



**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**  
to  
**Consultant Recommendations Regarding Incident Involving  
Threat Made via Yik Yak to WWU Student**

**March 1, 2016**

*Note:* For contextual understanding for the reader, management responses are embedded into the narrative from the Consultant on the lessons learned and his recommendations. For more information, please refer to the full report.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

As in any situation, there are always challenges that arise despite the best planning and protocol. Below are highlights of the lessons learned that were revealed as part of the University's formal after action debrief, as well as the consultant's recommendations.

1. There were some minor delays created as a result of all of the Vice-Presidents being off-site at an event. In addition it was Thanksgiving week and many of the key decision makers were out of the office. This being the case, there was an absence of senior leadership on campus, which potentially delayed the University's response.

***Recommendation:*** Develop a protocol and train additional senior leadership on their role in the absence of the Vice-Presidents.

***WWU Response:*** Western has trained many upper leaders for various emergency response roles. It is apparent after the events in November that the depth of that training does not reach far enough into the administrative structure to ensure necessary back-up. As a result, we will train additional leadership to step in for senior leadership when incidents occur and senior leadership is unavailable.

*Timeline:* *Begin in summer 2016 / ongoing*

*Lead:* *Environmental Health and Safety*

*Support:* *Department of Public Safety and divisions*

2. While unusual, the President of the University attended two threat assessment review assessment review. While this is not the norm, the University was attempting to demonstrate additional care as the student was not only the victim, but also the Associated Student Body President. The student victim also asked to bring other students to the threat assessment review meeting. Both of these factors created confusion regarding the purpose of the meeting.

***Recommendation #1:*** Develop formal policy/procedures that guide the Threat Assessment Team. These policies and procedures should dictate the purpose of the team, who comprises the team and how and why the team is convened.

**WWU Response #1:** Western will expand appropriate policies and procedures to provide further structure to the threat assessment process.

*Timeline: Policy/procedures in place by end of summer 2016*

*Lead: Department of Public Safety with assistance from Dean of Students*

**Recommendation #2:** The University should offer other avenues outside of the Threat Assessment Team where students can express concerns. Provide information on the additional resources available for all victims from the Counseling Center or through city services when appropriate.

**WWU Response #2:** Students who are not direct victims but who are impacted by events need an avenue for expression. While this avenue occurred in listening sessions after the November incident, there was no plan in place, which delayed the response time in developing the listening sessions. The Dean of Students will review this and other incidents to identify how better to create a structure for expression of student concerns. The University is currently developing a bias response approach, which will expand the emergency team to include a lead person to provide leadership for the broader community concerns at the beginning of the process.

*Timeline: Dean of Students review: immediate*

*Bias response approach: in progress*

3. The University was unable to make contact with the student victim via phone or email, which was somewhat unusual during this type of police investigation. This lack of communication created minor challenges during the police investigation, particularly when the police were unable to obtain a written statement from the student victim. It was unclear how to reach the victim in the absence of her response.

**Recommendation:** Ensure there is an agreed upon communication mechanism between the victims and the University. This can be further accomplished by having a victim advocate available to serve as a liaison between the victim and the University.

**WWU Response:** Western agrees that we need to have valid contact information, and will ensure that there is agreement that the information provided will continue to be the agreed upon contact information, and that a back-up contact number is provided in the case that the victim is not able to be reached. The victim advocate note will be addressed more in item #5.

*Timeline: Protocol in place by end of summer 2016*

*Lead: Department of Public Safety*

4. The Threat Assessment Team became the emergency response team. I believe this blurred the roles. It is important to be able to distinguish between the two teams, and ensure everyone involved understands his/her respective roles. Furthermore, there were no official notes taken during the first threat assessment review meeting, and the notes taken during the second threat assessment review meeting were not readily available. One of the biggest challenges was obtaining accurate documentation of what was completed outside of the official police investigation. While the police report captured most of the pertinent information, other information was obtained by additional follow-up interviews, and review of other notes and emails. There was no one central file of all of the communication regarding this situation.

**Recommendation:** Review protocol for both the Threat Assessment Team and Emergency Response Team and train all members of their respective roles, to include ensuring that notes are taken during all of the meetings. While some of the notes may be confidential, the goal would be to ensure the appropriate documentation occurs including action items, outcomes of the meetings and relevant information updated in the police investigation report. The University may also want to consider creating or purchasing an electronic system that allows for centralization of all threat assessment cases and meeting notes.

**WWU Response:** Western agrees that it is important to have a clear understanding between the roles of the threat assessment team and emergency response team, and will develop materials to clarify each, as well as establish the importance of note taking for the meetings. We will also develop an electronic system for threat assessment cases and meeting notes.

*Timeline: End of summer 2016*

*Leads: Department of Public Safety / Environmental Health and Safety*

5. The student victim and other students felt UPD was not responsive to their needs when they went to the police department. It was also noted that the student victim was extremely concerned about her safety and based upon the police report, appeared distraught. It is not documented anywhere what additional resources were provided to the student victim besides the Title IX resource cards.

**Recommendation #1:** The University may wish to hire a full-time victim advocate that can serve as a resource for the victims at the University, and allow the University to have a victim-centered approach for all victims. Furthermore, the victim advocate will be able to assist victims with navigating the criminal justice system and understand what might be confusing language and protocols.

**WWU Response #1:** Western will prioritize victim support including current student support areas. Additional victim advocate support will be immediately evaluated with consideration of both internal and external advocates, including the option of hiring or contracting for a victim advocate.

*Timeline: End of spring quarter 2016*

*Leads: Department of Public Safety, Dean of Students, CASAS*

**Recommendation #2:** Ensure all UPD police officers receive trauma informed investigation training. While this training focuses mostly on sexual assault victims, there are many suggestions during this training that will assist the officers when interacting with all types of victims. This training reinforces the victim-centered approach and may be extremely helpful for the UPD police officers when interacting with victims of crimes.

**WWU Response #2:** While Western UPD officers received extensive training for community based policing and working with students, specific trauma informed investigation training will be a good addition to the training program.

*Timeline: Summer 2016*

*Lead: Department of Public Safety*

**Recommendation #3:** Create a campus security advisory committee with membership that is comprised of a cross section of the University community, to include faculty, staff, students, and external community members. This committee can serve as an advisory committee to UPD and university leadership regarding public safety issues, but also focus on improving relationships between the police department and student population. This advisory group can also assist in educating the University on the role of UPD and how they evaluate the various safety concerns.

**WWU Response #3:** Western agrees that a campus security advisory committee will help strengthen relationships between the WWU Police Department and Western's community, including students. The idea of a Campus Community Advisory Committee was already identified in the Department of Public Safety's FY2016 goals. The consultant's recommendation reinforces the need to move ahead.

*Timeline: Charter in place by end of spring quarter 2016; committee in place by end of summer*

*Lead: Department of Public Safety*