Week 8: Personal & Online Safety

While campus and the surrounding areas are generally safe it is important to know what actions you can take to keep yourself safe in person and online. It is also important to know who to contact in case of an emergency.

University Police Department (UPD) & Campus Safety

University Police

UAlbany has its own police force, the University Police Department (or UPD) to keep our students and community safe. UPD is available 24 hours a day, every day working to maintain and improve the safety, security, and quality of life.

Important Phone Numbers

Save these numbers to your phone in case of emergency on or off campus:

- University Police Department (call first for on campus emergencies for the fastest response time): 518-442-3131
- Emergency (medical, fire, police): 9-1-1
- Albany Police (off-campus): 518-438-4000

Emergencies at US Border: If you are at a U.S. Port of Entry during business hours and need assistance you can call the ISSS office at 518-591-8172. But if it is a night, holiday, or weekend you can call UPD at 518-441-3131 and they can get you in contact with an ISSS advisor in case of an emergency at the port of entry. Make sure you have both ISSS and UPD's numbers saved in case you need them when traveling.

Blue Light Phones

Blue Light Telephones are located all around the University grounds. They can be found in parking lots, residence halls, on the academic podium, and along roadways. They are easily recognized by the blue light just above the phone box. In an emergency, all a student has to do is open the phone box, pick up the phone, and talk to the University Police Dispatcher on the line. Along with the 911 Emergency System, the Blue Lights give students immediate phone access to police, fire, and emergency medical services. If it is an emergency and you cannot stay on the line just knock the phone off the hook and it will alert University Police to your location.

UAlbany Alert

In the event of a campus emergency, official sources of information will be communicated via:

- The Web: This page will post frequent updates, and the University homepage will feature a UAlbany Alert notification.
- Email Notifications: Email messages will be issued from UAlbanyAlert@albany.edu. This includes class cancellations in the event of inclement weather.
- Social Media: Information will be shared via @UAlbanyAlert on Twitter. Follow for updates.
• **Emergency Information Phone Line**: UAlbany's emergency information phone line provides updates in the event of an emergency. You can access it 24/7 at (518) 442-7669.

• **"UAlbany Alert" by Text Message, Voicemail or Email Notifications**: Recipients must sign up for these notifications and can do so by logging on to [MyUAlbany](#) and choosing "UAlbany Alert" under self-service.

### Personal Safety Tips

#### General Safety Tips While On Campus and/or Downtown

- When at all possible don't walk alone at night. When it is unavoidable, stay alert and pay attention to your surroundings, or walk in places that are well lit and populated.
- Avoid dark places or groups of people; be aware of places that people can hide.
- If you feel that you are being followed, go to the nearest place where you think you'll find people and ask them to call the police.
- If you are being followed by someone in a car turn around and walk in the opposite direction, then find the nearest safe place (it will take time for the car to turn around if they want to keep following you).
- Walk facing traffic so you can see approaching cars.
- Don't go to a stranger's apartment.
- Don't overindulge in alcohol.
- Don't let your guard down.

#### Safety Tips for Your Home or Residence

- Never let a stranger into your room.
- You can keep yourself, your entire suite, and your stuff safe if you ALWAYS lock your doors. Work out a plan with all your roommates to agree that the doors will always be locked. It's a simple thing to do, but believe it or not, almost all thefts in the residence halls are from open rooms that create an opportunity for YOU to be a victim.
- Never smoke in your room. It is not only hazardous to your health, but it is dangerous in buildings where so many people reside.
- Don't prop open doors and do not let anybody in a residence hall behind you who does not have an IDcard.
- Watch out for your friends. Go out together and come home together.
- If you see something that does not seem right to you "say something" to your Resident Assistant or a staff member.
- You should never feel that you must tolerate unsafe or criminal behavior from your roommates. Seek out help from the residential life staff or other on-campus professionals.
- Know your exits in case of an emergency. Practice exiting from your floor without the ability to see. ALWAYS leave the building when the fire alarm rings.
- All residence halls are locked 24/7 with swipe card access.
- All suite doors are equipped with viewing holes.
- Phones are available in vestibules of residence halls for on campus calls.
- University Police patrol the residence halls.
- Students are issued keys to suites and bedrooms. Locks are automatically changed if keys are lost.
- Each Quad Office is equipped with Emergency Protocol Manual
- A Red Phone is located in each resident room for 911 calls.
- **If your apartment will be unoccupied for any extended period:**
  - Notify a trusted neighbor that you’ll be gone and ask him/her to watch your apartment.
  - Cancel all deliveries such as newspapers and have all mail held by the post office.
  - Do not leave valuables out in the open and remove anything of exceptional value. Close all first-floor blinds and curtains.
  - Use automatic timers to turn lights on and off.

**Online Safety Tips**

**Develop Safe Internet Habits**

Many of a student’s most common web activities — from online banking or shopping to downloading torrents and updating social media accounts — can be made more secure by following a few simple guidelines.

- Don’t download free media.
- Don’t store your payment information.
- Don’t overshare personal information on social media accounts.
- Change passwords regularly.
- Be cautious on public networks and computers.

**Online Harassment**

Online harassment may include:

- Unwanted/unsolicited e-mail
- Unwanted/unsolicited chat or instant messages
- Public or private messages on IRC
- Disturbing messages
- Unsolicited comments about you to others

**Online harassment is a crime** in New York State punishable by up to one year in jail, a $1000 fine, or both!

**What to do if you have been harassed online:**

- Report it! To the System Administrator(s), the ISP complaints account, to your ResNet RHC, or to the University Police.
- Archive and log all communication from the harasser.
- Tell the harasser to cease, once. Be firm, be professional, be formal. Tell them once, and then break off all further communication with them.

**Cyber Security**

Issues of cyber security fall into two broad risk categories:

**Theft and Fraud:** Digital criminals can gain access to your sensitive personal information, such as bank account, social security, and credit card numbers. Identity thieves can also make
Unauthorized purchases using your check and debit cards by accessing stored payment information with your login credentials. As students engage more in online/remote learning environments, they must be vigilant of scammers and fraudsters who might attempt to compromise digital security and/or steal personal information. Examples of personal details at risk include name, address, phone number, birth date, social security number, and bank account information.

To learn more about what types of scams and frauds, visit the [Frauds and Scams](#) section of the ISSS website.

**Stalking or Harassment:** The photos, location check-ins, and updates you post on social media may be intended for close friends and family members, but a cyber bully or stalker can use this personal information against you. Be wary of what you post online and how accessible it is to untrustworthy actors.