HOW SAFE IS BEHREND?

Residents, lock your doors

Mr. Donahue of Police and Safety asks for campus help and urges students to prevent 'crimes of opportunity'

by Liz Hayes
news editor

Campus theft seems to be an unusual problem this semester. Mr. William Donahue, manager of Police and Safety Services, recently commented that Penn State Behrend is experiencing an unusually costly rise in stealing.

Approximately in the last three weeks, Behrend has had about $20,000 in classroom equipment stolen. Also, one student reported the theft of a notebook computer.

In one of the computer labs, a window was broken and a projector stolen. Donahue says that this crime was apparently well planned and not a spur-of-the-moment occasion. As for the theft of the notebook computer, it appears that a student left her computer temporarily in the care of another. Amidst some confusion, the computer was stolen while she was gone.

Donahue believes that the theft of the notebook was more a "crime of opportunity" than a previously thought out plan. According to

Donahue, much of the personal theft seen on campus is of this spontaneous nature. Someone will walk past an open and unattended residence hall room, see easily removed items or accurately assume where valuables would be stored, and quickly walk off with them.

Police and Safety Services is currently looking for any leads in these thefts. Donahue was quick to point out that on several occasions janitorial staff and students have been instrumental in identifying and apprehending those guilty of theft. Often housekeeping staff will notice missing or out of place items when cleaning that may otherwise go unnoticed for a long period of time, thereby making it difficult to solve the crime. Donahue also referred to a fairly recent incident in which two students saw an individual

leaving the Engineering Complex with two computers that ended up being stolen. These students relayed this information to Police and Safety, and the guilty party was apprehended.

Donahue urges students to take action against possible crimes of opportunity. While recently, residence hall crime has not been a major problem, it may be breeding false sense of security for resident students. He pointed out that while students may trust the other residents of their hall, they could still fall victim to strangers inadvertently allowed into the buildings. For this reason he recommends that students keep room doors locked whenever possible, and to avoid letting people follow into residence halls. "This advice is not designed to make people paranoid; 99% of people are legitimate, but it only takes that one time to compromise security."

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>
> Mr. William Donahue,
> Manager of Police and Safety Services

How do Behrend's crime stats compare to other Penn State campuses?

The following crime statistics were acquired from the main Penn State Police Services' website at *www.psu.edu/dept/police/pol_sa_u.html*. They are also available in the United States Department of Justice publication, *Crime in the United States*.

These statistics are reported to the Pennsylvania State Police. They are part of the annual security report which provides crime statistics that are reported by local police agencies and campus security authorities. The statistics reported here are said to generally reflect the number of criminal incidents reported to the various authorities.

The statistics reported on liquor laws, drug laws, and weapons offenses represent the number of people arrested or referred to campus judicial authorities for respective violations, not the number of offenses documented. Prior to 1999, referrals to judicial authorities were collected on an academic year basis.

Behrend versus other Erie colleges — which is safer?

On the United States Department of Education Website, there is a section devoted to Campus Security Statistics. This site provides crime reports on over 6,000 colleges and universities in the U.S.

The Office of Postsecondary Education (a division of the Dept. Of Education) provides these statistics. In 1998, an amendment to the 1965 Higher Education Act (HEA) was passed by Congress that was designed to aid potential college students and their parents research colleges' reported criminal offenses when making college choices.

On this website, students and potential students may search for specific colleges, or by a variety of characteristics — such as location, offered programs, and school size. Several local colleges are listed, including Penn State Behrend, Gannon, Edinboro, and Mercyhurst. Statistics for the past three years are listed (1997, 1998, and 1999). Statistics for the year 2000 are not yet available.

Below are some of the major crime statistics for 1999. While there are several more categories of crime statistics provided by this site, the more relevant to Behrend are listed. Also listed are the comparable statistics for Mercyhurst, Gannon, and Edinboro.

For more information on this site or for more detailed statistics, log on to *www.ope.ed.gov/security*.

Crimes*	Penn State Behrend	Gannon	Edinboro	Mercyhurst
Murder	0	0	0	0
Forcible Sex Offenses	3	0	1	0
Robbery	0	1	0	0
Aggravated Assault	1	0	0	4
Burglary	2	0	1	8
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	1	0
Arson	0	0	0	0
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0	0
Hate Crimes	0	0	0	0
Arrests	76	0	51	6
Referrals	22	39	105	36

* All statistics are from 1999; Items in bold represent Penn State Behrend. Statistics gathered from *www.ope.ed.gov/security*

Penn State Campuses (Student Population; On-campus Residents)	Murder	Manslaughter	Sex Offenses	Assault	Burglary	Robbery	Motor Vehicle Theft	Arson	Hate Crimes	Arrests			Referrals		
										Liquor Laws	Drug Laws	Weapons	Liquor Laws	Drug Laws	Weapons
Abington (3,200; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/1	0/0/0	0/0/1	+/+/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0
Altoona (3,800; 900)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	7/5/3	3/5/0	+/+/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/0/1	21/135/25	1/23/5	0/0/0	+/+/7	+/+/14	+/+/0
Beaver (800; 250)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/1	0/1/0	7/2/00	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	9/158/9	1/0/4	0/0/0	+/+/35	+/+/12	+/+/1
Berks (2,000; 390)	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/6	0/0/1	0/0/0	+/+/76	+/+/2	+/+/1
Delaware (1,500; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/1	1/3/2	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/3/1	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0
DuBois (1,000; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/2/2	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0
Erie (3,600; 1,500)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/6	11/6/1	1/0/2	+/+/0	1/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	17/76/67	0/5/9	0/0/0	+/+/19	+/+/3	+/+/0
Fayette (1,000; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/1/1	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0
Harrisburg (3,500; 400)	0/0/0	0/0/0	3/1/0	0/0/0	1/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	6/2/1	0/3/3	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0
Hazelton (1,300; 475)	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/2/1	1/1/0	+/+/0	0/0/1	0/0/0	+/+/0	15/13/0	1/23/0	0/0/0	+/+/17	+/+/2	+/+/0
Lehigh Valley (500; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/1
McKeesport (1,100; 200)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/1	1/6/0	0/0/1	+/+/0	0/0/1	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/14/2	0/0/1	0/0/0	+/+/7	+/+/6	+/+/0
Mont Alto (1,300; 450)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/2/1	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	7/48/26	1/2/6	0/0/0	+/+/10	+/+/1	+/+/0
New Kensington (800; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0
Schuylkill (1,250; 250)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	1/3/0	1/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/1	0/0/0	0/0/0	3/2/14	0/0/1	0/0/0	+/+/8	+/+/2	+/+/0
Shenango (1,000; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/1	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0
University Park (40,000; 13,000)	0/0/0	0/0/0	10/11/8	7/22/2	36/37/0	+/+/32	0/1/6	2/1/0	2/1/0	260/ 503/195	97/ 137/84	1/1/1	+/+/447	+/+/19	+/+/2
Wilkesbarre (1,000; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/1	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0
Worthington Scranton (1,600; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/1/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/2	+/+/0	+/+/0
York (1,600; 0)	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0	+/+/0	+/+/0	+/+/0

+ - information unavailable; numbers represent statistics from 1997/ 1998/ 1999; Bolded items represent Penn State Behrend statistics   All stats from *www.psu.edu/dept/police/pol_sa_u.html*