Twenty Years of Crisis Response: Reflections on the 1999 Texas A&M University Bonfire Collapse

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In 1999, the Texas A&M University Bonfire collapse killed 12 students and injured dozens. This Advance U Webinar builds upon a recent research study that analyzed personal experiences and lessons learned from 15 leaders who led the crisis response and recovery. As campus leaders who experienced the tragedy, we will share reflections on the crisis and insights for a new generation of student affairs professionals.

Key Points

- A Framework for Understanding
  - Routine Emergencies
  - Crisis
- Texas A&M University Bonfire: Context
  - University tradition
  - Student-lead event
  - A shifting approach to advising
- Reflections from Crisis: A Phenomenological Study of the Texas A&M Bonfire Collapse: Study employed phenomenological methodology to understand the experience of serving as an administrator in wake of the Bonfire collapse.
  - Institutional Context
  - Institutional Crisis Response
  - Personal Crisis Experience
  - Outcomes of Crisis
- Personal Impact of Crisis
  - Traumatic Stress
  - A Framework for Understanding Trauma
  - Staying Strong During a traumatic Event
  - Strengthening Ourselves in Advance of Traumatic Events
- Key Lessons Learned
  - Preparation for Responding to a Crisis
  - Response to Emergency/Crisis
  - Recovery

Opportunities for Collaboration

- Local emergency response personnel
- Local hospitals
- Campus Public Relations Office
- Administrative personnel responsible for crisis response and emergency response protocols
- Campus partners
- Inter/national organization partners
- Student leaders
Further resources

- **Your own campus or organization crisis response protocols and emergency response procedures**
- **Crisis, Compassion, and Resiliency in Student Affairs**
  When a traumatic event occurs, student affairs professionals must be ready to respond and lead. Crisis, Compassion, and Resiliency in Student Affairs provides student affairs professionals of all levels with strategies and advice for creating a mindset to navigate the complexity that results from encountering crises both large and small.

- **Crisis Management: Responding from the Heart**
  Crisis management has become an expertise that is critical to every college or university. While developing plans and protocols is an important part of effective crisis response work, the most successful crisis responders also think about "doing the right thing" when faced with tough decisions. Crisis Management: Responding from the Heart explores this other dimension of crisis response and gives feelings the same level of importance as procedures. Through practical crisis response models and real-life stories from responders and their spouses, parents, and administrators, readers will discover the strength that comes from doing the right thing. Crisis Management illuminates how responding from the heart has the incredible power to energize the response process and contribute to a positive outcome.