode	4	4
Std. Deviation	.757	.941

Then, the researchers gave an open-ended question to participants who checked

"Disagree" or "Strongly disagree" on the statement of "I think the UF police department

is doing a good job of keeping me safe." A total of 10.1% (n= 10) participants answered

this question and half of them (n= 5) of them explained that the UF Police Department

is not doing a good job because they haven't demonstrated successfully catching the

criminal. Full responses can be found below.

Responses to open-ended questions
Q. In the space provided below, please explain why you do not think that the UF police department is doing a good job of keeping me safe.   • Haven't seen/heard of them do much but give tickets.   • They never catch criminals and spend too much time focusing on the wrong aspects of safety.   • I don't believe that there are many violent criminals in Gainesville   • I do not feel that most reported crimes are successfully resolved. I feel like I am constantly hearing about crime, but most of the time, I do not hear that a suspect has been caught.   • They never catch the criminals.   • I think they are stereotyping black male students and continually stopping and questioning them with absurd accusations such as "did you steal this bike?" and "if I take you to the dorm can you unlock the door"   • They never catch the suspects and just clear the scene   • I think that the messages that come out when something happens are not timely, nor are they effective in telling us that they have found the dangerous person   • They never apprehend the armed robbers.   • Not good

Gender Differences

The researchers examined whether there was a gender differences in the results reported above. Specifically, the researchers conducted a Chi-square test to compare frequencies and a t-test to compare mean scores. In this section, the researchers report the results that showed statistically significant difference between males and females.

First, the researchers conducted a Chi-square test to examine whether males and females react to the alerts differently. As shown in Table 7, females are more likely to ignore a UF Alert if it is not physically close to them compared to males ($\chi^2 = 6.87$, *df* =

2, *p* = .03). In terms of sharing behavior, there was no statistically significant difference

between males and females (Table 8)

Table 7

Gender difference in the reaction to UF Alert

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
When I receive a UF Alert, I…	Ignore it	3.3%	4.8%	4.3%
	Read it, and if it's not physically close to me I ignore it	53.3%	77.4%	70.0%
	Keep it in mind and actively await updates	43.3%	17.7%	26.1%

Table 8

Gender difference in the reaction to UF Alert (sharing behavior)

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
When I receive a UF Alert, I…	Share it with my friends	26.7%	41.9%	37.0%
	Share it with my family members	3.3%	1.6%	2.2%
	Share it with both	1.0%	19.4%	16.3%
	Share it with neither	60.0%	37.1%	44.6%

Second, the researchers examined gender differences in ranking of possible

dangers that participants most concerned for their safety. The researchers conducted the

Chi-square test using the frequency of each possible danger (e.g., robbery, active

shooting) as a dependent variable. As a result, the researchers found a statistically

significant gender difference in frequency of sexual assault being ranked in the top three

(χ^2 = 7.13, *df* = 2, *p* = .03). Specifically, more females (72.6%, n = 45) considered

"Sexual battery/assault with perpetrator still at large" as the most dangerous threat

compared to males (33.3%, n = 10; Table 9 and Table 10).

Table 9
Ranking of possible dangers which most concerned males for their safety

Rank	Robbery	Sexual battery/assault with perpetrator still at large	Break-in	Armed suspect	Active shooter	Gas leak	Fire	Hurricane warnings
1	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	80.0%	3.3%	0.0%	3.3%
2	6.7%	16.7%	3.3%	50.0%	6.7%	3.3%	13.3%	0.0%
3	10.0%	16.7%	20.0%	23.3%	10.0%	13.3%	3.3%	3.3%
Total	20.0%	33.3%	23.3%	83.3%	96.7%	20.0%	16.7%	6.7%

Table 10
Ranking of possible dangers which most concerned females for their safety

Rank	Robbery	Sexual battery/assault with perpetrator still at large	Break-in	Armed suspect	Active shooter	Gas leak	Fire	Hurricane warnings
1	1.6%	32.3%	0.0%	1.6%	58.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2	4.8%	17.7%	4.8%	33.9%	17.7%	4.8%	11.3%	0.0%
3	8.1%	22.6%	4.8%	35.5%	9.7%	4.8%	8.1%	1.6%
Total	14.5%	72.6%	9.7%	71.0%	85.5%	9.7%	19.4%	1.6%

Next, the researchers conducted a one-way ANOVA to examine how males and

females perceive safety differently. As Table 9 shows, males (M = 3.97, SD = .765)

perceived a greater level of safety of the UF campus compared to females (M = 3.58,

SD = .967, t= 2.08, *p* = .04). Also, males (M = 4.67, SD = .479) tended to feel more

comfortable reporting it if they or their friend were a victim of a crime compared to

females (M = 4.08, SD = .822, t= 3.60, *p* = .01). There was no other statistically

significant difference between males and females.

Table 11: Gender Difference in Perceived Safety

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
Based on my knowledge of crime in the area, I believe the University of Florida campus is a safe place for me.	Male	3.97*	.765
	Female	3.58*	.967
Based on my knowledge of crime in the area, I believe the University of Florida campus is safer than the surrounding community of Gainesville.	Male	4.37	.809
	Female	4.15	.853
If I or a friend were a victim of a crime, I would feel comfortable reporting it.	Male	4.67**	.479
	Female	4.08**	.822
I think the UF police department is doing a good job of keeping me safe.	Male	3.93	.944
	Female	3.66	.911
The language used in UF Alert is understandable.	Male	4.23	.858
	Female	4.11	.655
UF Alert involving break-ins would be helpful.	Male	3.83	.791
	Female	3.95	.688
I appreciate getting continual updates on UF Alert.	Male	3.87	.937
	Female	3.79	.878
UF Alert has sometimes caused my parents to be concerned for my safety at UF.	Male	3.13	1.187
	Female	3.75	1.073

* *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01

<u>Discussion</u>

The research reported here shows that first-year students respond to alerts mostly by reading the alert and ignoring it if the incident is not in their proximity. A small number of first-year students ignore the alert altogether, while approximately a quarter read and actively wait for further updates. This shows that most of the population actively engages in the usage of the UF Alert system to different degrees. Breaking it down by gender, females are more likely than males to ignore the UF Alert or read the alert and, if the danger is not close by, ignore it.

Because no international first-year students took the survey, researchers could not answer RQ3 about how international students respond to alerts once issued. This is one limitation in our study that does not represent an important part of the population of first-year students. The research team recommends this survey be done on a larger scale and specifically distributed to first-year international students in order to obtain data on their responses to UF Alert and DOS services.

In regards to first-year students' perceptions of the safety of campus and the community, the researchers determined that students do perceive the University of Florida campus to be a safe place for them. When the safety of the University of Florida campus is compared to the safety of the surrounding community, first-year students

perceived the university's campus to be safer than the surrounding Gainesville area.

Lastly, pertaining to resources in times of a crisis, three resources had more than 80% awareness: the police department, UF Alert, and the UMatter We Care Program. The police department is the most highly ranked resource followed by UF Alert. As the police department is in charge of UF Alert as well as Victim Advocates, the study signifies first-year students are aware of the readily apparent resources of the police department, but not so much the ones that aren't front-and-center in the news. The least known resource, even less than Twitter, is the Gator Times, which is emailed to every student.

There are two major suggestions for UF Alert and victim services. Data obtained from the open-ended questions suggest that first-year students would like to have updates on arrests made following UF Alert incidents. While the UF Alert system is solely to create awareness of dangerous situations that pertain to university students. But students are still concerned about what occurs after an "area has been cleared" and the danger is perceived to be over, so incorporating updates on arrests or charges through a feature on GatorSafe, the police department's new application, would be useful. GatorSafe covers nearly everything students asked for in an app – in particular, a map detailing locations of crime. Having a monthly round-up push alert or newsletter

that includes the arrest updates of any incidents that occurred within a month should

create more perceptions that UFPD is protecting the campus. This way, students can be

informed of updates on crimes the police department may have solved, but have fallen

out of students' recent memories.

The second suggestion is for Victim Advocates services to be promoted more.

Although first-year students are aware of the University Police Department and the

UMatter We Care Program, only a little over half of the participants had knowledge or

awareness of Victim Advocates. This suggestion also comes because of sexual assaults

that have been reported through the UF Alert system. While the University Police

Department and the UMatter We Care Program can direct students to victim services,

data shows that it is vital that Victim Advocates becomes a more visible resource.

One more limitation of the survey should be pointed out: the number of

participants. Future research or a replication of the study should attempt to survey a

larger number of first-year students. As mentioned before, the research should aim to

have international first-year student respondents as well. The response rate in general

was 49.5% (n = 99) of the desired 200 responses.

Overall, the research conducted aimed to analyze how first-year students

respond to UF Alert; the data shows that a majority finds the campus to be a safe place,

and a majority actively engages to some degree with a UF Alert.

<u>Appendix Materials</u>

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