

Suicide Crisis Management Protocol

Campus Suicide Prevention Program
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration



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Universidad del Turabo

- A non-profit, private institution, located 15 miles south east of San Juan, capital of Puerto Rico. It has five additional locations in Yabucoa, Cayey, Naguabo, Ponce and Isabela. In Barceloneta it has the Center for Excellence in Advanced Technology (CETA). There are two branch campus in Florida: Orlando and Miramar.

Universidad del Turabo

The Institution has seven Schools:

- Engineering
- Sciences and Technology
- Education
- Business and Entrepreneurship
- Social and Human Sciences
- Health Sciences
- International Design

Three Systemic Schools: Continuing Education, Technical Studies and Professional Studies (Adult accelerated program).

Universidad del Turabo

The student body totals 15,080; with 3,177 graduate students at the master and doctoral level. All students are commuters, mainly from the eastern central region of Puerto Rico.

Regular faculty members are 169, forty six percent (46%) holds doctoral degrees and fifty four percent (54%) master degrees.

Demographics – Freshmen students

- Gender:
 - Woman 62%
 - Men 38%
- Age: 18.6 – 21.6 years
- Marital Status:
 - Single: 70%
 - Married: 1%
 - Other: 29%

Demographics

- Average family composition: 4 members
- Family income: \$39,661.00
- School of origin:
 - Public: 79%
 - Private: 13%
 - other: 8%

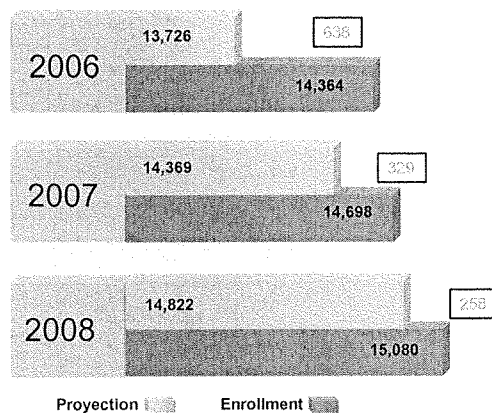
Demographics

- **Mother education:**
 - Elementary school: 5%
 - High School: 32%
 - College: 52%
 - Not reported: 11%
- **Father education:**
 - Elementary school: 5%
 - High School: 38%
 - College: 39%
 - Not reported: 17%

Demographics

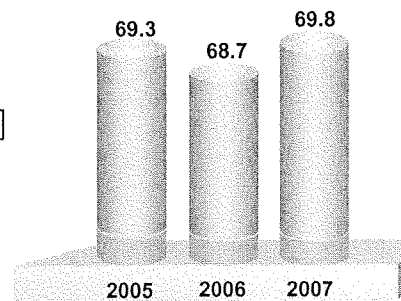
- **Admission grade point average:**
 - 2.0 - 2.49 27 %
 - 2.5 - 2.99 30 %
 - 3.0 - 3.49 24 %
 - 3.5 - 4.00 13 %

ENROLLMENT vs PROJECTION



RETENTION

Retention for 2007 was 69.8%.



Campus Suicide Prevention Program

The Campus Suicide Prevention Program includes three (3) activities:

- (1) Offering of a systematic training program for student organization leaders, faculty, counselors, athletic coaches, and security personnel.

Campus Suicide Prevention Program

- (2) Data collection of risk factors identified by the administration of a validated screening test. The benefits are early identification of risk factors of suicide and prompt referral for adequate mental health care. This data will be used in the third year to develop statistics and informational material related to suicide prevention.

Screening Test

- A suicide risk screening test was administered in the last two years to incoming freshmen.
- The text selected was the IRSA scale. It was validated in Puerto Rico on 1987, and it has been used in different countries of Latin America by psychologist and social workers (Uruguay, Cuba, Guatemala). The scale measures suicide risk factors on adolescent up to 20 years.

Screening Test Results

The scale gives the examiner a general result with a cutting point for risk, it also gives eighteen additional sub scales.

- Forty four percent (44%) of the students that took the test were classified at risk.
- Eleven percent (11%) of them reported from one to seven previous suicide attempts before college enrollment.

Screening Test Results

The most common factors observed in students at risk are:

- Broken families (divorce parents)
- Depression/hopelessness
- Recent broken relationships with partners

Campus Suicide Prevention Program

- (3) Preparation and dissemination of an Institutional Crisis Response Plan, (*Suicide Crisis Management Protocol*) which includes networking infrastructure created to link UT with health care providers from the external community.

Institutional Crisis Response Plan

The Protocol establishes a formal process to manage suicide on campus: prevention, intervention and postvention. It also provides procedures for crisis management, steps to be taken for referrals, follow-up and the re-integration process. The Protocol provides the institution a uniform process for all offices to manage crisis.

Protocol Development

- Need - the institution did not have a procedure to manage suicidal crisis, although there were several cases reported.
- Previous cases – students arrived at the Quality of Life Office, where they were managed in different ways. There was no accurate record of the cases or follow up.
 - Services provided were only as a crisis response. Sometimes they were refer to the psychological services clinic since there was no full time Psychologist in the Office. Doctoral Psychology interns intervene with them.
 - Suicide attempts - increase during the last years.

Protocol Development

- Starting the process – Due to the increase of cases, a proposal for prevention was wrote and approved. One of the objectives was the preparation of a Campus Crisis Management Plan. The Director of the Quality of Life Office supported the initiative, and has been part of the staff since the second year of operation. The Director revised the draft of the protocol and presented it to the counselors.
- The Associate Vice-chancellor for Retention supported the administration of the IRSA scale and the development of the protocol. Many students were leaving the institution due to emotional problems.

Protocol Development

- Resources:

In the meeting of January 2006, the Jed Foundation Framework Model, and a legal issues seminar were presented. Those seminars established the urgency of our institution for a formal protocol to manage crisis. This model was applied to fulfill our needs.

Protocol Development

- Obstacles:

- wrong ideas of administrators about suicide.
- many believe that “ you are not responsible if you don’t know”.

- Trainings and meetings with administrators were held to clarify issues about suicide and institutional responsibility.
- Faculty trainings were very effective. They are referring students at risk and are more sensitive to students emotional needs. It is now an issue of retention strategy.



UNIVERSIDAD DEL TURABO
Escuela de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas
Programa de Prevención del Suicidio en el Campus

PROTOCOLO MANEJO DE CRISIS SUICIDA EN EL CAMPUS

Este documento fue desarrollado por la propuesta Prevención del Suicidio en el Campus, con fondos provistos por la Administración de Servicios de Salud Mental y Abuso de Sustancias (SAMHSA) del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos Federal

Protocol

Table of Content:

- **Introduction:** University Life is a transition that involves anxiety. Nine to ten percent of students consider suicide during university life.
- **Justification:** Suicide is the third cause of death in Puerto Rico and the first cause of violent death between 15 and 44 years. Our University should provide the environment for learning and for personal and professional development of students.

Protocol

- Purpose: to establish a formal process to manage suicide on campus: prevention, intervention and posvention.
- Objectives are to:
 - Explain the meaning of suicide: risk factors and alert signs.
 - Educate the university community about prevention and effective intervention.

Protocol

- Indicate specifics actions in response to suicidal behavior.
- Establish the forms and procedures for the prevention, intervention an posvention.
- Inform about the institutional, community an emergency services.
- Reach: Universidad del Turabo, Gurabo Campus.

Protocol

- Definitions*
 - Suicide (idea, threatening, intent)
 - Students
 - Administrators
 - Professors
- * according to Institutional Manuals (Students and Professors Norms) and the Commission for Suicide Prevention in Puerto Rico.

Protocol

- Legal base:
 - Law Number 408; Mental Health Law of Puerto Rico as amended on August 6, 2008, by Law 183. Establishes the legal bases for intervention in risk situations and psychological services offering.
 - Law number 227, August 12, 1999 to create the Commission for Suicide Prevention, to develop and implement the public policy to attend suicide behavior.

Protocol

- Content highlights:
 - A. Prevention – training for faculty, high administration, administrative personnel, counselors, coaches and security personnel is compulsory.
 - Student leaders are invited to training.

Protocol

- Educational material distribution through the Psychological Services Clinic and the Quality of Life Office.
- Administration of the Suicide Screening Test (IRSA) to freshmen on a voluntary base.
- A-1. Risk conducts and signs that must alert professors and administrators.

Protocol

- B. Intervention: Procedures step by step to manage students who show suicide risk signs or students who intend suicide.
- Procedures for professors.
 - Procedures for the Mental Health professional: guide for evaluation, authorization to call a responsible adult, voluntary or involuntary referrals, hospital transfer, confidentiality.

Protocol

- B-1. Follow up: procedure for the university professional in charge of the situation: communication with the student, the family, the mental health professional, evaluation for academic decisions, support, plan development for their reintegration back into the institution.
- C. Postvention: support groups.

Protocol

- References:
 - Jed Foundation (2006). Framework for developing institutional protocols for the acutely distressed or suicidal college student. New York, N. Y. The Jed Foundation.
 - Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez (2004). Reglamento de Estudiantes, Manual de Profesorado
 - <http://www.lexjuris.com/lexlex/Leyes2008/lex12008183.htm>

Protocol

- Addendums:
 - Referrals forms
 - Inform consent
 - Consent Responsibility Release
 - Emergency Contacts
 - Inform consent for psychological services or evaluations and participation contract.

The protocol is at the Chancellor Office for dissemination.

Campus Suicide Prevention Program

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