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JULY 2020

# BEST PRACTICES: SCHOOL AND CAMPUS SECURITY

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# ADAPTABILITY HELPS UNIVERSITY DEAL WITH PANDEMIC UNCERTAINTIES

Harding University Assistant Director of Public Safety Kevin Davis discusses how security at his school managed the closure of campus and what they doing to prepare for what comes next.

In late May 2020, *Security Management* spoke with Kevin Davis, assistant director of public safety at Harding University and co-chair of the ASIS School Safety and Security Council, on what he was facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Harding is a private, Christian institution located in Searcy, Arkansas. Harding University has approximately 4,500 students and 1,000 faculty and staff. The campus also includes a pre-K through 12 school and a retirement center. It has a full-time force of 17 officers who are licensed by the

state to carry firearms, but they do not have arrest powers

The following is an excerpt of the interview edited slightly for clarity. The full interview can be accessed online at [www.asisonline.org/covidoncampus](http://www.asisonline.org/covidoncampus).

## How did the pandemic affect the Spring term?

A pandemic is a unique emergency from an emergency management standpoint. Most emergencies are an instantaneous situation. We need

an instantaneous reaction to ensure mitigation of the concerns. I would refer to the pandemic as more of a slow burn.

Here at Harding, while students were on spring break, our administrators met and decided that at first we would postpone the students' return by two weeks and transition to online classes. The decisions were based on the CDC guidelines in place at the time and recommendations from the state of Arkansas. Eventually the decision was made to just cancel

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# UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT SECURES AND MODERNIZES CAMPUS NETWORK

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The University of Connecticut (UConn) is a public research university with more than 32,000 students, more than 9,000 faculty and staff, and has five campuses in Connecticut.

Securing its campus network with thousands of students is a top priority and multifaceted challenge for UConn administrators. As students' college careers progress, so does their need to access spaces such as dormitories, labs and research facilities. Students also require essential services, such as copying, printing and dining hall services.

The Husky One Card is UConn's one-card solution designed to meet its physical access control and service needs. Previously, the university's card solution utilized proximity and magstripe technologies, which can easily be cloned. UConn administrators were seeking a solution

capable of increasing security while retaining magstripe and proximity technology to allow for a phased, university-wide transition to an updated one-card ecosystem. A secondary goal was to consolidate their credential issuance process into one in-house system that would minimize student wait times.

UConn partnered with identification solutions provider ColorID and selected HID Global's Seos credential technology to re-card the university. HID's triple-technology card—featuring magstripe, proximity, and Seos technology—helped UConn complete a phased transition of readers and software at all campuses.

To manage credential issuance in the future, UConn selected and deployed the HID FARGO Connect offering to decentralize and optimize the process. HID FARGO Connect supports high-volume ID card issuance by combining hardware, software and consumables into one cloud-based platform and enables UConn to issue credentials from any device with a web interface. The university paired HID FARGO Connect with HDP 5600 printers to enable inline card personalization and eliminate the manual entry of proximity and smart card data.

“Setting up our university with HID FARGO Connect will allow regional campuses to print cards directly for students—no wait, no temporary card,” said Stephanie Kernozicky, Director of the One Card Office at the University of Connecticut. “The mobility of being able to take pictures and print wherever we need was a big factor in selecting FARGO Connect.”

UConn has eliminated security vulnerabilities with no disruption to university life by re-carding its access control system with HID Seos cards across its campuses. Seos' best-in-class cryptography not only offers data and privacy protection that combat card duplication and other security attacks, but also equips UConn's campuses to deploy mobile access in the future.

Beyond access control, the One Card team now manages credentials and extends Seos to applications such as secure printing, cashless vending, parking, and more.

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the rest of the semester as far as in-person classes and finish the semester completely online.

### **How did the decisions affect the security division?**

From a security standpoint we just had fewer people on campus. It was a situation where normally during a regular school year our focus is mostly on protection of people, and of course we protect our assets as well, but people are our primary focus. Suddenly we're in a situation where all of our people are gone and we become primarily focused on asset protection. In offices and dorms, a lot of personal possessions were left behind when people left for spring break, and they needed to still be there when they eventually came to retrieve them.

### **Other than assisting in the retrieval of possessions, what have you been doing?**

Summer in general is our slower time when we kind of catch our breath and catch up on some longer term projects that we'd like to accomplish, and so this has given us a great opportunity to do a lot of that. We work on updating and revising policies and procedures, updating or creating training manuals. We've also taken the opportunity to conduct a lot more training with our officers. We routinely conduct armed officer training at the firing range. We do active shooter simulation training. All of my officers are medical first responders, so we've done medical refresher training. It's been a great experience just to get face time with all of our guys and get their input on updating policies and procedures and those sorts of things.

### **Whenever there is a return to campus, whether that is to begin the fall term or some other time, what changes do you anticipate for security?**

There are a variety of ways it could potentially affect security.

Nobody has a crystal ball to see what is going to happen, but areas that could be affected are of course major events—whether its sporting events, concerts, speaker series, things like that. We don't know if we will be able to resume larger gatherings of people, or if we do, we don't know what that will look like. We won't know whether we have to prescreen people, whether we will require personal protective equipment like masks or gloves—so for sure how we approach big events will affect security. As far as our Division 2 NCAA schedule, we don't know if there will be a season or how that will go.

We provide medical transport and treatment for our students on an emergency basis, and that will probably be affected in some way as well. And we don't know if there will be any routine health screening for COVID-19 when we're back. If so, we don't know if our officers will be asked to help with that screening in any form or fashion, be it crowd control or be it actually helping administration in some way. We are not sure about that, but that's another possibility of things we could be involved in.

And of course another big concern will be when we do resume, what will we do if a student is sick? What's the process that's going to happen there? Will we need to quarantine the student somewhere? Will we send them home? We don't what piece of that, if any, that our armed security team would have as far as helping out. What will class size look like? Will we require PPE? How will these things be enforced?

### **I think there were a couple dozen unknowns in there – how do you possibly make preparations for that?**

I think that's just across the board right now. Anybody you talk to will be saying the same things. Nobody can make a solid prediction, even the experts are up in the air right

now. We are making preparations for a variety of possibilities, things we can think of that could happen, and we'll just see what actually happens and make adjustments as we need to.

We are doing things like sourcing PPE. We've already had training with our offices on the proper use and function of PPE. At the university right now, we're in the process of opening our offices back up after having our staff work from home. More and more people are being brought back in, so our officers have been using PPE for a while now. We're absolutely preparing for all of those things I just mentioned, and the different possible requirements we might have as a result. We're making contingency plans for all the scenarios we can think of. There will still be some surprises, we won't be able to predict everything. The best we can do is try to be as prepared as best we can for the possible eventualities we can foresee.

### **Overall, has security changed as a result of the pandemic?**

I think in the security field in general, we have to maintain a certain level of adaptability, because new events happen that no one has seen or conceived of happen all the time. Whether it's a new cyber attack or new fraud tactics or ways to penetrate physical security, there are constantly new issues that come to light that we need to address. The pandemic is just another example of where a security function that is adaptable and able to quickly adopt and enact changes will be best able to perform the duties needed. When it comes to being adaptable, we may not be able to do something like change our staffing levels, but we can absolutely change the job we are performing as our needs shift. And we can also take advantage of other departments within the university. If there is a security need, our best approach to meet that need may be engaging with another department and putting some of the responsibility on them.

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