

5-11-2009

Campus Security Updates

Wesleyan University

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Archive of Campus Security Updates

Update 12:30 p.m. 5-8-09

Hearing the report that Stephen Morgan turned himself in last night gave us all here on campus an enormous sense of relief. Now that the fear has receded, we can begin to take the full measure of our grief for the loss of Johanna Justin-Jinich. At 1 p.m. today we will gather in the Huss Courtyard behind the Usdan University Center for a brief moment of remembrance. There will, as I've said, be another Memorial in the future when friends, co-workers, teachers and others have the time to plan something appropriate.

As campus rhythms return, some of the most frequently asked practical questions have to do with finals. Just this morning Provost Joseph Bruno sent an email to faculty describing changes to our normal exam schedule and asking for great flexibility from our professors:

"In addition, I announce the following modification in the final exam schedule. For those examinations scheduled for Monday, May 11, we will provide the option of a make-up period on Friday, May 15, to allow students extra time to return to campus and prepare for exams. We will attempt to make room reservations for Friday that mirror those in place for the Monday schedule. I sincerely hope you will honor any requests from students seeking extra preparation time for any scheduled examination, and I urge you to contact our colleagues in the Registrar's Office to arrange for space you may need to reschedule examinations on Friday. Of course, any delay until Friday may cause difficulty for students who have already made travel reservations and I ask you to accommodate those students in whatever ways you can. In any case, please contact the students in your courses today (Friday) to inform them of any options you can offer.

"Finally, I request that you grant all reasonable requests for grades of Incomplete so as to allow students to finish their final examinations or papers over the summer. This would affect seniors and graduation, so I propose to reinstate, for this year only, the practice of allowing graduation upon completion."

Students who have questions or dilemmas with respect to getting their final work done should contact their Class Deans immediately. We will follow-up with individual faculty members and students as needed. As I said in my communication last night: Nobody needs to worry about short-term academic deadlines right now, but we do want to give students an opportunity to finish their work.

Before we return to our studies, our concerts, shows, and athletic competitions, we will pause for remembrance at 1 p.m. today behind Usdan. I'd also like to pause to thank the faculty, staff and students who have struggled hard to keep our community intact—to take care of one another in this time of grief and fear. Our extended Wesleyan family also deserves our gratitude for their kind words of support and empathy. Every year as graduation approaches we can appreciate the joyful inspiration that alma mater brings. In this time of shock and sorrow, we have also realized that Wesleyan is a caring resource for us all.

Michael S. Roth
President, Wesleyan University

Update 10:25 p.m. 5-7-09

We have received confirmation from the Middletown Police Department that Stephen Morgan, the suspect in the recent shooting at the Red and Black Café, has been apprehended. The Wesleyan community is grateful for the work of the law enforcement agencies involved in this process. We are all breathing a little easier with this news.

Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Johanna and hope that this latest development brings them some measure of comfort. Wesleyan will resume normal operations, as originally planned on Friday, May 8th. The vigil will take place as scheduled at 1 p.m. in the Huss Courtyard of the Usdan University Center.

Michael S. Roth
President, Wesleyan University

Update 9:20 p.m. 5-7-09

Dear friends,

It has been a long and difficult day. I saw many students in their residence halls and houses, and others in their cars headed away from campus. I have met with police authorities throughout the day, and we have deployed additional forces across Wesleyan. The campus looks calm, but tension and pain remain.

Tonight my wife Kari and I had dinner with students, faculty and staff in Usdan. It was good to be together. There is so much hurt and anxiety... and fear stoked by newspapers and websites. I have discussed all the "new information" with police who are knowledgeable about the situation, and we feel confident that we have put in place appropriate security measures.

I look forward to seeing the libraries open in the morning, as well as the Freeman Athletic Center. Tomorrow there will police officers at both venues because we still must take extra safety measures. At 11 a.m. tomorrow we will send out an update, which will include information about finals. We will be extremely flexible about finals. Nobody needs worry about short-term academic deadlines right now, but we do want to give students an opportunity to finish their work.

At 1 p.m. tomorrow we will gather behind the Usdan University Center for a brief time of remembrance. We hold Johanna, her family, her teachers and her friends in our hearts. We will begin together to rebuild the habits of our community. These will keep us safe, caring and strong.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Roth
President, Wesleyan University

Update 8:00 p.m. 5-7-09

After extensive consultation with police officials and upon the implementation of increased security precautions and measures, we have decided to open the campus to more regular operations. Faculty and staff are asked to resume their normal responsibilities on campus tomorrow. Thank you.

Update 6:45 p.m. 5-7-09

After extensive consultation between Wesleyan and law enforcement officials, we have decided to begin to open the campus to more regular operations, starting with opening Usdan for a few hours this evening. We are instructing students to remain indoors after dinner tonight, but meals are being served, tomorrow morning the library will re-open, and before noon tomorrow there will be an announcement of a new, flexible schedule for final assignments. But we are still grieving; we still mourn.

Tomorrow at 1 p.m., two days after the shooting that took the life of Johanna Justin-Jinich, Wesleyan will hold a brief memorial vigil in the Huss Courtyard behind the Usdan Center. There will be time for Johanna's friends and family to plan other ceremonies at Wesleyan, and perhaps elsewhere. But tomorrow we will gather just to be with one another and remember. We will pay our respects to Johanna's all-too-brief life.

We will gather now because we need to, because it is right to do so, and because we feel it is safe enough to do so. There is now a much more robust police presence on the Wesleyan campus, and we will retain that presence as long as necessary.

Let us come together tomorrow at 1 p.m. in compassionate solidarity with one another, and in remembrance of Johanna.

Michael S. Roth
President, Wesleyan University

Update 10:00 a.m. 5-7-09

We have been informed by Middletown Police of new evidence about the suspect in yesterday's shooting. Although he apparently had a direct link to the victim but no other connection to the Wesleyan community, we have now been made aware that he expressed threats in his personal journals toward Wesleyan and/or its Jewish students. All students are urged to remain vigilant and to stay indoors. Additional security has been deployed accordingly.

We will continue to work with authorities to ensure the safety of students on campus, and there will be increased patrols by Wesleyan Public Safety Officers and Middletown Police. At this time we continue to believe that the safest place for students is in their residences and we will provide additional information as it becomes available.

Video of a press conference held this morning can be seen here: <http://www.courant.com/video/?slug=hc-wesleyan-shooting-video-wn>

Update 6:25 a.m. 5-7-09

The suspect in yesterday's fatal shooting has not been apprehended. Based on the advice of local authorities, Wesleyan instructs all students to remain in their residences. Faculty and staff should not come to their offices unless otherwise instructed. We will be sending information soon in regard to food and other administrative services.

Please remain cautious. The police investigation continues, and we remain in contact with them about all developments. We will send information via the usual channels as it becomes available.

Update 10:20 p.m. 5-6-09

We have recently received information from the Middletown police with pictures of the alleged gunman in the attack this afternoon, who has been identified as Stephen Morgan.

We remind students to stay indoors and to report any suspicious activities to the MPD (860 344-3200). We will send additional information as it becomes available. We plan to send another broadcast message at approximately 6:30 am.

Update: 7:10 p.m. 5-6-09

Based upon additional information found processing the crime scene, we would recommend Wesleyan students and Middletown residents remain vigilant. The suspect is at large and considered armed and dangerous. Students and the Wesleyan community are advised to remain indoors while Middletown Police continue this investigation.

Public Safety 860-685-3333

Middletown Police 911 or 860-344-3202

Update 6:47 p.m. 5-6-09

Based on new information we have just received from Middletown Police, we are advising students to avoid large gatherings, return to their residences, and remain indoors for the rest of the evening. There is no reason to believe that the perpetrator of the shooting earlier today is on or near the campus, but we believe that the Wesleyan community could possibly be at risk. We realize that some students want to come together tonight to console each other, but such gatherings are not advisable at this time.

We will continue to provide updates to the campus community via e-mail as additional information becomes available. Meanwhile, please immediately report any suspicious people or circumstances to Public Safety at 860-685-2222.

Dean Mike Whaley

Vice President for Student Affairs

Update 6:00 p.m. 5-6-09

It is with deep sorrow that I write to inform you that Johanna Justin-Jinich '10 was killed by a gunman this afternoon at her job at the Red and Black Café on the corner of William Street and Broad Street. This is a devastating loss for Johanna's family, friends, and for the entire Wesleyan Community. Our hearts go out to all those who grieve for Johanna, and we hope all can find comfort in the support of friends, teachers and classmates.

Staff from the Office of Behavioral Health can be reached in their offices until 9:30PM tonight and are always available via the 24 hour on-call system by calling: 860-685-2910.

We mourn together the loss of Johanna.

Michael S. Roth
President, Wesleyan University

Update 3:15 p.m. 5-6-09

This is an update of the emergency notification sent earlier this afternoon. A Wesleyan student was fatally shot at Red and Black Café this afternoon. The name of the student will be released upon notification of her immediate family. A gun was recovered at the scene of the shooting, however the suspect is still at large. Students, faculty and staff are urged to remain indoors while Middletown Police continue to search for suspect(s). All campus events scheduled for today, including Spring Fling, are canceled.

Michael S. Roth
President, Wesleyan University

Update 1:40 p.m. 5-6-09

Middletown Police has notified the University that a shooting occurred just after 1:00pm today in the area of Broad Street Books. The suspect has not yet been identified. Middletown Police have responded to the area. We advise students, faculty and staff to remain indoors until more information is available.

As more information is obtained the community will be notified via e-mail.