

Campus Security

Mercy College, through the Mercy Healthcare Center, has their own security force to guarantee that campus regulations are followed. Their primary jurisdiction extends to the borders of the campus—which are 21st Street, Madison Avenue, 23rd Street and Jefferson Avenue. Security does also provide escorts to the Executive Towers apartment complex. Security can be reached by phone at (419) 251-4444 if dialing from off-campus, or by dialing 14444 from an on-campus phone. They are located in the Jefferson Avenue lobby.

Use Provided Pathways for Walking

Recognize that many areas that look safe during daylight may be less safe in the evening. The trees and bushes that add to the beauty of a campus walk also provide criminals with hiding places when it is dark. If you are taking an evening class or going to the library at night, you may want to change your customary path to ensure that the route you are taking is well lighted and safe.

Security Escort Service and “the Buddy System”

If you cannot find a friend or “buddy” to walk with you to and from classes, call Campus Security and arrange an escort. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Security can be reached by phone at (419) 251-4444 if dialing from off-campus, or by dialing 14444 from an on-campus phone. They are located in the Jefferson Avenue lobby.

Recognizing Suspicious or Dishonest People

Be aware of your surroundings and report any suspicious behavior immediately to Campus Security. Security can be reached by phone at (419) 251-4444 if dialing from off-campus, or by dialing 11463 from an on-campus phone. They are located in the Jefferson Avenue lobby.

Steps to Protect Your Possessions

Theft Prevention in Your Residence Hall or Apartment

- Lock your room, your bike, and your car.
- Do not keep large amounts of money on you.
- Be wary of wearing too much jewelry or jewelry that looks very expensive.
- Do not leave purses, backpacks, or other valuables unsupervised for any amount of time – even seconds.
- Engrave larger items like televisions or stereo components.
- Write down serial numbers and take photographs of large valuables.

Your Textbooks

At the beginning of each semester, you may spend up to several hundred dollars on textbooks. To avoid having your textbooks stolen, follow these steps:

- Write your name in all of your books. It will not deter theft or prevent a thief from selling your books, but it will make identification easier if you find your book.
- Never leave your books unattended. This includes leaving them in libraries, cafeterias, residences, or classrooms.

Vehicle Registration

If you plan to drive to and park on campus, you will have to acquire a permit and register your car with Campus Security, please see the Telecounselor to do this. The Telecounselor can be reached by phone at (419) 251-1802 if dialing from off-campus, or by dialing 11802 from an on-campus phone.

When Leaving Your Car:

- Do not park on dark lots, streets, or alleys.
- Lock all doors and roll up all windows.
- Make sure to lock all valuables in the trunk or at least hide them from your sight.
- Never leave your car unattended and running, even for seconds.
- Do not leave important cards or documents in the glove compartment.
- Carry your registration and credit cards with you.
- If you park in a lot where you have to leave a key, leave only the ignition key with the attendant.

When Returning to Your Car:

- Walk alertly, with your keys in your hand.
- Check for loiterers and for anyone who acts suspiciously.
- Check your back seat before opening your door. Often, criminals will lie in wait for you there.

Ways to Ensure Your Personal Safety

It would be wise for you to follow some general safety tips.

- Travel in pairs or in groups.
- Use the escort service offered by Campus Security
- Let someone know where you are going and when you will return.
- Stick to lighted walkways and reduce walking at night.
- Avoid alcohol and other controlled substances.
- Consider taking a self-defense class.

Nuisance Calls

According to a prominent campus police agency, if you receive a crank phone call:

- As soon as you hear an obscenity or silence, hang up.
- Don't play detective with caller. This is the kind of reaction they want or need.
- Don't try to be clever...witty responses are interpreted as encouragement.
- Don't let the caller know you are upset.
- Never volunteer your name to caller.
- Crank callers are avid readers of classified ads – if you list your phone number, don't put your address in newspapers.
- Report annoying calls to Campus Security.
- Report type of call, voice description and background noise.

Sexual Assault

“Sexual assault” includes forcible and unwanted touching, fondling, and intercourse. “Rape,” a kind of sexual assault, is the occurrence of unwanted and forced intercourse.

Rape Myths

Many myths surround the crime of rape. These myths sometimes prevent women from reporting rapes.

MYTH: Rape usually happens to women who ask for it.

TRUTH: Rape can happen to anyone, regardless of behavior, wealth, and age. Every year, women the age of young girls, students, or grandmothers are raped. A rapist does not distinguish or discriminate.

MYTH: Rape is a crime of passion and only occurs spontaneously.

TRUTH: Rape is a crime of violence and power. The rapist wants to humiliate and control you.

MYTH: I cannot make a difference by reporting the rape.

TRUTH: Police departments and public officials can only properly gauge the incident of rape if you report it. Studies also show that a rapist will continue to rape until caught and prosecuted.

There are a number of steps you can take to prevent sexual assault. Many seem like common sense, but you would be surprised how many of these steps are not taken. Mercy College takes all forms of sexual assault seriously. Please refer to your Student Handbook for additional information.

FACT: Between 1973 and 1987, over 2.3 million women reported sexual assaults in the United States. Many more assaults go unreported. The U. S Department of Justice reports that 71% of these victims avoided being raped by taking self protective measures.

Verbal and Physical Resistance

You are never powerless when being attacked. However, it is important not to overestimate your ability to protect yourself. The goal of verbal or physical resistance is to react immediately and escape.

If you are attacked, consider the following measures:

- Yell, scream, or make noise if you think it will help. Sometimes noise deters an attacker; other times talking quietly may better protect you.
- If you feel physical resistance will be effective, remember the five vital areas on the human body; eyes, nose, throat, groin, and knees. Strike there repeatedly.
- If you escape, do not turn to look back. Just get away.

TIP: Each emergency situation is different. You instinct will tell you whether active or passive resistance will be most effective.

What to Do If You Are Sexually Assaulted

Many sexual assaults go unreported. Yet reporting incidents of sexual assault helps police identify crime areas and offenders. It might also contribute to clearing pending cases and preventing the attacker from repeating the crime.

- Report the crime to the police
- Try to keep calm. Remember and record everything you can about the person – speech, height, weight, clothes, scars, age, and direction of travel.
- If you are assaulted outside your home, remember everything you can about the location.
- Preserve all physical evidence. Though you may want to, do not bathe, wash or change clothing.
- Seek medical attention immediately. You may have been injured or exposed to a disease. Medical evidence is crucial to the successful prosecution of your attacker.
- Seek counseling. Many victims find it extremely difficult to deal with their assaults.

It is important to remember that sexual assault is a crime committed against you. As a victim, you are not to be blamed. Remember that there is also nothing wrong with seeking counseling.

Acquaintance Rape/Date Rape

“Acquaintance Rape” and “Date Rape” refers to a rape by someone you know. This person may be a date, a friend, an acquaintance, even an old boyfriend or a friend of a friend.

Facts on Acquaintance Rape

Another study revealed that more than 60 percent of all rapes can be labeled acquaintance rape. Four out of every ten assaults occur in the victim's home.

In addition, you will need to take a different set of precautions to prevent acquaintance rape. The following suggestions will help you avoid date rape:

- Set sexual limits. Decide early in the date how much physical involvement there will be.
- Do not give mixed messages. Be aware of any unconscious signals you may be sending.
- Be forceful and firm about your decisions involving alcohol, drugs, and sex.
- Be aware of any situations that make you feel uncomfortable and out of control.
- Trust your feelings and instincts.
- Avoid losing control with alcohol and drugs, especially on first dates or with people you do not know well.
- If you do not know someone well, consider driving yourself to the date or agree to meet somewhere public.
- Avoid scheduled places where you may feel vulnerable.
- Socialize with people who share your values.

TIP: When agreeing to a date with someone you barely know, consider going in a group or double dating.

Victims often report that acquaintance rape seemed to “just happen” or that events seemed to progress, uncontrollably, on their own.

Whenever possible, you should try to reduce the times when events develop beyond your control. There is nothing wrong or prudish about requesting that other people respect your personal privacy and values. Nor is there anything wrong with expecting your date to respect the boundaries you create.

How to Avoid Being Accused of Date Rape

There is a lot of confusion today about what constitutes acquaintance rape. This is because two people often perceive events in dramatically different fashions.

Most people know that it is never right to force yourself on others. Doing this is rape. But the lines are not so clearly drawn at other times.

To avoid being accused of rape, you need to communicate with your date to ensure that both of you consent to any physical activity. The following guidelines should assist you with this preparation:

- If your date is sending you mixed signals, ask for clarification.
- You should exercise caution about instigating physical activity with your date.
- Be careful about assuming that you know what your date wants.

- Realize that men and women may have different perceptions about physical intimacy.
- Do not let yourself be overcome by your desires.
- Do not take advantage of someone who can no longer make their own decisions, if they are drunk or on drugs.

FACT: Being intoxicated is not a legal defense for acquaintance rape.

Being accused of rape is a serious and grave situation. Given the adverse circumstances surrounding rape and accusations of rape, Mercy College addresses this issue in the Student Handbook.

YOUR COLLEGIATE SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

WHEN WALKING	AT HOME	WHEN DRIVING
Cross the street when you notice suspicious people ahead of you.	Keep your doors locked when you are home alone, even during the day.	Do not leave your windows rolled down on your car and lock your car doors.
Walk assertively, implying you know where you are going.	Do not leave doors unlocked for people planning to stop by later.	Park your car in well lighted areas, especially at night.
Carry your keys in your hand as you walk. You can use them as weapons and open your door faster.	Do not let strangers into your dorm or apartment even if they say they are friends of your roommate.	Check the back seat of your car before entering. Criminals often wait for you there.
Attach a whistle to your key chain.	Do not give copies of your keys to friends. This includes boyfriends and girlfriends.	Look under your car to see if anyone is hiding there. Someone may grab or cut your ankle.
When possible, avoid wearing clothes that restrict your movements, like high heels and tight pants. They make it harder to run.	Consider leaving lights on when you leave your residence hall or apartment. If you will be gone long, find someone to pick up the newspapers and turn on the lights.	If you are in an accident, be cautious when getting out of the car. If you fear a car-jacking, drive to the nearest police station, then get out of the car.
Body language works. Look confident.	Make sure all locks and smoke alarms work.	Pay attention to all drivers and road conditions.
Stay aware and alert at all times.	Make sure your windows are locked.	Keep your car in proper working order.
Always carry at least a quarter. You can use it to call the police, a friend, or a taxi.	Do not speak with prank phone callers. Do not ask questions or encourage them. Just hang up the phone.	Do not get out of your car if someone follows you home. Drive to a friend's house or apartment of the police station.
Walk near the curb, away from bushes, alleys, and dark entryways.	Do not answer the door without first looking out a peep hole.	Keep your car in gear at traffic lights and intersections.
Call police or security if you have been followed or if you notice someone following others.	Call police or security if someone is loitering outside your door or banging on it repeatedly.	Do not stop to assist other motorists. Instead, drive to the nearest phone and call the police.

Are We Too Concerned With Safety?

Some people might think that crime or personal injury is something that happens to other people – so why make a big issue over safety?

- And, we all know college campuses are safer than most communities. So why should there be so much attention devoted to safety? Here are the reasons:
- Going to college is often the first, totally independent lifestyle period for many students – students may be somewhat protected by home environments and not have the safety concern.
- As students, we must realize that practicing preventing safety measures is learned behavior that requires education.
- In life, personal and family safety should become a daily concern whether we like to admit it or not – you should use good safety judgments on campus, off campus while traveling and in your won community.
- Your mind and body are your greatest assets – certainly, protection and care of your most valuable assets makes good sense.

Use Your Common Sense

What is the best weapon you possess to keep you safe? It is not a gun or knife. It is not a secure lock. It is your common sense.

When trying to avoid becoming a victim of crime, realize that you have a number of defenses already operating within you. Your common sense can help you eliminate unnecessary risk; your intuition may help you deal with crimes as they occur; your curiosity can lead you to learn about safety and security services available on campus; and your memory can record all vital information.

Remember that crimes occur at any time or any place. Many take only seconds to complete. Often the difference between a successful and a failed criminal activity is the amount of preparation taken by the potential victim.

In this report, we have provided you with essential information for preventing crime. It remains up to you, however, to put these guidelines and recommendations into action. If you would like to discuss anything in this report, please feel free to contact Doreann Vogel, Residence Life Students Admissions Officer, at 419-251-1906 from an off-campus phone or 11906 from an on-campus phone or via email at doreann.vogel@mercycollege.edu.