

UAH Annual Security Report Issued

This past October, the University published online its 2013 Annual Security Report (ASR). Each year all private and public institutions of higher education are required to assemble and make available certain campus crime data and information about its security policies. This obligation was created by federal legislation popularly known as the Clery Act, named after a female Lehigh University student who was murdered in her residence hall room in 1986. The intent of the Clery Act is to prompt colleges and universities to focus greater attention on the safety of students and others on campus and to disclose to potential students (and their parents) data concerning the incidence of criminal activity on and near campus.

Crime data for nine types of offenses is assembled from campus police and local police agencies and reported in the ASR for the past three calendar years (2012, 2011, and 2010), and it is broken down into several “geographical zones.” The first is campus property, including a separate “counting” for residence halls. For 2012, few instances of campus crime were reported, except for burglaries (22), the majority of which occurred in student residence halls. Arrests and referrals to the student disciplinary system for violations of alcohol, drug, and weapons laws must also be tracked and reported. For 2012, the only noteworthy activity here was over two dozen alcohol judicial referrals (all occurring in the residence halls), down substantially from the previous two years. The second geographical zone is referred to by the term “non-campus areas,” defined in the Clery Act regulations as off-campus facilities owned by recognized student groups or owned/controlled by the University and used for educational purposes. There are no facilities that fall into this category for UAH. The third zone is contiguous public property adjacent to and accessible from the campus. This includes primarily public streets running through or bordering the campus (*e.g.*, Holmes Avenue, Sparkman Drive) and University Place School (which was acquired by the University in 2013 and will be classified as campus property in the 2014 ASR). No crimes were reported in this zone in 2012.

A final type of reportable criminal offense is a “hate crime,” that is, a crime motivated by bias against the victim’s gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. No hate crimes were reported for 2012 for any geographical area.

The remainder of the ASR is comprised of information about the University and a summary of important University security policies. The latter includes those relating to the identification of campus security authorities (those officials to whom crimes may be reported by students and who are obligated to pass such information on to campus police), the University’s policies for issuing a “crime threat” timely warning and emergency notifications, its sexual assault policy, etc. A relatively new policy, mandated by the Clery Act, provides procedures to be following by the University in the event a student living on campus is “missing.”

The ASR may be found online by going to <http://www.uah.edu/safety> and clicking on the “Annual Security Report” link. An Annual Fire Report, also required by federal law, may also be accessed at that site by clicking the “Fire Safety Guide” link. Questions about these reports may be addressed to the UAH Chief of Police and the Office of Counsel.