



Preparing for November 2020 and Beyond

Proactively Address Blind Spots to Minimize Campus Flashpoints

Meet Our Expert



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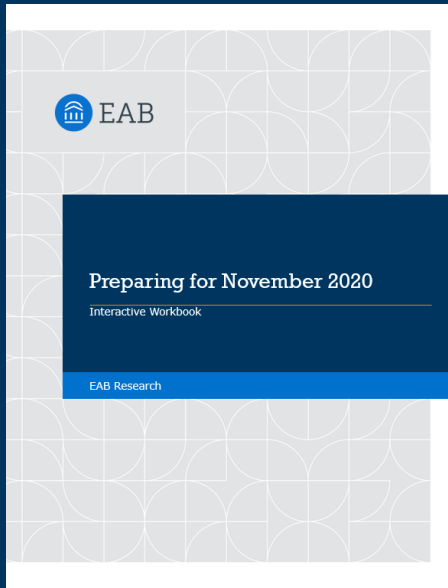
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Proactively Address Blind Spots to Minimize Campus Flashpoints

- **Is Your Institution Prepared for Election 2020?**
- **Break**
- **Interactive Exercise: Preparing for Campus Climate Flashpoints**
- **Closing Remarks and Survey**

Interactive Workbook



Use Your Workbook to:



Take notes throughout session



Discuss ideas and thoughts with group members



Engage in group exercises



Identify next steps and session takeaways

Caught Off-Guard in 2016

2020 Election Will Be Even More Contentious and Divisive

Post-Election Campus Incidents Made National Headlines



Mobs of tearful, angry students protesting Trump victory swarm college campuses



Campuses confront hostile acts against minorities after Donald Trump's election



Meet the conservative student activist who wants to make campus great again



White Nationalists march on University of Virginia

Hate Crimes and Organizations Rose in US Post-Election

↑ 30%

Increase in number of hate groups from 2015-2018

↑ 50%

Increase of White Nationalist groups in 2018

↑ 30%

Increase in hate crimes between 2015 to 2017, with biggest gains in crimes involving violence¹

Source: Dickerson, C., Saul, S. "[Campuses confront hostile acts against minorities after Donald Trump's election.](#)" *The New York Times*, November 10, 2016; Grinberg, E. "[Meet the conservative student activist who wants to 'make campus great again'.](#)" *CNN*, April 18, 2017; Jaschik, S. "[Tensions, Protests, Incidents.](#)" *Inside Higher Ed*, November 14, 2016; Spencer, H., Stolberg, S. "[White Nationalists march on University of Virginia.](#)" *The New York Times*, August 11, 2017; Svrluga, S. "[Mobs of tearful, angry students protesting Trump victory swarm college campuses.](#)" *Washington Post*, November 9, 2016; EAB interviews and analysis.

F

January
President Trump impeachment trial

February
U.S. closes national borders to China

Ahmaud Arbery shot and killed while jogging in Georgia.

March
WHO¹ declares COVID-19 global pandemic

Higher Education institutions close campuses, move to virtual operations

May
Students launch 100+ class-action lawsuits for tuition refunds

Protestors voice opposition to stay-at-home orders across the nation

CARES² Act provides \$14.25B for higher ed

April
VP Joe Biden accused of sexual assault by former Senate aide

Murder of George Floyd spark national protests for racial justice

June
Students demand end of university-police contracts

Protests spark global movements for racial justice

July
U.S. reaches 4 million COVID cases

August
UNC-Chapel Hill shuts campus one week after opening

November
Election Day

Hurricane Laura ravages Louisiana

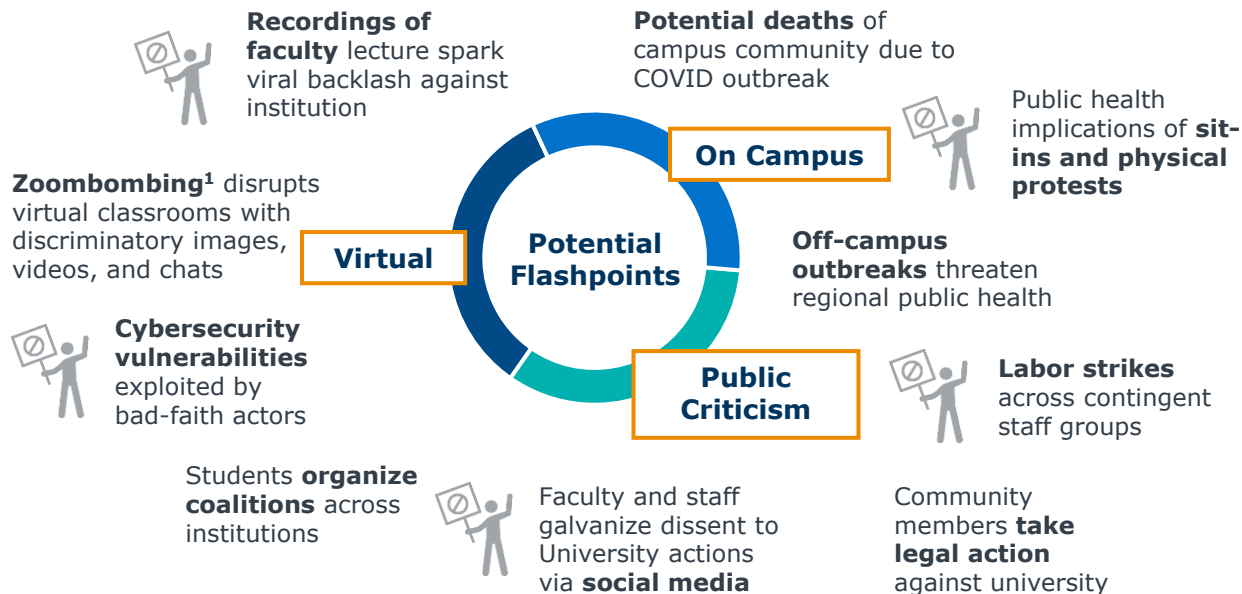
World Health Organization

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Sources: CNN, [2020 Year in Review](#); National Conference of State Legislatures, [Higher Education Responses to Coronavirus \(COVID-](#)

Backdrop to the 2020 Election

Current Cultural Moment Is Triggering Novel Flashpoints



A flashpoint is a climate-related incident or event that causes disturbance in the community or media, including heightened levels of activism, media and public scrutiny, and reputational damage.

1) Zoombombing is an unsolicited intrusion into a video conference call, generally broadcasting inappropriate content.

Higher Ed Is Not In a Vacuum

Private Sector Also Contending with Climate Flashpoints

Bon Appétit Stars Quit
Over Racial Discrimination

-Vox, 2020

Judge Allows 2,300 Women
To Proceed With Gender

Tucker Carlson's top
writer resigns after
posting racist and sexist
remarks online

-CNN, 2020

Alaska Airlines Panned
After Gay Couple Had To
Give Up Seats

Facebook Restricts
Speech by Popular
Demand

-The Atlantic, 2019

H&M Slammed As
Racist For
The Jun

Goldman Sachs Sued By
Former Executive Over Sexual
Orientation Discrimination

-CNBC, 2019

Pixar's John Lasseter To
ve Disney Follow
ual Harassment
mplaints

-The Ver

Chick-fil-A's Canadian
Expansion Sparks Pro-
LGBTQ Protests

No More Rainbow Capitalism:
Protestors March Against Corporate
Commodification of Pride Month

-Reuters, 2020

L.A. Fitness Says Employees
Accused Of Harassing Two

Racism For Skin
Lightening Cream

Claims in Suit

"The challenges we are seeing on campus...conflicting views on free and inclusive speech, lack of diversity in our staff--are the same ones that everyone watches play out in Silicon Valley, Washington, and everywhere else. **Students are judging us against them. This comparison raises the bar on what constitutes an adequate response.**"

President, Public University

A New Gold Standard Is Emerging

Service Industries Address Incidents with *Rapid* and *Thorough* Responses

Two Viable Response Strategies

2018

Company wide anti-bias training



STARBUCKS

After a viral uproar caused by two Black patrons being arrested in a Philadelphia store, CEO issued formal apology and announced a mandatory *anti-bias training* for all employees.

2020

Taking action against white supremacy



Responding to the murder of George Floyd and the resulting national unrest, Ben & Jerry's issued a statement addressing historical roots of systemic racism and advocating for specific policies to redress racial inequality.

What Industry Is Getting Right



Speed

Responding to incidents swiftly to steer direction of conversation



Accountability

Assuming responsibility for any associated direct and indirect actions



Underlying Concerns

Addressing historical and systemic issues that have led to incident



Actionable Next Steps

Outlining comprehensive actions to address incident and mitigate future harm



Reaffirmed Values

Emphasize sustained commitment to company values and priorities

But Higher Ed Institutions Are Falling Behind



Flashpoints Find Most Colleges and Universities Scrambling to Respond

Higher Ed's Failed Response Incites Demands

● **May 2020**

Senior Leaders offer empty words, little action

In response to the murder of George Floyd, students and faculty criticize higher education leadership for placating protestors without actionable agendas. Students demand divestment of police contracts.

85%

Of 4-year university leaders believe racial justice protests are **likely** or **very likely** for fall semester

AACU, 2020.

Why Institutions Are Underprepared

- ✗ Outdated policies and protocols
- ✗ No strategy to respond, leading to slow and reactionary responses
- ✗ No coordinated or trained first responders
- ✗ Fail to proactively monitor for potential flashpoint issues
- ✗ Senior campus leaders are surprised or frustrated by students' demands

Repercussions Reverberate Through the Years



Response Failures Have Lasting Impacts on Institutional Reputation

University of California, Davis's 2011 Pepper Spray Incident

Factual reporting occurs in the **immediate aftermath**

Analysis of stakeholder **reactions soon follows**

Crises resurface long after the initial incident

Future crises associated with the initial incident

HUFFPOST

November 19, 2011

UC Davis Police Pepper-Spray Seated Students In Occupy Dispute

The New York Times

November 22, 2011

Pepper Spray's Fallout, From Crowd Control to Mocking Images

The Washington Post

August 9, 2016

UC Davis Chancellor Resigns After Pepper-Spray Scandal

Los Angeles Times

July 9, 2020

At Some U.S. Universities, A Time to Rethink Cops on Campus

The Stakes Are High for Addressing Flashpoints

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Consequences Are Real for Institutions and Individuals



Fundraising Consequences

\$6M

Total drop in existing pledges and donations to the University of Missouri in November and December 2015



Possible Legal Action

807

Number of student inquiries about free speech violations and restrictions received by FIRE¹ in 2015, up from 719 in 2014



Enrollment Impacts

10%

Drop in applications if *The New York Times* covers an institutional scandal in a long-form magazine article



Jobs at Risk



Ithaca college president resigns after protests over race issues



Seattle U. Dean, subject of protest, placed on leave



Pres. Falwell's Blackface Tweet Brings Racial Dissent to Liberty U.

Source: Inside Higher Ed, "[Seattle U. Dean, subject of protest, placed on leave](#)"; The Huffington Post, "[How Media Coverage Of Campus Scandals Impacts College Applications](#)"; The New York Times, "[Falwell's Blackface Tweet Brings Racial Dissent to Liberty University](#)", "[Fighting for Free Speech on America's Campuses](#)"; Washington Post, "[Ithaca college president resigns after protests over race](#)"; EAB interviews and analysis.

How Will We Get it Right?

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Higher Education's Leadership Imperative

“Beyond responding to the latest flashpoint or upsurge of activism, our students are asking us to tackle issues that are rooted in complex social challenges. Oftentimes, **these issues do not have a single 'right' answer.** With today's political climate, any response (or even no response at all) is contentious.”

*President
Private University*

Discussion Questions



1 How do you anticipate the campus community will respond to the 2020 election and its aftermath?

2 What worries you most about your institution's incident response plan?

Five Common Failure Paths

A Roadmap for Improving Campus Flashpoint Preparedness and Response

5 Failure Paths FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

FAILURE PATH 1



Status-quo risk identification practices overlook potential campus flashpoints.

FAILURE PATH 2



Information about potential flashpoints is decentralized so institutions miss early opportunities to intervene.

FAILURE PATH 3



Leadership teams assume that existing relationships are sufficient for managing the institutional response strategy.

FAILURE PATH 4



Institutions are unsure if, when, and who should respond to current or potential flashpoints.

FAILURE PATH 5



Institutions address the immediate flashpoint incident, but not the broader context on campus.

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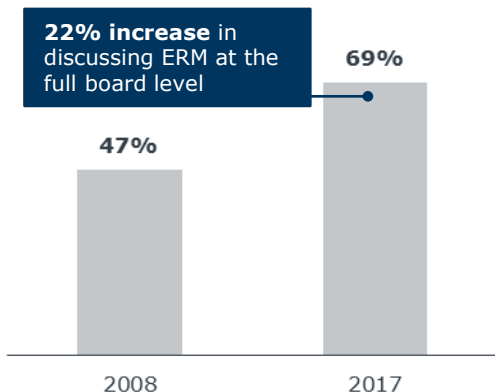
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The New Normal

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Is Sweeping Higher Ed

ERM is a Growing Priority for University Leaders...

United Educators, 2017



1 in 4

Institutions report discussing ERM at **every board meeting**

...And Reflected in Hiring Needs Across Higher Ed

Emsi Analyst, 2018¹



113%

Increase in job postings for risk-titled roles



64%

Increase in job postings that include risk skills

Chief Risk Officer

Sample Job Responsibilities

- Manage enterprise risk management program and report on risk to Board
- Identify emerging reputational risks
- Develop and implement comprehensive risk treatment plans

Risk Identification Practices Overlook Flashpoints

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Climate-Related Risks Are a Continuing Blind Spot

Flashpoints Are an Unfamiliar Risk Terrain

“Our campus has a well-oiled process for assessing and managing financial, operational, and compliance risks. **But we are not there yet with respect to campus climate**, in part because of who is and is not involved in risk discussions. We need to do a better in order to prepare for the next climate crisis.”

*Vice President for Student Life
Private University*

54%

Of institutions believe they do not have the ability to withstand a major reputational risk event

Top Five Areas of Reputational Risk

United Educators, 2017

- 1 **Campus Climate**
- 2 **Sexual Assault and Title IX**
- 3 Academic Programs
- 4 **Student Behaviors**
- 5 Higher Ed's Business Model

Integrate Flashpoints in Campus Risk Assessment



Prepare for Reputational Risks by Proactively Identifying Flashpoints

Flashpoints Challenge Status Quo Risk Registers

Common Pitfall



Narrow Content Focus

Registers emphasize only financial, operational, and compliance risks, overlooking flashpoints



Recommended Action

Update Your Risk Register

Include climate flashpoints and reputational risks as distinct risks



Limited Grading Framework

Registers assess only likelihood and impact of potential risks, downplaying reputational impacts



Upgrade Your Risk Grading Framework

Assess velocity and preparedness to account for the rapidly evolving nature of climate flashpoints



Range of Risk Altitudes

Attempts at being comprehensive yield unwieldy lists of institutional, divisional, and unit risks



Prioritize Institutional Risks

Prioritize the risks most likely to impact your institution, not unit-level incident-specific risks

Social Listening Helps Surface Emerging Risks

19

Provides Real-Time Intelligence for Flashpoint Management

Social Listening Helps Brands Make Sense of the Online Conversation



Volume

How many people are talking, and how often?



Voice

Who is driving the conversation?
Who or what talked about?



Sentiment

Is the conversation positive, neutral, or negative?

Actionable Insights Result in Strategic Brand Management



Size a growing crisis, target your response, and assess the impact



Learn how prospective students talk about you and your competitors



Identify and connect with student social media influencers



Social Listening Toolkit on EAB.com



Apply social listening concepts to a climate flashpoint or crisis



Audit your social strategy to identify and address flashpoints



Explore enterprise social listening technology platforms

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Decentralized Information Hinders Risk Mitigation

Multimodal Campuses Exacerbate Institutional Information Silos

Many Offices Have Access to Potentially Important Information...

Information Technology

"This racist reddit thread is really blowing up. Virtual protests are being planned."

Student Center

"Several students are making a political statement and refusing to wear masks."

Athletics

"An athlete just tested positive for COVID."

Public Safety Department

"A fraternity is planning an off-campus party this weekend."

...But Uncertainty and Confusion Hinder Action



"How do I know if this social media post will be problematic? Should I do something?"



"How can I keep track of university events when everything's virtual?"



"Who should I tell? I'm not sure who handles stuff like this."



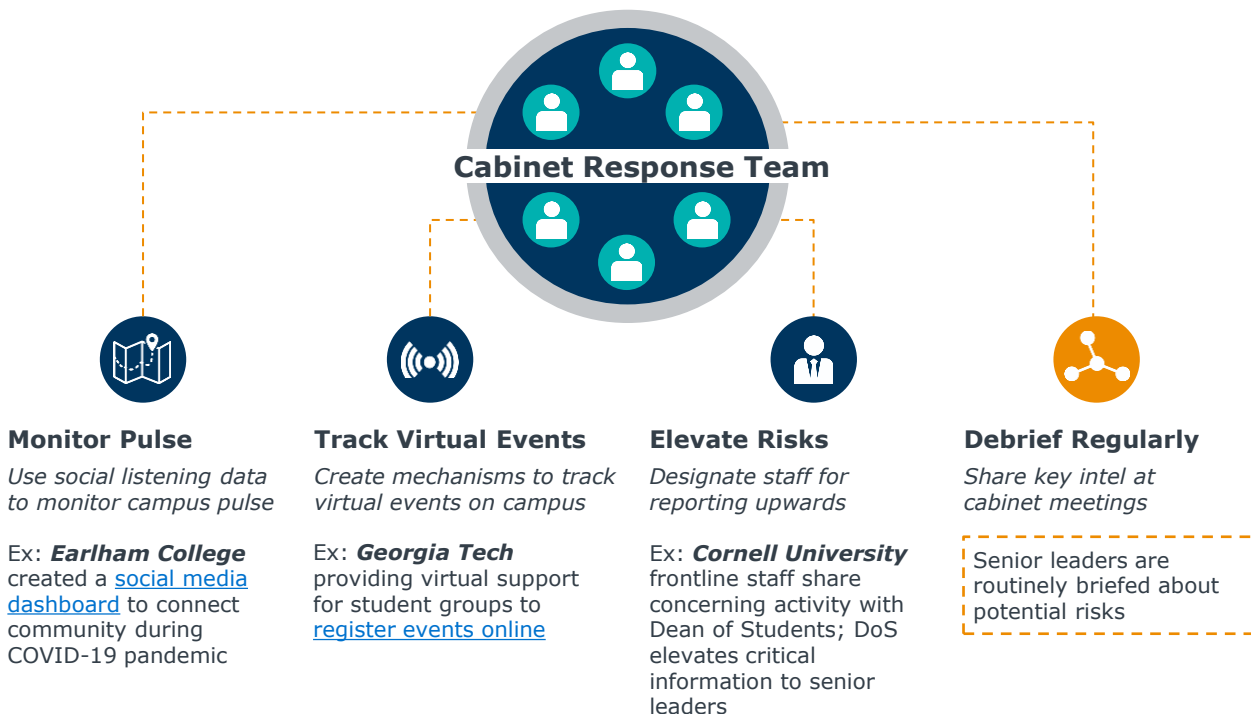
"Why do frontline staff always seem to know what's happening on the ground and I'm not in the loop?"



Actionable info gets lost without established expectations on when and how to elevate potential risks

Collect and Coordinate Information Sharing

Four To-Dos to Expand Your Data Points



Strengthen Awareness of Potential Flashpoints

Risk Briefings Ensure Leadership Awareness and Promote Early Action

1



President asks university communications office to **maintain a running list of potential flashpoints**

2



Communications staff monitor emerging issues, including inbound communications, social media, higher ed trends, and national news stories

4



Cabinet discusses emerging issues and prioritizes top concerns for risk mitigation and early response

3



Every 6 weeks, VP for Communications **briefs president and cabinet on top 10 flashpoint risk areas**

Key Benefits



Provides regular forum for evolving discussions with leadership



Fosters earlier cabinet collaboration around risk mitigation tactics



Keeps risks related to climate flashpoints top-of-mind across the year



Enables longitudinal analysis of emerging areas of concern

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The Perils of the Status Quo

Two Common Approaches Do Not Promote Quick and Consistent Responses

APPROACH #1

Relationship-Based Response



"We are a very close cabinet. I can always pick up the phone and call whoever I need for any situation."

Preparation Falls by Wayside as People Assume Relationships Will Suffice



Assumption that primary actors will remain constant year over year



Lack of formal protocols because everything is based on conversations



Belief that strong relationships result in quickly coordinated action



Unrealistic expectation that preparation will happen when there is leftover time

APPROACH #2

No New Team Required



"We already have so many related teams and task forces...do we really need one more?"

Existing Teams Fall Short in Scope, Skill, or Expertise

[Emergency Management Teams](#) are focused on campus safety and tactical response for true emergencies (e.g., natural disasters)

[Behavioral Intervention Teams](#) are focused on student behaviors and impact on campus community

[Climate Taskforce](#) matches in subject matter expertise, but often lacks senior perspective and tactical expertise

Create a Dedicated Rapid Response Team

Set a Specific Charter and Flexible Structure to Enable Agile Responses

How to Assemble a Rapid Response Team for Flashpoints



STEP 1

Determine Scope

Clarify Responsibilities

- Communications vs. tactical operations
- Specify how this group interacts with existing teams and departments



STEP 2

Identify Membership

Delineate Tiers

- Tier 1: Core members who are always activated in climate flashpoints
- Tier 2: Unit-level designees and/or subject matter experts



STEP 3

Define Roles

Assign Ownership for Next Steps

- Who does what as a crisis unfolds?
- Who has final sign-off authority?
- What terrain is each member responsible for?

Key Elements



Define specific parameters for when the team is activated – and when they are not



Educate campus and address expectations about team scope and responsibilities



Establish internal and external communication channels to receive and disseminate information

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Should We Respond?

Lack of Clarity and Varying Perspectives on When and How to Respond

Presidents Split on Speaking Out About Political Issues

Inside Higher Ed, 2018 Presidents Survey



55%

Of presidents reported **speaking out more on political issues** in 2017 than they typically do



54%

Of presidents said they intend to **speak out more about issues beyond those directly affecting their college**

“

Aspiration Shared by Many...

“I believe the president is a moral leader of the university... I know it’s difficult, but I’d like them to be more bold about standing up for the values the campus espouses.”

*Mark Yudof
Former College President*

...But Difficult in Execution

“Presidents find themselves having to make such judgment calls all the time and in turn they are judged by the quality of those judgments.”




*Anonymous
Former College President*

Clarify When the Institution Will Respond

Set Expectations Before a Flashpoint Arises, On or Off Campus



University of Maine System's *Stoplight Framework* Simplifies Decision Making for Institutional Statements

	Category	Sample Issues	Process
	GREEN ZONE <i>Mission Critical</i>	Directly impacts the institution and community	Institutional finances; student and employee health and safety; campus operations
	YELLOW ZONE <i>Mission Indirect</i>	Does not directly impact the mission and institution	Immigration policy; labor standards; national protests
	RED ZONE <i>Mission Unrelated</i>	Unrelated to the university's mission or financial stability	Political events; state and federal policies not related to the university
			Chancellor and presidents can freely issue a statement
			Time permitting, chancellor and presidents should consult with <i>rapid advisory committee</i>
			Chancellor and presidents should generally avoid making statements on these topics



Routinely update framework to be relevant to current campus, national, and global climate

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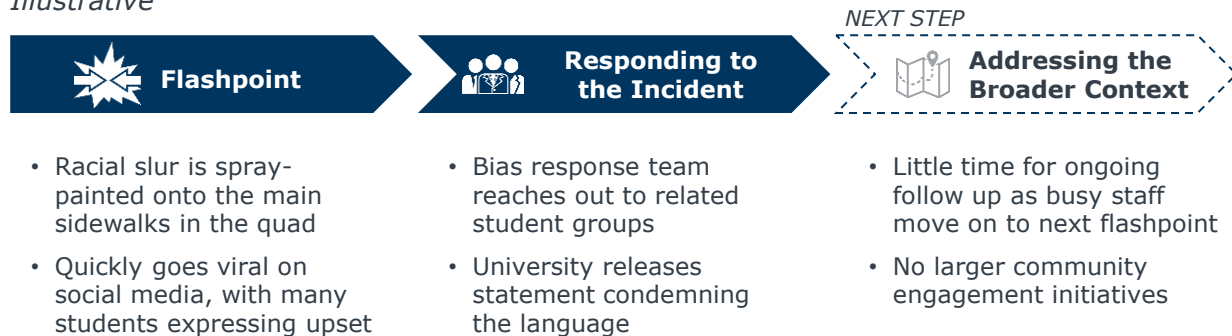
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Incident-Only Response Is No Longer Enough

Institutions Face More Pressure to Address the Broader Context

Responses Often Miss Critical Component

Illustrative



Addressing the Broader Context Is No Easy Task

- ✗ Immediate incident response efforts are all-consuming
- ✗ Difficult to make and communicate progress on systemic issues
- ✗ Wanting to get it “right” delays a comprehensive response
- ✗ Higher ed processes and decision making is slow moving

Address the Broader Context, Not Just the Incident

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Proactively Address Emerging Areas of Concern Using Varied Approaches



Speak Out

President wrote an [open letter](#) to campus community **condemning racial injustice** happening across the country and historically on U.S. college campuses.

Colgate University



Facilitate Discussions

Tufts University's College of Civic Life developed a [guide](#) for **facilitated political discussions** in preparation for 2020 election.

INSTITUTE FOR
DEMOCRACY &
HIGHER EDUCATION



Track and Report

Cornell developed an **online tracking system** that reports the status of [institutional initiatives](#) on campus climate and diversity.



Cornell University



Solicit Solutions

Crowdsource ideas for university initiatives like George Washington University's Building Renaming Framework



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1:15–1:50 p.m.

Is Your Institution Prepared for Election 2020?

1:50–2:00 p.m.

Break

2:00–2:50 p.m.

Exercise: Planning for Flashpoints

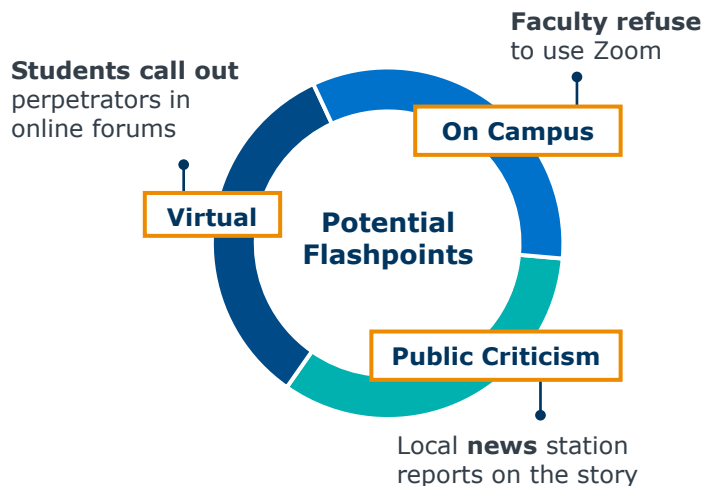
2:50–3:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks and Survey

Example Exercise to Get You Started

Simulating a Potential Flashpoint

Scenario: Zoombombing disrupts a virtual course with xenophobic images, videos, and chats targeting Chinese international students



Guide to Incident Response



Who does this impact?



What are our guiding priorities?



What expertise do we need?



Who should respond?



What is the public perception?

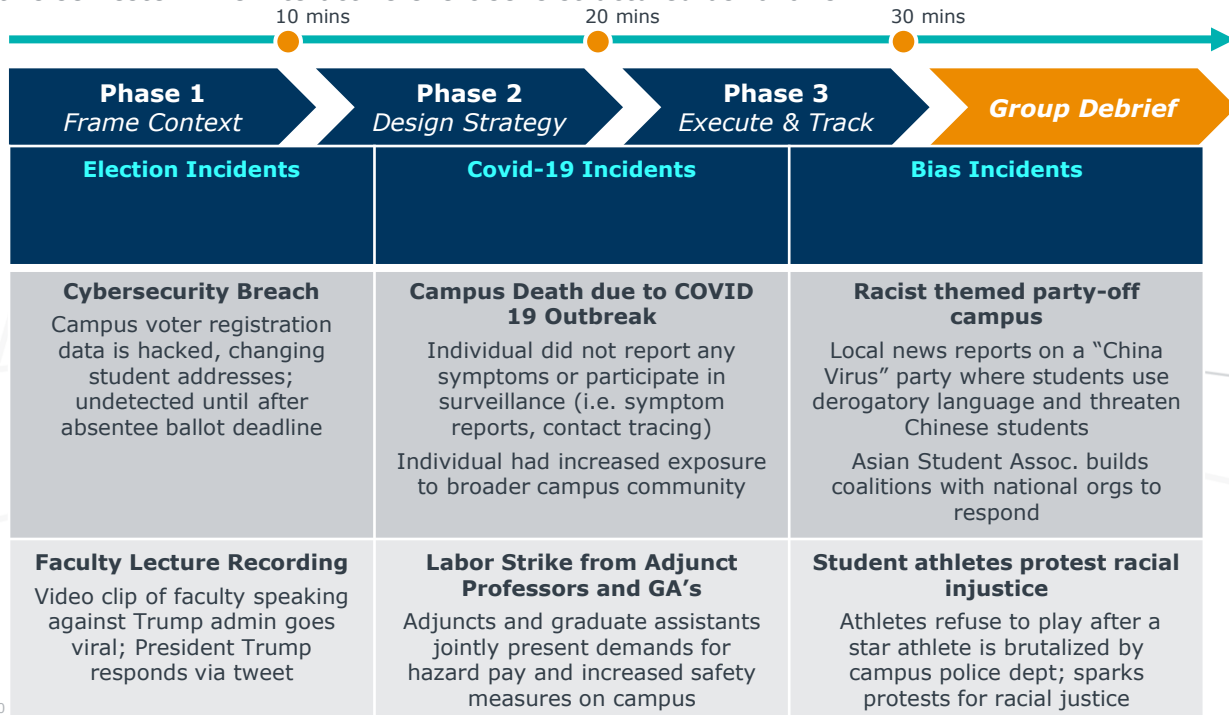
Responding to Potential Campus Flashpoints

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Breakout Interactive Exercise

Directions

In small groups, design an institutional flashpoint response plan for a potential scenario this semester. The interactive exercise is structured as follows:



Debrief and Reflect



Large Group Discussion

Discussion Questions

- 1 If this incident occurred at your institution, how might your actual response differ from what you have planned?
- 2 Were there any discrepancies in cabinet members' priorities? How did you resolve them?
- 3 How did different stakeholder perspectives complicate or clarify your response strategy?
- 4 What gaps or areas of improvement did this exercise highlight in your institution's current response protocol?

Forward Action Planning

Take a few minutes to complete the Forward Action Planning Worksheet on **page 9** in your workbook.



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- **Webinar with Interactive Activity (Action/Scenario Planning)**
- **Intended Audience: Cabinet Members and Crisis Response Team/Task Force**
- **Scheduling On-Going and Beyond election**



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- **How much time has your team(s) spent preparing for the 2020 Election ?**
- **What are your most top of mind concerns or challenges as it relates to preparedness and response to incidents/flashpoints?**
- **What ideas, content or elements might be missing or could be added to help an institution prepare for campus flashpoints?**