



Campus Security

U.S. colleges and universities provide security while preserving openness



A University of Southern California security officer monitors activities on campus. USC.

Campuses of U.S. colleges and universities are safe places for students to study and live while not shutting them off from the outside community. Campus violence is rare; theft of personal belongings is the most common crime. According to the U.S. Justice Department, U.S. students aged 18–24 are less likely to be victims of violent crime than people of the same age in the general population.

Many U.S. colleges and universities have trained security officers with the same arrest powers as local police, according to the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators Inc. (IACLEA). Others have officers without arrest powers but have formal agreements with local police for mutual assistance. Still others employ a contract security firm to ensure safety.

Nearly all U.S. campuses provide safety protection 24 hours a day, publicize three-digit emergency telephone numbers, and have emergency phones scattered across the campus, according to the IACLEA. In addition to regular patrols, campus safety officers provide security at special events such as concerts and athletic competitions.

The University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles, the U.S. school with the largest number of foreign students, provides safety services typical of big schools. Besides the three-digit emergency phone numbers plus more than 400 emergency phones easily identified by their prominent blue lights, USC's Department of Public Safety operates an emergency text message system to alert students to potentially dangerous situations and instruct them about what to do.

After regular school hours at USC, the public safety department limits the number of entrances to campus, stations security personnel at each entrance, and requires visitors to show identification.

Monica Harvey, vice president of student government, stands by an Emergency Telephone System blue box on Purdue University campus in Indiana.

Purdue University photo/Andrew Hancock



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USC students have options for getting around safely at night. Between 6 p.m. and 2:45 a.m. the Campus Cruiser Service provides vehicles to transport students to their destinations or someone to walk with students as an escort.

With more than 300 public safety officers, New York University (NYU) in New York City operates three regular bus routes around and between campuses from 7 a.m. to midnight and a safe-ride program from midnight to 7 a.m.

NYU buildings with prominent green lights at their entrances have public safety officers on duty 24 hours a day. Off-campus participating merchants who post identifying stickers in their windows offer their stores as safe havens where students can seek assistance in emergencies.

Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, aims to promote students' safety through building design, including adequate lighting and unobstructed views. The school



Security officer at Boise State University in Idaho interacts with a student. *Boise State University*

also locks residence halls 24 hours a day, restricts access to many campus buildings after regular hours, and requires current university identification cards for access to buildings on campus.

According to the IACLEA, nearly all four-year colleges and universities with 2,500 or more students

offer crime-prevention programs. These include sexual assault prevention, drug and alcohol education, self-defense training, victim assistance and student security patrol programs.

For more information about the IACLEA and campus public safety, visit www.iaclea.org.



Left, New York University operates bus routes around and between campuses during regular hours. *NYU*. **Below**, Boise State University in Idaho provides upon request a security escort service. *Boise State University*

