

# A Study of the Perceptions of College Students on Cyberbullying

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## Abstract

Cyberbullying is a concern for all citizens. Harassment and hostility continue to be evident on digital media in society. In this study, the authors evaluate the perceptions of college students on cyberbullying at Pace University. The findings from a research survey disclose a higher level of knowledge of the perceived prevalence of cyberbullying and of the perceived perpetration of cyberbullying towards distinct populations of students. The findings from the study concurrently disclosed a lower level of knowledge of perceptions of institutional pro-action on problems of cyberbullying at the university. This study will benefit administrators, counselors and instructors, and especially information systems instructors, considering an improved process to respond to the sensitivity of students confronting cyberbullying in both society and university.

**Keywords:** cyberbullying, electronic media, harassment, hostility, internet, mobile computing, privacy, sexting, social networking, victimization

## 1. BACKGROUND AND DEFINITION

*"I am devastated by the death of 18-year old Tyler Clementi ... My heart is breaking ... for a society that continues to let this happen. These kids needed us. We have an obligation to change this ... We have to make it stop."* (Degeneres, in Shelton, 2010)

Bullying is defined as "a form of aggression in which one [college] student or a group of [college] students physically or psychologically harasses [another college student] over a long period of time" (Hazler, Hoover and Oliver, 1992). Bullying is differentiated in intent to cause distress or harm, in repetition over time,

and in a relationship in which imbalance of power is a feature (Rigby, 2004). Peer abuse (Olweus, 1993, Sage Publications), peer harassment (Juvonen, Nishina and Graham, 2000) and peer victimization (Juvonen and Graham, 2001) are further indicated in the literature of bullying – 75% of children before they are college students have experienced bullying (Greenya, 2005, p. 2). Literature currently indicates bullying as a method of improving social status (Parker-Pope, 2011). Bullying may be indicative of future problems in performance and psycho-sociality (Kim, Leventhal, Koh, Hubbard and Boyce, 2006 and Storch, Masia-Warner, Crisp and Klein, 2005) for both perpetrators and victims. Bullying is a

common concern and a frequent experience for students in schools in the United States and has been cited by President Barack Obama (Shepherd, 2011).

Cyberbullying is essentially an extension of bullying. Cyberbullying is "any behavior performed through digital or electronic media by [college students or groups of college students] that repeatedly [over time] communicates aggressive or hostile messages intended to inflict discomfort or harm on [other students]" (Tokunaga, 2010, p. 278). Behavior of cyberbullies may be in the form of cellular or digital imaging messages; chat and discussion room messages; e-mail, instant messaging, pictures and photographs, and unauthorized video; messaging on profiles on social gaming and networking sites, such as ChatRoulett, Formspring, Facebook and MySpace, and on systems, such as Twitter and YouTube; and Web blogs, pages or polling sites targeting victims (Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho and Tippett, 2006 and Li, 2007). Behavior of college students, especially teenagers, may be in sexting in "the sending or receiving of sexually-explicit or sexually-suggestive [messaging or photographs]" through the cellular telephone or the social networking Web sites (Hinduja and Patchin, 2010). Victims may be repeatedly victimized by perpetrators through cyberstalking.

Cyberbullying is a devastating form of behavior because the goal of the perpetrator may not be clear to the victim. The perpetrator may cover her or his identity in anonymous e-mail addresses or pseudonymous names and harass the victim without detection 24/7 (Phillips, 2010). This form of bullying may be done from a location in schools or from locations not in schools through electronic media, and the material may be extended to a large number of students and non-students on the Internet. Cyberbullying is heightened in schools by increased mobile and social networking – 30% of teenagers with profiles on social networking sites have experienced harassment on the sites (Janviere, 2010). Frustration is evident in the lack of privacy (Paul, 2011). Cyberbullying as a form of bullying is a concern cited in the literature.

Cyberbullying may contribute far greater problems of performance and sociality for student victims (College Degrees, 2011) than the earlier form of non-electronic bullying.

Cyberbullying may constrain learning performance in schools. High school incidents of cyberbullying or bullying may contribute to problems of social unhappiness (Luster, Small and Lower, 2002) and withdrawal (Baldry, 2004) of victims. Peer harassment of high school students might be a factor in suicides of victims (Cleary, 2000). School incidents of cyberbullying contributing to suicides are highlighted by Cyberbullying News (Cyberbullying News, 2010) in Table 1 of the Appendix. Such incidents are important inasmuch as literature indicates that incidents of cyberbullying as a culture of high school students contributes to further incidents of this form of bullying in the culture of college students (Laster, 2010).

Estimates of incidents of cyberbullying in colleges differ because of the diverse focus of authors in the literature (Cyberbullying Research Center, 2011). However, 20% - 40% of children and teenagers have experienced cyberbullying (Tokunaga, 2010, p, 277). Literature indicates in the past six months 34% of college students have experienced cyberbullying as victims; 64% of students have observed cyberbullying of other student victims; and 19% have been perpetrators of cyberbullying victimization. Further literature indicates increased homophobic incidents and sexting of student victims, 39% as female victims and 25% as male victims – Tyler Clementi of Rutgers University in New Jersey was a male suicide victim of cyberbullying (Swearer, 2010). Incidents of cyberbullying may be increased in the culture of college students because of the closed community of a university, especially of a suburban university, in which potential student victims may be easy to find by perpetrator students (Bostonia, 2009, p. 5). This college culture of cyberbullying may argue for better education and enforcement about the problems of cyberbullying if college students perceive cyberbullying as a concern.

## 2. INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

*"In '1984,' the abolition of personal space was part of an overarching government policy, but nowadays it [is] often nothing more than a side effect of wired high spirits. The era of the 'viral video,' when footage of some absorbing slice of life can spread overnight around the globe, is bringing out the anarchist in all of us."* (Kim, 2010)

The authors' study attempts to evaluate the perceptions of college students on cyberbullying. Though literature indicates problems of cyberbullying, the perceptions of higher-aged college students on bullying may indicate that cyberbullying is a basic condition of college culture if not human nature (Greenya, 2005, p. 6). Perceptions may indicate that cyberbullying is a condition of experience for college students that do not have negative impact (Rigby, 1999) – perhaps in the perceptions of some students Tyler Clementi was not courageous at Rutgers University? Might not sexting be defended by the First Amendment of the Constitution (Sullivan, 2011)? Might sexting be a status symbol (Henderson, 2011)? Indifference of observer students to cyberbullying victims is indicated in the literature. Perpetrators portrayed in the culture of society may be more popular than victims, as in the "Simpsons", in which Bart is victimized by Nelson (Greenya, 2005, p. 3). The power of perpetrators is recognized by students. The importance of cyberbullying as a concern in a college setting of students may not be clear in the literature, but the evident and frequent problems in the literature may indicate that cyberbullying is not a benign issue.

Given the continuance of problems of cyberbullying, colleges may have to consider further etiquette (Mason, 2008) or guidelines for helping students (Edwards, 2010). Guidelines may be hindered however in the perceptions of administrators and instructors in schools that bullying, if not indirect cyberbullying, is an experience in the growth of students (Smith and Brain, 2000) – pranks - and is not an important problem. The perceptions of observer students and students victimized by cyberbullying may be that administrators, instructors and staff may not respond enough to the victimization – 30% of students may not even report the victimization to an adult person (Gomez, 2010). Observer students who do not report cyberbullying fuel perpetration of victimization (Greenya, 2005, p. 4). Current perceptions may be that guidelines of schools may not helpful in intervening in the bullying of perpetrators or in the prevention of cyberbullying. The impact of the perceptions may be that guidelines for intervention may constrain incidents of cyberbullying in colleges, but they may not be effective in constraining cyberbullying as an example of cultural problems (Wong, 2009), absent laws.

Bullying laws are already defined by almost all governments in the United States and are highlighted and identified by the Cyberbullying Research Center (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010) in Table 2 in the Appendix. However, these laws may not be helpful to students because of differing definitions for bullying and cyberbullying, in sanctions diverse for perpetrators and schools with few incidents higher than misdemeanors (Cruz-Griffith, 2010), and in lack of policies required for schools, and furthermore, laws may not be helpful to students because of the lack of recent reflection of technology. School staff may not be helpful to the students because of their lack of skills – 25% of staff may not even be skilled in the cyberbullying laws of the states (Hinduja and Patchin, 2010). The Department of Education has had to inform colleges and high schools of the need for staff to be skilled in the laws (Dillon, 2010). Laws defined by the federal government are limited nevertheless in the United States, as in the Education Amendments of 1972 anti-discrimination laws (Title IX), though the Megan Meier Cyberbullying Prevention Act by Representative Sanchez (Kravets, 2009) and the Cyberbullying as a Form of Harassment Act by Senator Lautenberg (Lister, 2010) are pending in Congress. Perceptions of these proposals are often that they are impulsive and intrusive, as there are already state cyberbullying laws. The impact of these perceptions and problems and perceptions of "underprosecution" (*The Economist*, 2011) may be that colleges and schools may have to be more involved in the prevention of cyberbullying, in order to lessen negative perceptions of students.

Schools might consider a cyberbullying guideline policy or process designed by the authors of the study from the literature and highlighted in Table 3 of the Appendix. Such a process might be engaged in cyberethics (Kraft and Carlisle, 2010) at college, instructors and other levels in a university. The process is interdisciplinary, so students might learn the context of cyberethics as a desired experience integrated and internalized into the norms of a university. In fact, the process is of internalizing new norms of sociality of the university involving observer students that might be helpful in the prevention of cyberbullying. This process is an institutional program for the prevention of perpetration and victimization in the university and for the providing of safety strategies for student non-victims and victims (Bryce and Klang, 2009).

Importantly this process is a program for providing an investigative structure (Bostonia, 2009, p. 8) and software tools (Tozzi, 2011). The impact of this college cyberbullying guideline policy process or other social media networking processes, in providing a presumable prevention and safety structure, may have to be decided by positive perceptions of the structure by the students.

Therefore, this study explores the perceptions of college students on cyberbullying and a cyberbullying guideline process. Might the perceptions of the students be that cyberbullying is not an important issue and instead is a norm of society? Might the perceptions of students be that cyberbullying guideline policies or processes for instructors and administrators and for students are a formality in a university? Might there be perceptions that students having a disability, or ethnic, gender, homophobic, racial or religious inclinations could be inevitably victimized by perpetrator students even with prevention processes? Might there be perceptions that students may not even be knowledgeable of proactive processes and resolution sources in the event of victimization? This study evaluates the perceptions of college students as to the seriousness or non-seriousness of cyberbullying and cyberbullying policy and process solutions in a university.

### 3. FOCUS OF STUDY

The focus of the study is to empirically evaluate college cyberbullying by exploration of the knowledge of students at a major metropolitan institution. Exploration of the perceptions of students as to the prevalence and prevention of cyberbullying may contribute input into a process resolution and safety strategy that may limit cyberbullying, if not bullying, in a college setting. Findings furnish a not frequently found model program for potential prevention of cyberbullying that might be leveraged by administrators, instructors and staff and students, subject to the perceptions of the scope of seriousness or non-seriousness of cyberbullying in an institution. In light of an increased anti-bullying movement (Morgan, 2010) against non-civility in the culture of society (Agress, 2010), the findings of this study on the culture of a university might even be leveraged for optimum sociality of society. Finally, this study might be leveraged by instructors in information systems as they evaluate the impact of cyberbullying on the

profession and on society (Stoodley, Bruce and Edwards, 2010).

### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The research methodology of this study was focused on college students at Pace University, a metropolitan institution with a diverse ethnic, gender, international, racial and religious population of students. In the March – May 2011 period, approximately 400 undergraduate students who were enrolled in a required computing course were asked to participate in an electronic perception survey on cyberbullying, to which responses were anonymous. Of the 400 students, there were 121 valid responses. In the May – June period, the authors of the study, who are instructors at the university, evaluated the responses using Qualtrics and SPSS (McClave and Sincich, 2006).

The survey included a definition of cyberbullying (Tokunaga, 2010, p. 278) followed by 60 questions: 4 demographic questions; 9 fundamental knowledge of cyberbullying questions; 7 perceptions of cyberbullying institutional policy questions; 8 perceptions of cyberbullying problems and seriousness at the university questions; 13 questions on perpetration and victimization internal and external to the university; and 19 population questions on perpetration and victimization. (The survey instrument is included in Figure 1 of the Appendix.)

The questions in the survey were reviewed for integrity in research design, privacy, and sensitivity of inquiry by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) of a committee of faculty of the university, prior to the survey.

### 5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF STUDY

#### Demographic Data

The average age of the respondents was 19.5 years. Most respondents were female (58%), which reflects the general student population at the university. Most of the respondents were first-year students (63%) because the course in which they were enrolled, a university core course, is generally taken by first-year students. Also corresponding to the general student population at the university, 54% of the respondents were liberal arts students, 33%

business students and the remainder distributed among the three other schools of the university.

### Student Awareness of Cyberbullying

Three awareness questions were asked. Responses were on a five-point Likert scale. Most students (79%) Agree or Strongly Agree that they are aware of cyberbullying on the Internet. Also, 81% of respondents Agree or Strongly Agree that they are aware of cyberbullying at other universities. However, only 11% Agree or Strongly agree that cyberbullying is a serious issue at the university.

Students were asked if they are aware of cyberbullying incidents at the university, with 9% answering "Yes". Of those answering "Yes", the number of incidents reported ranged from one to three. The number of perpetrators of these incidents ranged from one to three, and the number of victims ranged from one to three.

### Students Being Cyberbullied

Respondents were asked if they were ever cyberbullied at the university, with 7% responding "Yes". Of those answering "Yes", the number of times victimized ranged from 1 to "a few". The number of perpetrators ranged from one to two. Students who admitted being cyberbullied were asked which method was used to cyberbully them. Table 4 in the Appendix shows the responses.

Respondents were asked if they are aware of cyberbullying of certain groups of people at the university. Table 5 in the Appendix shows the results. Note that the largest groups being cyberbullied are gay and lesbian students, followed by females.

Students were also asked if they were victims of cyberbullying outside the university, with 20% responding "Yes". Of those answering "Yes", the number of times victimized ranged from one to "countless." The number of perpetrators ranged from one to, unfortunately, "my whole junior high." Students who admitted being cyberbullied were asked which method was used to cyberbully them. Table 6 in the Appendix shows the responses. Note that the most prevalent method of cyberbullying is through posting messages on social networking sites.

### Cyberbullying and the University

In the following, unless otherwise noted, the questions were asked on a 5-point Likert scale. The survey asked if the university, as an institution, was sensitive to the problems of cyberbullying. The results were almost a perfect bell-curve as shown in Table 7 in the Appendix.

The survey also asked if the respondents believed that the university is knowledgeable of cyberbullying as an activity harmful to students. Table 8 in the Appendix shows the results.

Note that from Tables 7 and 8, one might conclude that although a good percentage of students believe the university is knowledgeable of cyberbullying (45% Strongly Agree or Agree), only 21% believe (Strongly Agree or Agree) that university is sensitive to the issues of cyberbullying.

The survey asked if professors were knowledgeable about cyberbullying. Table 9 in the Appendix shows the results. Note that the results in this table are very close to that of Table 8 that asked the same question about the university. This indicates that students closely identify "the university" with their professors.

There are two courses that all students in the university are required to take and where it might be appropriate for professors to discuss issues of cyberbullying. One such course is CIS 101, the university core computing course in which the respondents were students; the second is UNIV 101, a non-credit bearing course required of all first-year students that introduces them to university life. 74% of the respondents believed that cyberbullying should be discussed in CIS 101 and 73% believed that cyberbullying should be discussed in UNIV 101. The survey asked if cyberbullying had ever been discussed in *any* university course, with 29% responding "Yes". The number of professors discussing cyberbullying ranged from 1 to 5, with 50% responding that 2 professors had discussed cyberbullying and 38% responding that 1 professor discussed cyberbullying.

Interestingly, there are statistically significant differences (at the  $p=0.05$  level) in gender in those believing that cyberbullying should be discussed in CIS 101 and UNIV 101. Nearly 80% of females want cyberbullying discussed while only 60% of males want it discussed.

Respondents were asked a series of questions on what they think the university should do to educate students and professors on cyberbullying. Table 10 in the Appendix summarizes the results. As is evident from the table, the university needs to raise the awareness of its cyberbullying policy and of the consequences of cyberbullying generally.

### **Student Awareness of Cyberbullying Policies**

Students were asked if they were aware of the university's policy and cyberbullying laws in the U.S. Only 21% either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they were aware of the university's cyberbullying policy, while 34% Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they were knowledgeable of U.S. cyberbullying laws.

### **Ethical Evaluation and Response**

The survey asked if cyberbullying is a serious issue for the respondent. See Table 11 in the Appendix. The results indicate that cyberbullying is a serious issue for about 34% of the respondents. This agrees with the previously stated result that about 7% of the respondents had been cyberbullied at the university and 20% outside the university.

The survey asked if the respondent had ever consciously been a perpetrator of cyberbullying. Surprisingly, 10% admitted to doing so. Also asked was the question "Might it be acceptable for freshman or sophomore students to be cyberbullied by junior or senior students?" Surprisingly, 8% responded "Yes".

Respondents were also asked to make value judgments on the privacy and ethics of cyberbullying. Table 12 in the Appendix summarizes the results. Note that 84% either Agree or Strongly Agree that cyberbullying is wrong, but 73% believe that it is a violation of privacy. This shows a possible misunderstanding of the full consequences of cyberbullying.

The survey asked what should be the consequences of cyberbullying. The respondents were given a list of penalties and were asked to choose as many as they thought appropriate. See Table 13 in the Appendix. Note that the majority, 63%, would want just a warning to the perpetrator while only 20% would suggest expelling the perpetrator. Does this indicate a view that cyberbullying is not that serious an

issue for students? There is a statistically significant difference between males and females (at the  $p=0.05$  level) on suspension with 42% of males choosing suspension, while 64% of females chose suspension.

The survey also asked whom the respondents would contact in the event they were a victim of cyberbullying. The respondents were presented with a list of possibilities and were asked to choose as many as they deemed appropriate. Table 14 in the Appendix summarizes the responses. Note that the most popular response is "Your best friend" even over "Your parents", which is perhaps not surprising for college-age students. There was a statistically significant difference (at the  $p=0.05$  level) between male and female respondents in choosing "The Counseling Center" with 32% of males and 50% of females making that choice. There was also a high statistical difference in gender ( $p=.004$ ) between males and females in choosing "Parents", with 38% of males and 64% of females making that choice.

## **6. FINAL IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY**

*"It is not technology as such, which affects society for good or bad, but its uses, which are ... shaped by the values of society ... We must remember that we are not trapped helplessly in front of an unstoppable technological steamroller. Our control is how we use our knowledge that we will be required to live with the results of our decisions on the use of this new technology."* (Solomon, 1985)

The study shows that cyberbullying is a serious issue for the respondents. A vast majority also believe that cyberbullying is wrong and a violation of one's privacy. This belief is confirmed (see Table 13) by the fact that a majority of students want a moderate to severe penalty for perpetrators of cyberbullying.

The study shows that although the respondents are very aware of cyberbullying on the Internet, only a small number (11%) think that it is a serious issue at their university and an even smaller number (9%) are aware of cyberbullying incidents at their university. Of the 7% of respondents who admitted being cyberbullied at the university, the study shows that the primary vector of cyberbullying is the posting of harassing messages on a social networking site, which is in accord with the findings of Janviere (2010).

A much greater percentage of respondents (20%) were cyberbullied outside the university, presumably for most in high school, (80% of respondents were first- or second-year students) where again the primary cyberbullying vector was a social networking site.

The study also revealed some information that might be useful to a university's administration. As noted, only 21% of respondents believe that the university is sensitive to cyberbullying issues. A very large majority of respondents also believe that cyberbullying should be formally discussed in required university courses and that the university should do more to educate students, faculty, and staff on cyberbullying issues. Table 14 in the appendix also shows that students are not comfortable contacting university officials if they are cyberbullied. These results show that the university is in need of increasing student trust and awareness of university support for cyberbullying victims, and should take a more active role in facing cyberbullying issues.

#### **7. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH STUDY**

The findings from a sample of students in a study of cyberbullying and cyberbullying policy processes at Pace University may not be generalized to other urban and suburban universities in the United States without caution. Though the responses of the students were largely through an anonymous survey, the sensitivity of responding to a cyberbullying survey may have underreported the perpetration and victimization of the students (Cole, Cornell and Sheras, 2006). Also, the findings of the survey were limited to the perceptions of students and lacked the perceptions of administrators, instructors and staff who are key players in policy processes of a university.

The larger limitation of the definition of cyberbullying that may be consistent or non-consistent with the definitions, focuses and the methodologies of other research studies (Cyberbullying Research Center, 2011 and Tokunaga, 2010, p. 283) may favor an opportunity for a new research study. Such a study might integrate with domestic practitioner specialists, as the Cyberbullying Research Center at Florida Atlantic University and the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and the forthcoming

Tyler Clementi Foundation (Foderaro, 2011), or international specialists, as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (Olweus, 1993, Research Center for Health Promotion), so that a study by one university might match definitions and methodologies to the specialists. Research study might be further pursued by the authors of this study as to which cyberbullying policy processes were successful and not successful at the university, inasmuch as the seriousness of cyberbullying at the university was a clear finding of this study.

#### **8. CONCLUSION OF STUDY**

This study confirmed that in the perceptions of college students at Pace University cyberbullying was a concern for the students. Higher level knowledge of the perpetration of cyberbullying towards distinct gender and homophobic populations of students and of the prevalence of cyberbullying at the university were in the study. Lower level knowledge of the students of the proactive processes for safety steps with the institutional problems of perpetration and victimization were disclosed in the study. The study furnished a model program that might be engaged by administrators, instructors and staff and also students in responding to the sensitivity and seriousness of cyberbullying in the cultural like norms of a university. This study will be further pursued in 2012 with a research survey by the university together with practitioner specialists in the topic.

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\_\_\_\_\_ (2011) Creepy crawlies: The Interbet allows the malicious to menace their victims. *The Economist*, April 23, 63.

## Appendix

**Figure 1: Cyberbullying Instrument of Survey**

What is your age?

Gender?

- Male       Female

What is your status?

- Freshman     Sophomore     Junior     Senior

To which school of the University do you belong?

- Liberal Arts     Education     Nursing     Business     Computing

Definition of Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is any behavior performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others. In cyber-bullying experiences, the identity of the bully may or may not be known. Cyber-bullying can occur through electronically-mediated communication at school; however, cyber-bullying behaviors commonly occur outside school as well.

You are aware of cyber-bullying as an activity on the Internet

- |                       |                       |                               |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Disagree<br>Agree nor | Agree                 | Strongly Agree        |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Cyber-bullying is a serious issue for you.

- |                       |                       |                               |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Disagree<br>Agree nor | Agree                 | Strongly Agree        |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

You are aware of cyber-bullying activities at other schools (for example the Rutgers student who committed suicide as a result of cyber-bullying)?

- |                       |                       |                               |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Disagree<br>Agree nor | Agree                 | Strongly Agree        |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Might it be acceptable for freshman or sophomore students to be cyber-bullied by junior or senior students?

- Yes       No

Have you discussed issues of cyber-bullying in your fraternity or sorority at the University?

- Yes     No

Should cyber-bullying be discussed in UNIV 101?

- Yes     No

Should cyber-bullying be discussed in CIS 101?

- Yes       No

Have professors in your courses at the University discussed incidents or issues of cyber-bullying?

Yes       No  
How many professors have done so?

Should the University do any of the following? Please respond to all.  
Publicize more its policy on cyber-bullying.

Yes       No

Publicize more the problems of cyber-bullying as an activity harmful to students.

Yes       No

Sponsor seminars for students on the problems of cyber-bullying as an activity harmful to students.

Yes       No

Sponsor sensitivity seminars for professors on the problems of cyber-bullying as an activity harmful to students.

Yes       No

Sponsor sensitivity seminars for staff on the problems of cyber-bullying as an activity harmful to students.

Yes       No

Cyberbullying penalty and contacts

What should be the penalty for perpetrators of cyber-bullying? Choose as many as appropriate.

- No penalty by the University
- Student is suspended by the University
- Warning sent to the student by the University
- University immediately expels the student
- University informs police of the incident

If you were a victim of cyber-bullying, whom would you contact. Choose as many as appropriate.

- The President of the
- Your local Police Department
- The Dean of Students
- Your fraternity or sorority
- The Dean of your school
- Your best friend
- The Chair of your department
- Your parents
- The Counseling Center
- No one
- The Security Department

The administration of the University is knowledgeable of cyber-bullying as a activity that is harmful to students.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree                      Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree                      Strongly Agree  
                                                                                       

Cyber-bullying is a serious issue at the University.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree                      Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree                      Strongly Agree  
                                                                                       

Professors at the University are knowledgeable on cyber-bullying as an activity that is harmful to students.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree                      Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree                      Strongly Agree

You are aware of the official policies of the University on cyber-bullying.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

The University, as an institution, is sensitive to the problems of cyber-bullying.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

You are knowledgeable of the laws on cyber-bullying in the United States.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

Cyber-bullying is a violation of privacy, regardless of the intent of the perpetrator.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

Cyber-bullying, pure and simple, is wrong.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neither Agree nor Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

Are you aware of incidents of cyber-bullying at the University?

Yes     No

Of how many incidents are you aware?

How many perpetrators were involved?

How many victims were involved?

Perpetrator?

Have you ever consciously or unconsciously been a perpetrator of cyber-bullying?

Yes     No

Have you ever been a victim of cyber-bullying at the University?

Yes     No

How many times were you victimized?

How many perpetrators were there?

What method was used to cyber-bully you. Choose as many as appropriate.

Looking in to your cell phone                       Posting harassing messages on a social

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Looking in to your email        | <input type="checkbox"/> networking site  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sending you harassing emails    | <input type="checkbox"/> Posting harassing pictures on a social networking site                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sending you harassing pictures  | <input type="checkbox"/> Preventing a friend from contacting others on a social networking site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sending you pornographic images | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexting  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |

**Bullying outside the University**

Have you ever been a victim of cyber-bullying outside the - at another university, in high school, or at work?

- Yes       No

How many times were you victimized?

How many perpetrators were there?

What method was used to cyber-bully you. Choose as many as appropriate.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Looking in to your cell phone   | <input type="checkbox"/> Posting harassing messages on a social networking site                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Looking in to your email        | <input type="checkbox"/> Posting harassing pictures on a social networking site                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sending you harassing emails    | <input type="checkbox"/> preventing a friend from contacting others on a social networking site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sending you harassing pictures  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexting  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sending you pornographic images | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |

Are you aware of cyber-bullying of any of the following groups at the University? Choose as many as appropriate.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male students                | <input type="checkbox"/> African-American students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female students              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic students         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian students               | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim students           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gay students                 | <input type="checkbox"/> African students          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian students             | <input type="checkbox"/> Developmentally disabled  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physically disabled students | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                     |

For each of the following pairs, choose the one you think is more likely to be a VICTIM of cyber-bullying at the University.

Male      Female

- 

Foreign      Non-foreign

- 

Gay      Straight

- 

Lesbian      Straight

- 

Disabled      Non-disabled

-



**Table 1: Cyberbullying Incidents Contributing to Suicides in United States**

Date	Incident	Location	Student
3/21/10	Harassment - Messaging on Web Site	New York	Alexis Pilkington
1/14/10	Harassment - Cellular Messaging	Massachusetts	Phoebe Prince
9/12/09	Harassment - Cellular Messaging of Picture/Sexting	Florida	Hope Witsell
7/1/09	Harassment - Cellular Messaging of Picture/Sexting	Ohio	Jesse Logan
10/16/06	Harassment Impersonation - e-Mailing	Missouri	Megan Meir
10/9/06	Harassment-e-Mailing Messaging	Kentucky	Rachael Neblett
6/29/05	Harassment-e-Mailing Messaging	Florida	Jeffrey Johnson
10/7/03	Harassment-e-Mailing Messaging	Vermont	Ryan Patrick Halligan

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ (2010). List of cyberbullying related suicides. *Cyberbullying News*, May 10, 2-3 [Adapted].

**Table 2: Cyberbullying Laws in Governments in United States**

State	Bullying Law	Cyberbullying Law	Policy Required for Schools	Sanction for Criminals	Sanction for Schools
<b>Alabama</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Alaska</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Arizona</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Arkansas</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>California</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Colorado</b>	No	No	Yes	Proposed	Yes
<b>Connecticut</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Delaware</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>District of Columbia</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Florida</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Georgia</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Hawaii</b>	No	No	No	Proposed	No
<b>Idaho</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Illinois</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Indiana</b>	No	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Iowa</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Kansas</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Kentucky</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Louisiana</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Maine</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Maryland</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Massachusetts</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Michigan</b>	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Minnesota</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Mississippi</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Missouri</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Montana</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Nebraska</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Nevada</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No



<b>New Hampshire</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
<b>New Jersey</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>New Mexico</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>New York</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>North Carolina</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>North Dakota</b>	No	No	No	Proposed	No
<b>Ohio</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Oklahoma</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Oregon</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Rhode Island</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
<b>South Carolina</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>South Dakota</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Tennessee</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Texas</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Utah</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Vermont</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Washington</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>West Virginia</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Wisconsin</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Wyoming</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Source: Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J.W. (2010). State cyberbullying laws: A brief review of state cyberbullying laws and policies. *Cyberbullying Research Center*, July [Adapted]

**Table 3: Cyberbullying Guideline Process – Model Program**

	<b>Guideline for Implementation</b>	<b>Administrators</b>	<b>Instructors</b>	<b>Staff*</b>	<b>Students</b>
<b>College Level</b>					
Bullying Laws	Mandatory	X	X	X	X
Cyberbullying Laws	Mandatory	X	X	X	X
Title IX Laws	Mandatory	X	X	X	X
Definition of Bullying	Mandatory	X	X	X	X
Definition of Cyberbullying -Sexting	Mandatory	X	X	X	X
Cyberethics in Mission Statement of University	Mandatory	X			
Code of Cyberethics for Administrators, Faculty and Staff	Mandatory	X	X	X	
Code of	Mandatory				X

Cyberethics for Students					
On Campus and Off Campus Incident Policy	Mandatory				X
Office of CyberEthics	Optional	X			
Introduction to Cyberethics as a Course for Freshman and Transfer Students: Cyberbullying Issues and Prevention Safety Strategies	Mandatory		X		X
Cyberbullying School Policy for Observer Students	Mandatory	X			X
Cyberbullying School Policy for Professor Victims	Mandatory	X	X		
Cyberbullying School Policy for Student Victims	Mandatory	X			X
Potential Zero Tolerance	Optional	X			X
Annual Faculty Retreats and Sensitivity Workshops	Optional		X		
Bi-Annual Faculty Inter-Collegiate Regional Workshops	Optional		X		
Process for Reporting Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization for Observer Students and Student	Mandatory	X			X

Victims					
Process for Investigation of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization by Internal Security and Reporting of Results	Mandatory	X	X	X	
Sanctions for Perpetrator Students - Formal Graduated Negative Sanctions (No Penalty, Parent Notification and Reprimand Sanctions to Sanctions of Suspension and Expulsion from University and of Police Prosecution) - Informal Negative Sanctions	Mandatory	X			X
Internal Psychiatric Referral Services for Perpetrator Students and Student Victims	Mandatory	X			X
Internal Referral Services for At-Risk Students	Optional	X			X
Annual Report on Cyberbullying Incidents and Cyberbullying Safety Strategies to	Optional	X			

President of University					
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<b>Guideline for Implementation</b>	<b>Administrators</b>	<b>Instructors</b>	<b>Staff*</b>	<b>Students</b>
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**Instructor Level**

Cyberbully in Cyberethics Course for All Freshman and Transfer Students -Etiquette on Internet ("Netiquette")	Mandatory		X		X
Cyberbully Modules in Interdisciplinary and Occupational Courses in All Schools of University	Mandatory		X		X

Faculty Handbook on Reporting Perpetration and Victimization	Mandatory		X		
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On-Line Privacy Protection Steps in Interdisciplinary and Occupational Courses -Perpetration Scenarios -Public Perpetration Scenarios	Mandatory		X		X
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Prevention and Safety Strategies on Web	Mandatory		X		X
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Annual Security Workshop on Cyberbullying	Optional	X	X	X	
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Scenarios through Technology and Web					
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<b>Guideline for Implementation</b>	<b>Administrators</b>	<b>Instructors</b>	<b>Staff*</b>	<b>Students</b>
-------------------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------	---------------	-----------------

**Other Levels**

Centers for Social Justice -Ethnic Focus -Gender Focus -Homophobic Focus -International Focus -Religious Focus	Optional	X			X
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Centers for Social Justice - Intercollegiate programs	Optional	X			X
--	----------	---	--	--	---

Club Programs -Fraternities and Sororities -Other Recreations	Optional				X
---	----------	--	--	--	---

Cyberbullying Ethics Board on Safety Strategies	Optional		X		X
---	----------	--	---	--	---

Cyberbullying Information Month	Mandatory	X	X	X	X
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Cyberbullying Symposiums	Mandatory		X		X
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Cyberethics Portal Zine for Public Sources	Mandatory	X	X	X	X
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Guest Presentations on Safety	Optional	X	X	X	X
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Strategies from Security Industry					
Mentoring Network for At-Risk Students and Student Victims	Optional		X		X
Peer Resources and Sources on Cyberbullying Topics -www.isafe.org - www.netSMARTZ.org - www.wiredsafety.com	Mandatory	X	X	X	X

**\*Aide, Cafeteria, Clerical, Maintenance and Security Staff**











**Table 4**

Cyberbullying method at the university	%
Looking in to your cell phone	14%
Looking in to your email	14%
Sending you harassing emails	29%
Sending you harassing pictures	29%
Sending you pornographic images	14%
Posting harassing messages on a social networking site	43%
Posting harassing pictures on a social networking site	29%
Preventing a friend from contacting others on a social networking site	0%
Sexting	14%
Other	0%






**Table 5**

Cyberbullied Groups		%
Male students		25%
Female students		25%
Asian students		14%
Gay students		43%
Lesbian students		25%
Physically disabled students		14%
African-American students		10%
Hispanic students		10%
Muslim students		14%
African students		12%
Developmentally disabled		8%
Other		33%






**Table 6**

Cyberbullying method outside the university		%
Looking in to your cell phone		14%
Looking in to your email		9%
Sending you harassing emails		32%
Sending you harassing pictures		23%
Sending you pornographic images		14%
Posting harassing messages on a social networking site		64%
Posting harassing pictures on a social networking site		27%
Preventing a friend from contacting others on a social networking site		9%
Sexting		9%
Other		36%






**Table 7**

The university is sensitive to cyberbullying.		%
Strongly Disagree		1%
Disagree		16%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		62%
Agree		20%
Strongly Agree		1%

**Table 8**

The university is knowledgeable of cyberbullying		%
Strongly Disagree		4%
Disagree		5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		48%
Agree		40%
Strongly Agree		5%

**Table 9**





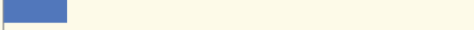
Professors are knowledgeable of cyberbullying		%
Strongly Disagree		1%
Disagree		10%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		43%
Agree		41%
Strongly Agree		5%



**Table 10**

<b>Question: The University Should ...</b>	<b>Percent Yes</b>
Publicize more its cyberbullying policy	82
Publicize more cyberbullying as a harmful activity	85
Sponsor student seminars on cyberbullying	72
Sponsor cyberbullying sensitivity seminars for professors	69
Sponsor cyberbullying sensitivity seminars for staff	65

**Table 11**

Cyberbullying is a serious issue for you		%
Strongly Disagree		17%
Disagree		16%
Neither Agree nor Disagree		32%
Agree		21%
Strongly Agree		13%

**Table 12**

<b>Answer</b>	<b>Cyberbullying is a violation of privacy, regardless of intent</b>	<b>Cyberbullying, pure and simple, is wrong</b>
Strongly Disagree	1%	2%
Disagree	3%	1%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	23%	14%
Agree	37%	21%
Strongly Agree	36%	63%

**Table 13**

What should be the penalty for cyberbullying?		%
No penalty by the University		7%
Warning sent to the student by the University		63%
University informs police of the incident		50%
Student is suspended by the University		57%
University immediately expels the student		20%

**Table 14**

Whom would you contact if you were cyberbullied		%
The President of the university		16%
The Dean of Students		39%
The Dean of your school		25%
The Chair of your department		14%
The Counseling Center		44%
The Security Department		29%
Your local Police Department		24%
Your fraternity or sorority		11%
Your best friend		63%
Your parents		57%
No one		9%