Sensemaking as a Trigger for Change in University Emergency Response Routines:
Ethnographic and Case Study Analyses of a Residential Life Department

by

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Dedications

To My Student Affairs Colleagues across the Country

In my pursuit of academe, I have not forgotten where I come from nor that you contribute

so much to the lives of students and the goals of the university. This study is a love letter

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Abstract

In light of incidents like the Virginia Tech massacre, there is growing need for scholarship on emergency management in higher education. Traditional literature has typically focused on locating breakdowns, blame, and accountability by questioning whether emergency responses evidence departures from protocol. Yet, experience teaches that adhering to formal protocols can sometimes backfire, and departing from these protocols can be beneficial. Indeed, changes to protocol are normal occurrences in university emergency response. To gain greater insight into the issue, the correct question is not *whether* departures occur but *why*.

Accordingly, this study draws upon Feldman and Pentland's (2003) illustration of flexible work routines to develop a conceptual model. In this view, routines are comprised of ostensive (written protocols and shared understandings) and performative (lived experience) characteristics. When a discrepancy between the two occurs – when enacted emergency response breaks from protocol – it signals a change in the routine. The trigger for this change is sensemaking, or the process by which organizational actors simultaneously interpret and enact responses to an evolving event characterized by temporal constraints, uncertainty, and ambiguity (Weick, 1999).

This study addresses the research question: What sensemaking dynamics trigger change in university emergency response routines? It reflects a year-long organizational ethnography of emergency response in a residential life department at one urban

university. Qualitative coding is used to label, organize, and analyze the ethnographic data. Thereafter, the study employs theoretical sampling to identify four embedded case studies: a committed suicide, an attempted suicide, anticipated problems by campus guests during an annual football game weekend, and disruptive celebrations following Obama's presidential election. Ostensive-performative mapping and qualitative coding elaborate the sensemaking dynamics triggering change in 12 related subroutines.

The study finds three sensemaking dynamics relevant to university emergency response: Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility. While entry-level administrators employ retrospect drawn from simulations and stories, idealized hero identities, and plausible images driven by closeness to the student experience; veteran administrators draw upon lived experiences, parent identities, and plausible images grounded in reflection. The ongoing negotiation of these dynamics provides checks and balances within the department and strengthens the university's capacity for accommodating its emergency landscape.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Periodically in the evolving history of American colleges and universities, an emergency of notable circumstance or scope draws the attention of higher education administrators and scholars. Examples include the 1966 bell tower shootings at the University of Texas-Austin, the 1970 shootings by the National Guard upon student protestors at Kent State University, the death of 12 students in the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse at Texas A&M, and the Seton Hall University residence hall fire in 2000. When such events arise, discussions pique regarding the reasons they occurred, the actions university administrators took in response, and the types of policies or procedures that must be altered to avoid future instances of the same event. However, as time sets the original emergency further in the past, scholarly interest in the topic wanes. Left behind are lessons-learned memorialized in reflective writings on best practices and only broad questions about the university's role in emergency response.

Following a growing interest in emergency management spurred on by 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, two emergencies gained momentum through national media coverage in academic year 2006-2007. The first involved the murder of a student named Laura Dickinson in the residence halls at Eastern Michigan University. The second has come to

be known as the Virginia Tech Massacre. At the time each of these events unfolded, they were treated independently of one another. Yet, these incidences share a set of key distinctions. Whereas in the past, detailed deliberations over a university's response procedures were left to internal audits, investigations related to emergency response in both the Eastern Michigan and Virginia Tech cases played out squarely in the public eye. Further, ensuing assessments of each event raised vigorous debates about whether protocols were in place to anticipate such eventualities and whether university personnel had followed these protocols accordingly.

With regards to following protocols, investigations revealed that concerns in the Eastern Michigan case revolved around two issues: the degree to which university administrators shared pertinent information about the incident with the university's president; and whether university administrators appropriately informed the campus community of the murder in accordance with Cleary Act procedures (Butzel Long, 2007). Likewise, investigations surrounding the Virginia Tech shootings questioned whether protocols for identifying troubled students were followed in the months leading up the shooting; and whether procedures were carried out for notifying the community of the shooting while it was happening (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007). Together, the incidents at Eastern Michigan and Virginia Tech cast university emergency response as an endeavor rife with confusion about policies, difficulties coordinating the efforts of multiple response teams, and miscommunications. Moreover, they stirred challenges from the media, government officials, and society at-large about how emergency response is enacted on college campuses across the U.S.

Over the next year, university administrators around the country watched carefully as the debates ensued. From the perspective of individuals at the front line of university emergency response, how the Eastern Michigan and Virginia Tech incidents were being discussed represented a bit of truth and a bit of fiction. The bit of truth was that university emergency response is a challenging ordeal. It is nearly impossible to predict where, when, and how emergencies will manifest on a particular campus. Given their scope of responsibility and operations, universities are seeded with an endless array of "ticking time-bombs" for which administrators must be prepared to handle. These include, and are not limited to, criminal activities, misuse of information, issues of confidentiality, building safety and maintenance, athletics-related traditions or scandals, campus-wide health concerns, unethical behavior or misconduct, financial problems, natural disasters, legal or labor disputes, and events that might tarnish the perception or reputation of a particular institution (Mitroff, Diamond, & Alpaslan, 2006) Moreover, the organizational context that administrators have to overcome in responding to such emergencies is nothing less than daunting. Not only do campuses span large geographic areas, they have vast physical plans, diverse and autonomously operating subunits, decentralized governance, and largely transient populations (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Conversely, the bit of fiction arising in the wake of the Eastern Michigan and Virginia Tech incidents was that university emergency response is carried out with strict adherence to emergency protocols. Frontline responders know that a set of protocols addressing every possible emergency situation simply does not exist. Further, even existing protocols cannot be specified with enough detail to anticipate every nuanced

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challenge an emergency might raise. Therefore, administrators shift and amend emergency response protocols all the time. In fact, they even disregard some protocols altogether if the procedures seem outdated, unrealistic, or otherwise problematic.

For ten years, I served as a college administrator enacting emergency response in the field of Student Affairs. Therefore, alongside my professional colleagues, I followed the coverage of Eastern Michigan and Virginia Tech with keen interest in how emergency response was being portrayed in the public eye. The critiques and criticisms of administrative actions after the unfortunate events at these two universities motivated not only personal and professional reflection, but also scholarly curiosity. At the intersection of two sensitizing emergencies and reflections on lived experience, I was inspired to explore a set of larger questions as a basis for this study. First, what does the academic field of higher education really know about university emergency response? Second, are departures from protocol always negative or problematic? Finally, when administrators depart from protocol, what leads them to do so?

Practical and Conceptual Issues raised by Emergency Response Evaluation

When surveying the literature, it is immediately evident that the field of higher education is limited as to what it knows about emergency response. That is to say, we do not know much from a scholarly perspective (McEntire, 2004). This may be, in part, due to where the literature on higher education emergency response originates. One segment of the higher education literature base on emergency response is dominated by reflections rather than by empirical studies. These are largely topical, addressing specific incidences on college campuses such as campus shootings (O'Neal, 2009; U.S. Fire Administration, 2008), fires (Sheeran, 2000), hate crimes (Stage & Downey, 1999), student deaths

(Hollmann, 2002; Hurst, 1999; Lowery, 2000; Young, Nord, & Harris, 2002), natural

disasters (Bagwell, 1992; Brown, 2000; Foote, 2000; Harrell, 2000; Kennedy, 1999), and

athletics related incidents (Brand, 2000; Clement, 2002). As was the case with 9/11,

literature also addresses incidents external to higher education that nonetheless impact a

range of colleges and universities (Caputo, 2001; Fickes, 2002; Jackson, 2002; Knapp,

Benton, & Calhoun, 2002; Schmitz, 2002). As a source of scholarly understanding, these

reflections are problematic. Although they have utility in terms of advertising lessons

learned to administrators in the field, they do not necessarily provide systematic and

structured foundations upon which to anchor further or deeper analyses of emergency

response.

Another segment of the literature is drawn from investigations of emergency

scenarios that have yielded negative outcomes. On one hand, these sources of insight into

emergency response can be helpful in that analysis is more structured than in the personal

reflections literature. Inquiry is often carried out through some type of methodology,

analysis is represented as systematic, and remedies or implications are often suggested in

the end. On the other hand, investigations can be problematic in that this version of

inquiry into emergency response can become an occasion for forwarding political

agendas around accountability and control (Olson, 2000). Lessons learned and remedies

suggested often focus on planning, breakdowns, and blame rather than straightforward

understanding of process, procedures, and organizational dynamics. Attributing the

negative outcomes of emergency events to individual negligence or systematic

breakdowns is helpful in the short-term if the goal of analysis is to provide a quick-fix

solution to isolated incidents. But such conclusions can also raise challenging issues for higher education's leaders both practically and conceptually.

Planning vs. Action Paradigms for Understanding Emergency Response

In retrospective analyses of higher education emergencies, issues with response are often anchored in whether the institution planned correctly for the incident in the first place. Given such a framing of the problem, the remedy proposed is often to plan better (Brand, 2000; Brown, 2000; Clement, 2002; Fickes, 2002). Planning better might involve developing means of anticipating events, tailoring response protocols to specific types of events, making plans more widely available to institutional constituents, or preparing a centralized emergency-response team for action. By attributing response problems to the planning process, the assumption is that administrators may have preemptively forecasted emergencies more accurately or designed more appropriate interventions for specific events. This may not be surprising given the concentration of higher education literature around strategic choice, or conceptual frames that emphasize the agency of executive leaders, the role of decision making, and the power of preemptive planning in adapting to environmental-level forces of change (Alfred, 2006; Cameron, 1984; Cameron & Tshirhart, 1992; Sporn, 1999). If leaders accept the assumptions herein, they are likely to view emergency response through the lens of a planning paradigm. In other words, they believe that problems in responding to unexpected environmental events, like emergencies, largely come back to questions of forecasting and planning.

Yet, few institutions have neglected to develop emergency plans or to carry out procedures aligned with those plans. At the institutional level, administrators design response plans at the executive level of administration, convening centralized emergency

response teams and campus concerns committees to forecast problems and design preemptive protocols (Brand, 2000; Brown, 2000; Clement, 2002). Within various segments of colleges and universities, the anticipation of and response to emergencies is even a significant focus of daily operations (Bordner & Petersen, 1983; DeStefano, Peterson, Skwerer, & Bickel, 2001; Dual & Paroo, 1995; Grieger & Greene, 1998; Jackson & Terrell, 2007; Nichols, 1997). According to the planning paradigm, the correct emergency response plan should yield acceptable outcomes when incidents arise, if responses follow suit.

However, if all of these emergency response plans are in place and assumed to have been updated over time, then why do responses yield seemingly paradoxical outcomes? Practical experience teaches that adhering to protocols sometimes results in unacceptable outcomes to emergency events while departing from protocols sometimes results in acceptable outcomes. The planning paradigm fails to shed light on such issues. In essence, the planning paradigm addresses the inputs (i.e., protocols) and the outputs (i.e., the outcome of an emergency response), but does not address what is happening within the black box of an unfolding emergency incident. Owing to the variable nature in which emergencies unfold on the scene, what happens in the black box provides important cues to why administrators adhere to or depart from protocols. Therefore, an alternative paradigm is necessary for deepening our understanding of emergency response. Namely, an action centered paradigm shifts focus from how emergencies *might* be handled to how emergencies are *actually carried out* in university contexts.

Accountability, Breakdowns, and Blame

The planning paradigm raises additional complications with regards to locating the reasons that enacted emergency response often departs from espoused. In examining emergency response as a function of adherence to emergency response plans, narrow boundaries are set for understanding the challenges of enactment and its related outcomes. For instance, if the plan is the only criteria on which a particular emergency response is judged, then there are a limited number of justifiable explanations for a negative or tragic outcome. Essentially, related investigations (practical or scholarly) seek out breakdowns, blame, and personal accountability rather than suspecting other dynamics to have introduced complexities. Such investigations almost always result in the firing of presidents and related staff members, rewriting emergency response plans with increased specificity, and drills or walkthroughs patterned on the recent events.

The primary problem with this lens of breakdowns, blame, and accountability is that whereas related remedies (e.g., firing key constituents, eliminating offices, revising response plans) may satisfy political, symbolic, or psychological ends, they may not actually fix the emergency response mechanisms in question (Allinson, 1994; Drabek & Quarantelli, 1967; Heath, 1998; Neal, 1984). By limiting the lens through which emergency response is analyzed, the range of possible solutions for improving reliability in institutional emergency response is likewise bounded.

Organizational Context, Assessment Implications, and Generalizability

Finally, in reflection and in research, higher education literature has treated emergency response in an overly broad manner with little attention to the nuances introduced by institutional structure, operations, or work. For example, emergencies are often framed as equal across various contexts. But in institutional practice, the term

"emergency response" can refer to various families of events such as extraordinary events (e.g., epidemics, natural disasters, or terrorism) or emergency incidents that have become a regular part of college operations (e.g., student alcohol issues, union disputes) . Further, emergencies may also be discussed as if they are the domain of one large university organization. However, in reality, the responsibility of forecasting and responding to various families of emergencies are distributed throughout the university often by functional area. University Presidents are potentially not focused on the same types of issues that Student Affairs administrators might be; and Student Affairs administrators unaware of the emergency-related concerns of the president.

Ultimately, different types of events are likely to exist within the scope of different departments' dialogues, involve different institutional respondents, and may require different approaches to resolve. Therefore, in-practice, the conclusions drawn from scrutinizing emergency response in one context are often not generalizable to other contexts. Without an articulated understanding of emergencies and corresponding response mechanisms, leaders are in jeopardy of either fixing the wrong problems or not fixing problems at all. And without more serious attention to organizational work, structure, and roles, studies of emergency response in higher education may yield impractical and unrealistic implications.

Purpose of the Study and Overview of Chapters

Campus emergencies and related response is of growing importance in the practice of higher education administration and the study of colleges and universities as organizations. However, given the existing means of understanding emergency response within this particular setting, many gaps exist with how we currently examine the issue

conceptually, theoretically, and practically. The first gap addressed by this study is that of analyzing the dynamics of emergency response solely as a function of planning and protocols. Although investigative reports and administrative reflections provide depictions of the complex organizational environments involved in university operations and emergency response, they often fail to answer the question: why, despite the best-laid plans for handling emergencies, enacted emergency response departs from espoused protocols. Therefore, this study is designed to examine the dynamics causing university administrators to alter protocols when enacting emergency response.

The second gap addressed by this study involves the lack of scholarship depicting emergency response as driven by dynamics other than individual accountability and blame. In an effort to develop conceptually sound bases for examining emergency response dynamics purely for the sake of advancing scholarship in the area, an extensive literature review is undertaken in Chapter 2 synthesizing research from both higher education and organizational studies. The findings from this research shift the focus away from individual culpability and toward inquiry into work processes, organizational cultures, social interactions, and interpretive meaning making. Herein, two theoretical lenses are identified as appropriate for examining discrepancies between emergency response protocol and action. Feldman and Pentland's (2003) conceptualization of flexible work routines sets up a structure useful for systematically identifying both the espoused (ostensive) and enacted (performative) aspects of an emergency response. Meanwhile, Weick's (1995, 1999) theoretical lens of sensemaking provides a basis for explaining why departures may occur between these espoused and enacted characteristics of a particular emergency response. Combining these two lenses, a conceptual frame is

developed to examine the sensemaking triggers that cause change in university

emergency response routines.

A third gap undertaken by this study involves the need for more rigorous studies

of emergency response in terms of vividly articulating the context in which such actions

occur, systematically analyzing the dynamics therein, and deriving findings relevant to

various institutions of higher education. To achieve this goal, the research question is

examined through a year-long ethnographic study. Chapter 3 reviews the rationale and

design of this methodological approach. From August 2008-2009, I was immersed in the

week-to-week work of a Residential Life office at a large, urban university. The

Residential Life office was selected owing to its ongoing role in responding to

emergencies within the university setting. Collected data reflect the ostensive and

performative aspects of emergency response routines in the Residential Life context.

Included are observations (e.g., staff training events, weekly staff meetings, campus

events, emergency drills); collected documents (e.g., manuals, policy handbooks, weekly

staff reports, security reports); informal interactions; and 18+ semi-structured staff

interviews. Employing open, axial, and coding techniques as a means of labeling,

organizing, and deriving themes, a stepwise analytical strategy yields relevant findings.

Collectively, chapters 4-11 share the findings and discussions related to the

stepwise analytical strategy. Chapter 4 depicts the nature of the Residential Life work

along with specific details about emergency response work within that context. Chapter 5

outlines the landscape of emergencies and emergency response in the Residential Life

setting and outlines the selection criteria for the four case studies to follow. Chapters 6-9

elaborate a subset of four case studies wherein deliberations over enacting emergency

response routines were evident in this Residential Life setting. Within Chapters 6-9, each case is deconstructed into its component characteristics, ostensive and performative. The ostensive and performative routines are then mapped and compared side by side. The maps are analyzed both for evident departures between the two and for instances where departures were deliberated by the staff. The extent to which and why such discrepancies exist elicit a set of discussions about the underlying sensemaking dynamics triggering such changes.

Chapter 10 synthesizes the case-specific and contextual findings to identify three sensemaking dynamics prevalent in triggering change for Residential Life emergency response routines (Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility) and consider ways in which these three operate to manifest change. A goal of this dissertation is to contribute new ways of thinking about emergency response in higher education institutions and extend the conceptual frames with which we study such dynamics. Another goal of this study is to identify improved tools for helping university administrators locate, diagnose, and fix problems with emergency response procedures. Related conclusions, implications for future research, and implications for administrative practice are therefore also addressed in Chapter 11.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Frame

In an effort to build a conceptual frame for understanding the relationship between emergency response protocols and action, this chapter synthesizes literature on three accounts. First, definitions will be discussed for two of the key concepts central to this study: emergency and emergency response. Second, delimited by these definitions, the chapter will review emergency response literature from both higher education and organizational studies disciplines in an attempt to conceptualize our current understandings of the topic. Third, guided by these findings, the theoretical frameworks of organizational routines and collective sensemaking will be discussed. The chapter concludes with a conceptual frame for studying change in emergency response routines through the lens of collective sensemaking.

Definition of Key Concepts

To assemble a body of work on emergency response is not a straightforward task. Not only is the literature spread across the work of different disciplines and scholarly journals, the terms used to reference such research are not consistent. Therefore, to guide efforts in identifying and synthesizing literature, it is important to consider how the notion of "emergency response" should be conceptualized. Broken into its component

parts, emergency response is the sum total of an event and an action, or an emergency and its response. Distinctions found in the literature on these two topics set the basis for developing a framework for this study.

Emergency

There are a variety of terms that can capture the types of events addressed in this study: incident, emergency, crisis, disaster. In the mass media and in public dialogues, these descriptors are often used interchangeably. However, in higher education, each label connotes a distinct set of characteristics. Whereas incidents are localized to the campus context, crises affect universities at the institutional level, and disasters have dire consequences for both the campus and the surrounding community (Harper, Paterson, & Zdziarski, 2006). The issue of labeling critical events is also a topic of debate in the broader organizational scholarship (Pearson & Clair, 1998). For instance, scholars have long deliberated whether a crisis can be defined by key characteristics such as threat, time constraints, and surprise (Hermann, 1963), control, opportunity-threat, and vulnerability (Milburn, Schuler, & Watman, 1983), ambiguity, time pressures, threat/opportunity (Kovoor-Misra, Clair, & Bettenhausen, 2001), the abrupt or cumulative nature of an event (Hwang & Lichtenthal, 2000), or whether the designation is a matter of respondent perception (Billings, Milburn, & Schaalman, 1980).

Although these designations are useful in examining the nature of the events, themselves, the distinctions do not contribute additional insight into the focus of this particular study. Incident, crisis, or disaster, events in this category are all different types of emergencies. Moreover, they are the types of emergencies that trigger responsive actions. Therefore, for the purposes of identifying relevant literature, I have opted to

include research addressing all of these categories. However, to simplify related discussions, they are generally referred to as emergencies or incidents.

Emergency Response

In-practice, emergency response in higher education is a concept housed under the larger umbrella of emergency management. Emergency management consists of four phases of action, each of which is simultaneously distinct and interconnected (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Prevention-mitigation refers to the actions that universities take to minimize the likelihood that emergency situations will emerge or decrease the risk in cases where such events are unavoidable. Preparedness refers to the policies and procedures universities put in place in anticipation of needing to respond to emergency situations. Response involves the actual actions that universities undertake to "contain and resolve" an emergency scenario. Recovery addresses policies and procedures for returning functionality to an institution after an emergency has occurred.

At the same time these distinctions are useful for focusing the efforts of university administrators regarding the resolution of campus emergencies, the framework is also helpful for delimiting scholarship relevant to the research question at the center of this study. Since this study seeks to understand dynamics that cause university administrators to enact changes in protocols as an emergency unfolds, the literature reviewed hereafter focuses specifically on emergency response.

Situational Research on Emergency Response

In contrast to research addressing emergency prevention, preparation, and recovery, the research on emergency response is neither abundant nor cohesive. These observations may be due to two related challenges. First, studying response requires

snapshots of complex dynamics occurring as incidents unfold. Not only must the researcher be in the right place at the right time to catch such an event, she must also be able to elaborate patterns of behavior that could appear irrational and immeasurable. With respect to empirical analysis, it is difficult to label, measure, and derive rules explaining the dynamics of real-time actions. Second, whereas preparatory, preventative, and recovery procedures can easily be conceptualized and implemented across institutional settings, response procedures are often deeply context-specific. Therefore, scholarship addressing response almost always presents problems with regards to generalization and lacks a cumulative sense of knowledge-building.

As a result, existing studies on response in higher education are largely situational. In other words, related research draws lessons from or highlights observations about unique occurrences and one-time events. Although theory is sometimes referenced as a means of elaborating lessons-learned from these events, the aim of such scholarship does not necessarily build theory or advance a particular set of conceptual frames. Yet, in its reflection of lived emergency response experiences, the higher education literature is useful in that it suggests themes that might be pursued through research in other disciplines. In this case, the themes raised in the higher education emergency response literature can be translated to specific lines of inquiry addressed by organizational studies. Combined, the organizational and higher education literature provide a window into understanding the dynamics operating in emergency response and the key drivers of such dynamics.

Presence of Stakeholders and Stakeholder Networks

One of the most significant determinants of whether emergency response actions adhere to or depart from protocols is the involvement of multiple decision makers (Mendonca, 2007). In this view, emergencies are more than events to be managed, they are inherently social problems (Drabek, 2008). The fact that an event is labeled an emergency, in the first place, is the result of a socially constructed interpretation. In addition, such events affect the social constructs of individuals' private lives and community relationships. Further, emergency response involves constantly changing patterns of consent and dissent within and among responder groups. Therefore, at the same time an event affects the social context, so too is it affected by its social context. As Drabek (2008) states, "the processes by which social problems are socially constructed, redressed, or unaddressed call attention to the actions of individuals, groups, and organizations at all of these levels" (p. 27).

In keeping with this view, current literature focuses less on the processes by which individual decision-makers engage in emergency response and more on how overlapping respondent networks undertake such actions. In contemporary university settings, as well as with large-scale emergencies like 9/11, responses often require collaboration between offices, divisions, and organizations. The strength of the relationship between these networks, the trust they have for one another, and the ability of the networks to coordinate actions shape how emergency protocols are enacted on-site (Kapucu, 2006, 2009; Sommer & Pearson, 2007). Because the participation of different networks emerge over the course of a response, thereby shifting the demand for related resources, the evolving network structure also has the capacity to shape the ways in which the response efforts take place (Brower, Jeong, Choi, & Dilling, 2009).

Because universities engage a wide range of stakeholders in their operations, the relationships between groups present a particular challenge to emergency response (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). The higher education literature speaks to the impact that stakeholder networks, by their very involvement, have on campus emergency response. In a qualitative case analysis of a campus gunman incident on a university campus, Asmussen and Cresswell (1995) attempted to depict the complexities of such an emergency, analyze the organizational challenges of responding to campus violence, and identify theoretical concepts that may help make sense of the overall response. On the one hand, they found that the emergency response was shaped by emergent patterns of leadership, communication, and authority that evolved between different administrative groups throughout the situation (e.g., Campus Police, Student Affairs, Campus Health Center). On the other hand, Asmussen and Cresswell found that respondent's actions were largely shaped by anticipating the psychosocial needs of respondents, students, and staff potentially affected by the event. Likewise, in a theoretical analysis of the events surrounding the nationally-covered allegations of rape against the Duke University lacrosse team, Fortunato (2008) concluded that responses to the resulting "reputation crisis" were largely shaped by administrators' efforts to anticipate different stakeholders' needs.

Stakeholder Interpretations and Conflicting Norms

Beyond being altered by the presence or anticipated needs of various stakeholders, university emergency response is also affected by the different cultural lenses each stakeholder network brings on-scene. Different respondent groups have different strategic orientations with regards to how they handle emergencies (Huang &

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Su, 2009). Additionally, each stakeholder network contributes a unique perspective to interpreting evidence surrounding a particular emergency event (Ulmer & Sellnow, 2000). When a group of individuals, offices, or organizations come together in a collective response effort, there are bound to be differences between how each constituent group perceive the events and how they define an appropriate course of action. The gaps between the norms, perceptions, and expectations of these different stakeholders often exacerbate the complexities brought about by the characteristics of a particular emergency and, therefore, shape the actions undertaken in emergency response (Schneider, 1992). The extent to which stakeholder networks can come to a collective understanding, communicate that understanding among constituents, and coordinate constituents into collective actions determines what they can achieve in responding to an emergency (Comfort, 2007; Cook, 2009).

Given the fact that universities operate under the direction and influence of various stakeholders, the cultures within these groups play an important role in determining how emergency response unfolds. For instance, research on the faculty shows a lack of agreement as to whether it is in their collective purview to monitor the student body for potential dangers and/or take an active role in responding to evolving events (Ward, 2009). A set of articles authored by two different faculty members at California State University, Northridge, Blumenthal (1995) and Berry (1996) elaborate this debate by connecting personal reflections and management theory to examine the nature of emergency response in the aftermath of the Northridge earthquake. From Blumenthal's perspective, the immediate and long-term emergency response undertaken by administrators was conflated by tensions between two of the university's most active

stakeholders, administrators and faculty. The administration's decisively authoritarian and hierarchical approach to emergency management departed significantly from the shared governance typically employed by the university when making significant institutional decisions. From Berry's perspective, this departure from faculty centered norms around decision-making was necessary to enact an emergency response evolving over the course of the event and its aftermath. Whereas faculty typically bring certain talents and perspectives useful to academic decisions, administrators demonstrated an alternative set of talents, will, and dispositions.

Blumenthal and Berry's debate emphasizes the organizational findings that university emergency response is shaped not only by cultures and norms existing within subgroups, but also across subgroups. For instance, Harper (2004) examined the responsive actions of senior Student Affairs officers in emergency situations arising from a hazing incident at Florida A&M University and controversy over the use of a Native American mascot at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. Her results showed that the more capable a Student Affairs administrator was in understanding the strategic perspectives of colleagues in other university subdivisions, the greater his or her impact on enacting emergency response. To examine the role of stakeholder interpretations on a particular emergency scenario, Wahlberg (2004) analyzed the case of public scrutiny growing around University of North Dakota's tradition of employing a Native American mascot. In that review, he concluded that conflicting interpretations by stakeholders drove the importance placed on the issue and the actions that emergency respondents took within.

Capacity of Stakeholders to Enact Efficient Practices

Berry's (1996) observation that administrators offer a specific set of management capacities in times of crisis raises an additional impact that stakeholders can make on emergency response. Namely, stakeholder capacity to enact efficient practices in the midst of an emergency situation affects the ways in which those actions take place. For example, whether or not a particular subdivision of the emergency response network has the authority to act autonomously may affect the way their division handles an emergency and the speed with which response occurs (Huang & Su, 2009). Similarly, a respondent network's actions may be largely determined by their capacity to harness communication, coordination, and control in a critical situation (Comfort, 2007; Cook, 2009).

O'Neal's (2009) historical analysis of campus shootings at the University of Texas – Austin and Kent State University, Aschenbrener's (2001) comparative case studies of natural disasters at three universities, and Kishur's (2004) analysis of decision-making among community college presidents facing institutional crisis suggest that the key issue impairing or enabling responsive actions revolves around inter-group communication. Clarke and Chess's (2006) case study of an incident setting off an anthrax scare elaborates this issue. Faced with contamination from a letter containing a white powder, university administrators found themselves having to simultaneously managing communications with a diverse range of stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, the news media, and government agencies. Ultimately, communication problems tied up with the need to respond to multiple parties simultaneously inhibited and shaped the actions of respondents (Clarke & Chess, 2006). In his analysis of a flash flood affecting Colorado State University, Kennedy (2004) recognized such

communication and coordination problems not to be issues in and of themselves. Rather, he found that disasters cause an "emergency subculture" for universities in which new task and decision-making structures emerge within the organization. How and to what extent a university could respond to unexpected events was a function of whether administrators could enact effective communication and decision-making given this emergent structure.

Forecasting and Critical Thinking

Another area of interpretation affecting response is the level to which responders can foresee the potential emergency in a particular situation. For instance, in the cases of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, government agencies failed to undertake certain responsive actions owing to their inability to imagine the scenarios as potential disasters (U.S. House of Representatives, 2006; National Commission on Terrorist Acts on the United States, 2004). This example is used by Kiltz (2009) to underscore the importance of critical thinking as a factor shaping emergency response actions. Whether organizations perceive an event as a crisis, and further whether they perceive that crisis to be a threat or opportunity, changes the nature of how they respond (Penrose, 2000). Also in the category of looking forward, the level to which respondents can forecast involvement in particular emergency scenarios help shape the actions undertaken in an emergency (Kreps & Lovgren Bosworth, 1993). The higher education literature often frames forecasting and critical thinking as a function of leadership orientations. Research on different administrative groups (e.g., presidents, student affairs administrators, academic department administrators) suggest that the cognitive frames used by top-level leaders to

interpret unfolding events affects how and to what level of effectiveness emergency response is enacted (Akers, 2007; Davison, 2008; Harper, 2004; Mills, 2004).

Past and Collective Experiences with Emergency Response

Finally, in contrast to an ability to think forward, reflecting back also shapes the manner in which respondents take action in the midst of an emergency event. One way that happens is through past experience in the role of respondent (Kreps & Lovgren Bosworth, 1993). Buck's (2009) research on the factors affecting enacted emergency response for upper-level Residential Life administrators supports this assertion. He found past-experience to be one of the primary tools Residential Life administrators use to shape their actions therein. Moreover, past experiences need not only be the domain of individual respondents to make a difference in university emergency response. Emergencies trigger collective learning such that organizations can transform lessons-learned into measures for future preparedness (Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2008). For example, in a survey of Student Affairs professionals' orientations toward emergencies, findings showed that this group of university administrators expanded their views of the types of issues that might occur under their purview (Catullo, Walker, & Floyd, 2009). The reason surmised was that the types of landmark situations such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Virginia Tech shootings, the Northern Illinois shootings, Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, and the bird flu have all affected emergency preparation and response. In particular, the events taking place between 2001 and 2007 have shifted Student Affairs administrators' attention from retroactive to preemptive response and honed their awareness of what needs to happen when faced with an evolving emergency situation (Catullo, Walker, & Floyd, 2009).

Theoretically-Centered Research on Work Routines and Sensemaking

The situational research on emergency response raises two related points. First emergency response is tied inextricably to work processes, structures, and dynamics. In other words, the challenges involved in undertaking emergency response are related to the degree to which events and actions adhere to or interrupt routine operations. Second, understanding the ways in which emergency response work plays out requires a parallel understanding of the network, social, and interpretive dynamics occurring within and among university constituents. Restated, emergency response is a function of evolving social-psychological processes occurring within and between organizational subgroups. Together, these observations direct us to two theoretical bodies of literature central to developing a conceptual frame for analyzing emergency response: organizational routines and collective sensemaking.

Organizational Routines

Within an organizational context, crisis management reflects the utilization and updating of organizational routines (Sommer & Pearson, 2007). Organizational routines can be thought of as the building blocks of work within an organization (Becker, 2004, 2005; Cyert & March, 1963; Nelson & Winter, 1982). Based on a work-centered conceptualization of organizations, Becker, Salvatore, and Zirpoli (2005) define routines as the "recurrent behavior patterns that implement and carry out tasks that deal with interdependencies" (p. 7). However, the idea of organizational routine has been loosely defined and broadly applied in past research (Becker, 2004). Routines have been framed as artifacts of cognition (Cohen & Bacdayan, 1994; March & Simon, 1958), standard operating procedures (Cyert & March, 1963), and pre-determined scripts (Nelson &

Winter, 1982). But at the core of routines, it is the regularity in the collective patterns of work that distinguishes organizational routines from other types of work processes or operations (Becker, 2004, 2005). Becker, Lazaric, Nelson, and Winter (2005) posit that understanding organizational routines is fundamental to understanding different types of organizational change. Whether impacted intentionally or consequentially, changes in the recurrent patterns and norms of work are the essence of what it means for an organization to undergo a change.

Stability in Organizational Routines

Delving further into the research, the notion that routines change is a relatively recent evolution in scholarship on work processes. Early literature on organizational routines depict routines as either inherently stable (e.g., genetic codes) or as stabilizing mechanisms within an organization (e.g., standard operating procedures reduce uncertainty about procedure) (Cyert & March, 1963; Nelson & Winter, 1982). Herein routines involve actions that are regular, repeated, and patterned. They are seen as scripts difficult to change or changed slowly only over long periods of time (Cyert & March, 1963; Nelson & Winter, 1982). The more frequently a routine is enacted, the more difficult it is to change (Edmonson, Bohmer, & Pisano, 2001; Gersick & Hackman, 1990).

In terms of how it is envisioned through protocols and standard operating procedures, emergency response demonstrates the classic characteristics of organizational routines. In effect, protocols treat emergency response as if it occurred on a regular basis, providing guidelines that can be repeated as situations arise time and again. However, as raised in the introduction, any administrator who has been responsible for emergency

response knows that what happens in the field rarely adheres strictly to the outlined protocols. Because protocols reflect imagined actions rather than real action, they can be considered a sort of fantasy document, the function of which is to demonstrate systematic consideration for potential events rather than offer realistic patterns for handling such scenarios (Clark, 1999).

In that there are often departures between protocol and action, emergency response in higher education can also be thought of as fantasy documents. First, emergency response is neither the primary task of many offices nor is it consistently a part of the daily work cycle. Thus, the enactment of emergency response may not be all that routine a task. Further, certain emergency response routines may be enacted seldom within in a long span of time (e.g., earthquake protocols). Therefore, although structured through protocols to be enacted time and again, emergency response can also lack a certain level of repetition in-practice. Finally, enacted emergency response is often shaped not only by protocols, but by the contexts or events that call for such actions. It often does not progress the same way twice, even in situations where the context appears to be similar. Therefore, as a plan of action, one might consider an emergency response routine as stable. However, in context and as a set of actions, emergency response raises questions about flexibility and change. This discrepancy between planning and action in emergency response supports a second position on understanding organizational routines.

Change in Organizational Routines

Contemporary scholars view routines as inherently flexible in terms of design and organizational impact (Feldman, 2000, 2004; Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Feldman & Rafaeli, 2002). From this perspective, not only does a routine have the capacity to

change, but it is likely to change while still maintaining the integrity of a routine. Feldman and Pentland (2003) contend that routines are not as straightforward as earlier conceptualizations imply. Rather, routines are complex dynamics constituted simultaneously by two primary characteristics: ostensive and performative. Ostensive characteristics of a routine (or ostensive routines) include the abstract patterns that give shape to that routine. Such ideas about a given routine may be shared implicitly within an organization as norms or understandings about how to accomplish a particular task. Ostensive characteristics may also be shared explicitly through artifacts such as protocols, rules, and guidelines. As exemplified in emergency response, ostensive characteristics resemble more traditional conceptualizations of routines. At the same time, the performative characteristics of a routine (or performative routines) reflect the actions undertaken by individuals within a specific context. But the ostensive and performative characteristics of a particular routine are more than co-existing alternatives. In a recursive and ongoing manner, ostensive and performative characteristics of a particular routine shape and cause change in one another.

Whereas the ostensive characteristics of routines speak to the underlying structure of planning, the performative characteristics focus on the process of collective interpretation and action. In other words, routines are not only a function of design and structure, but also a function of organizational actors, their ideas, and their actions (Feldman, 2000). Routines are at the "crucial nexus between structure and action, between the organization as an object and organizing as a process" (Pentland & Reuter, 1994, p. 484). The influence of structure on action, and in turn, action on structure is the driver of change in organizational routines. Such a relationship has been defined as

structuration, a conceptual model that has a strong influence on contemporary

conceptualizations of organizational routines and change.

How Ostensive Routines Change: Structuration

Structuration (Giddens, 1984; Ransom, Hinings, & Greenwood, 1980; Sewell,

1992) has been applied widely to explain the relationship between structure and agency

in organizational change. Although not exclusively, structuration has been elaborated

through research on change in technology use and related work routines (Barley, 1986;

Masino & Zamarian, 2003; Orlikowski, 1992, 2000; Yates, 2005). Figure 1 depicts the

basic tenets of the conceptual frame in the context of organizational work routines. All

organizations have rules, policies and procedures that describe work within that particular

context. These rules are encoded in artifacts that provide organizational actors with a

shared understanding about who they are, what they do, and how to do it in the

organizational setting. In the case of technology, shared data systems may serve as an

artifact. However, protocols and standard operating procedures can be thought of as

serving a similar function.

Essentially, such artifacts become inscribed with the ostensive routines for work.

The ostensive characteristics provide guidelines for and shape organizational actors'

actions. In other words, the ostensive characteristics of a routine provide a guideline for

or constrain actors' actions by outlining acceptable practices. However, organizational

actors do not always adhere to these constraints nor follow such guidelines precisely.

They employ agency in deciding whether their actions will conform with the guidelines

or depart from them. Both types of actions can be considered part of the performative

routine. But enacting a departure from the ostensive routine signals a change in routine.
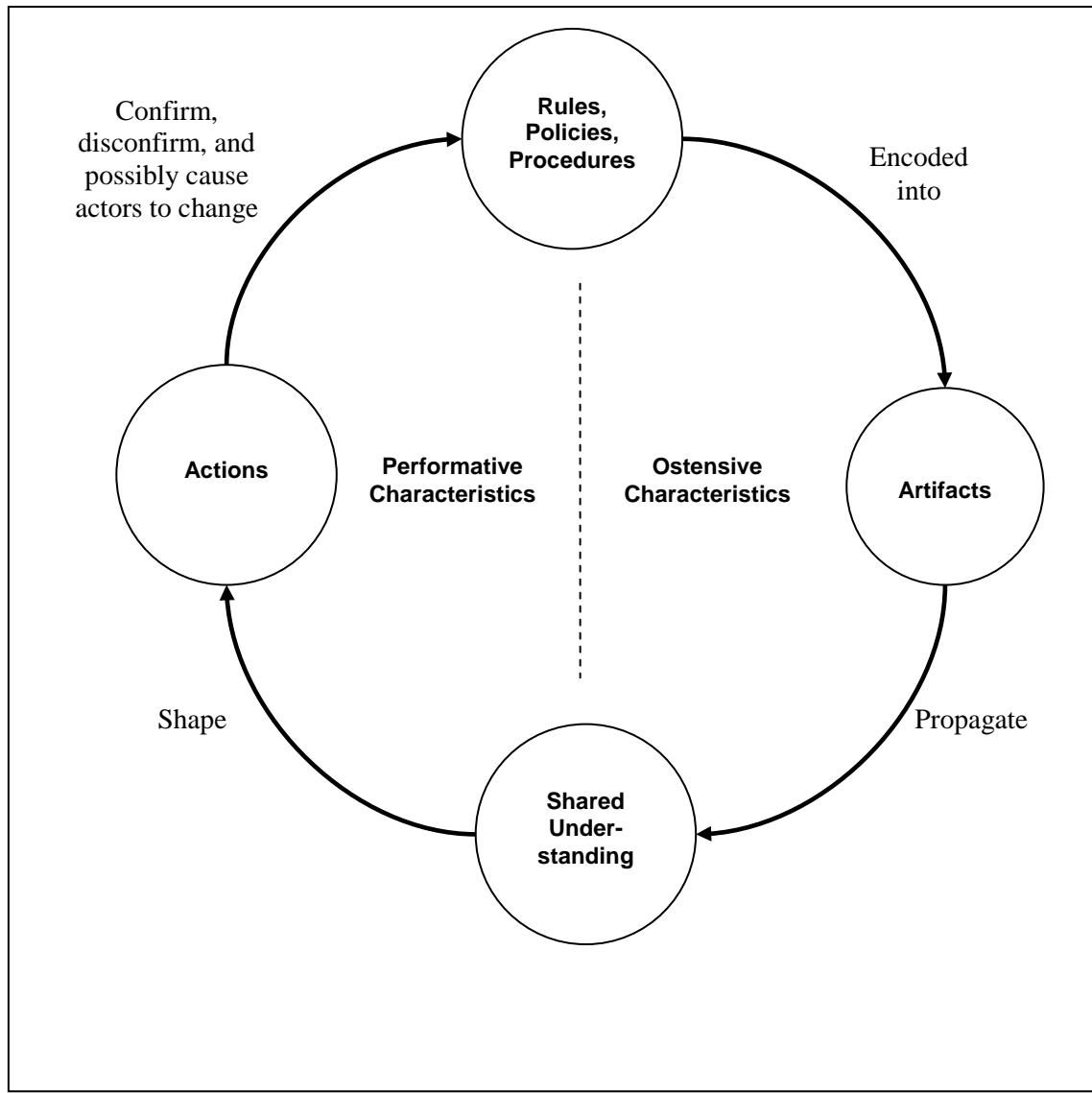
Figure 1. Structuration of Organizational Routines Representing the Relationship between Ostensive and Performative Routines

Clearly, once an action outside of the guidelines has been taken, the routine has already been altered. But it is the consequences of that departure that completes one cycle of structuration. When a discrepant action has been taken, it causes organizational actors to reconsider the content and meaning of both their actions and the original protocols. In

some cases the organizational actors may consider a particular action the result of a novel event. Herein, they may decide that there is no need to change the original protocol. In other cases (and especially where there is a preponderance of cases or an especially significant event), organizational actors may see a departure from ostensive routines as a sign that the original artifacts need to be changed. Therefore, the enacted routine becomes the impetus for change in the anticipated routine. This recursive relationship continues in a fashion as to continually "structure" the mutually constitutive characteristics of the routine.

Why Performative Routines Change: Individual, Social, and Environmental Perspectives

Structuration provides a baseline for understanding how artifacts and actions shape one another and introduce change into established routines over time. Yet, if we adhere to Feldman and Pentland's definition of routine, there are problems with structuration as a sole means for understanding change therein. First, although structuration accounts for both ostensive and performative characteristics, it houses the idea of routine and change more so in the former. Structuration does not fully account for the reasons why actions, themselves, change. Still, enacted departures from protocol are important to understanding both why routines change and specifically how an emergency response routine remains simultaneously stable and flexible.

Second, structuration presents a closed loop model for change in organizational routines. Although this is helpful to understand the complex dynamics between artifacts and action, the structuration model does not account for the impact of external forces or novel events on routines. External forces and novel events are often part of the scenarios requiring enactment of the emergency response routine. Third, the structuration model

implies long-term, cyclical, and incremental change between ostensive and performative routines. The model, therefore, fails to provide insight into change that affects a routine in a particular moment. Overall, although structuration explains *how* routines change, it does not fully explain *why* organizational actors depart from routines, especially in the performative sense. Therefore, structuration leaves open the question: What causes organizational actors to enact performative routines that depart from ostensive routines?

Individual Dispositions and Adjustments

At a micro level of analysis, changes in performative routines occur because individual actors have agency. Actors make decisions about whether to carry out a routine as prescribed, whether to change it, or whether to disregard it altogether. Therefore, the orientations or characteristics that actors bring to the table matter. Some researchers focus on the ways in which personal characteristics affect an individual's enactment of a routine. Some findings hold that actors employ diverse goals for enacting routines or different orientations toward preserving them (Howard-Grenville, 2005; Orlikowski, 2000). Other findings show that an actor's perception of whether a particular routine strengthens or threatens personal identity may account for alterations to a routine (Greenhalgh, Voisey, & Robb, 2007). Additionally, reactionary measures matter. Adapting routines can be seen as a means of coping with unfamiliar events or those for which a prevailing routine seems ineffective (Greenhalgh, Voisey, & Robb, 2007; Levitt & March, 1988). Research has found that simply being made aware of habits, causing actors to reflect more deeply on their actions, impels change in routines (Cohen & Bacdayan, 1994). Actors also consider changing routines when a mismatch is encountered between their interpretation of the environmental context and the

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environmental context assumed by the routine (Bruns, 2009; Feldman, 2003; Volkoff, Strong, & Elmes, 2007).

As far as any of these explanations might provide deeper insight into the ways in which organizational routines change, they omit a critical part of the organizational story: collectivity. From a collective perspective, individual level adjustments are important because they set the impetus for change in motion. However, actual changes are achieved when more than one actor is involved in the decision.

Social Constructivist Processes

At a broader level of analysis, and consistent with contemporary emergency response literature, change in routines is related to social constructivist processes, or the social, interpretative, and collaborative processes occurring between organizational actors, subgroups, and networks (Feldman, 2000; Pentland & Feldman, 2005; Sommer & Pearson, 2007). In contrast to thinking about routines as ties that bind work processes together, this view holds that routines can be seen as ties that connect humans to one another. Moreover, routines can be seen as ties that shape the shared understandings of related subgroups around issues of performance, context, power, and identity (Feldman & Rafaeli, 2002). They help subgroups establish which procedures are relevant to their own work and delimit which procedures belong in the scope of others' work. Routines also provide guidelines to organizational actors as to whether work is meeting its goals or whether adjustments might be necessary.

Ultimately, routines bring together organizational actors to perform a task. When brought together, they have to come to a shared understanding about which actions to take and which not to take. When a characteristic of the work context shift (e.g., a group

encounters an emergency situation), routines change as a function of negotiating these shared understanding (Balogun, 2006; Balogun & Johnson, 2005; Feldman & Rafaeli, 2002) and resolving conflicts through interactive decision-making processes (DeSanctis & Poole, 1994). At the center of many conflicts is the structuration process by which artifacts inscribe power and authority relationships into work routines; and, recursively, how routines enacted in real situations potentially call for realignments of those relationships (Barley, 1986; Edmonson, Bohmer, & Pisano, 2001; Greenhalgh, Voisy, & Robb, 2007; Masino & Zamarian, 2003; Perlow, Gittel, & Katz, 2004). In essence, the collective meaning making processes occurring within and across organizational subgroups provide an important link between the espoused characteristics of a routine and how that routine is enacted (Feldman & Pentland, 2003).

Environmental Level Shifts

Moreover, changes in performative routines occur not only for their own merit, but often as a function of timing or environmental consequence. From the perspective of long-term change, routines are altered in an evolutionary manner via selection (Miner, 1990). In other words, the environment renders which routines will remain viable or insufficient. To seal off an organization's weaknesses from environmental shifts, unique routines are adopted for the short-term. If the new routines continue to fortify the organization from demise, they replace older routines. From the perspective of short-term change, routines are altered when a significant event occurs, especially a disruption in routine that requires organizational actors to collectively reinterpret their work (Gersick & Hackman, 1990, Zellmer-Bruhn, 2003). For instance, groups consider changing their routines when they experience a novel event, when failure is encountered, when a

milestone is reached, when an intervention questions prevailing norms of the group, or

when the group must cope with structural changes to the organization. The threshold for

change occurs when both the organizational impetus for change and timing coincide.

Collective Sensemaking and its Seven Properties

When individual actors use their agency to adjust protocols, collaboratively

negotiate those adjustments, and do so in response to environmental level contexts, they

are essentially engaging in collective sensemaking. Sensemaking describes the process by

which organizational actors simultaneously interpret and enact responses to an evolving

event characterized by temporal constraints, uncertainty, and ambiguity (Weick, 1999;

Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). The frame suggests that organizations face

particularly acute challenges when presented a situation that demands a response, but for

which there is no precedent or the protocol is unclear (Weick, 1995).

One of the challenges involved in sensemaking is that, in the absence of clear

directives, organizational actors must interpret what is going on around them and may

even be forced to respond before having come to some type of conclusion. Rationality

becomes a subjective matter in ambiguous environments, therefore an unreliable or even

unrealistic foundation for decision-making and action. Further, this subjective reality is

rarely in the hands of one person, but must be collectively negotiated among a group of

people as the situation unfolds. Sensemaking holds that groups develop uniquely

collective ideas about what is going on in the moment and about what to do next.

Weick (1995, 1999) outlines a set of seven dynamics that comprise collective

sensemaking (Table 1). These characteristics provide a framework for locating distinct

Table 1. Seven Properties of Sensemaking (Weick, 1995, 1999)

- Social Context: Presence of others, real, implied, or imagined
- Personal Identity: Sense of self given the unfolding situation
- Retrospect: Understanding the present through the past
- Salient Cues: Elaborating small cues into stories
- Ongoing Projects: Temporal context of unfolding change
- Plausibility: Socially agreed upon idea of what is possible or how to interpret the story
- Enactment: Taking action(s) in response to the unfolding situation

types of challenges organizations face when responding to ambiguous change environments. A short overview of each is elaborated below.

Social Context

Social Context recognizes that organizational actions are often influenced by the presence of others. For instance, organizational actors may be influenced by power relationships involved in supervisor-supervisee dynamics or by the pressures exerted by peer groups. Moreover, those involved in the social context need not be directly on-the-scene in order to exert influence. Whether involved in a literal, figurative, or imagined sense, organizational actors influence one another both directly and indirectly. With regards to contemporary emergency response, one of the interesting facets of social context involves emergent organizational structure (Becker, 2007). In other words, given emergencies of high complexity or large-scale, units composed of otherwise separate sub-organizations crystallize temporarily to enact response. Herein, duplicating efforts, communications, and overall coordination become issues that both complicate sensemaking and escalate the effects of an emergency, itself.

Personal Identity

Personal Identity reflects the fact that interpretations of environmental events are often tied up with how organizational actors view themselves. In other words, at any given time organizational actors occupy and play out various identities, personal, professional, or otherwise. These identities have the capacity to influence how that person interprets a particular event. Given a social setting, and especially one encountering a sensemaking event, organizational actors are constantly negotiating identities. However, identities are not only the domain of individual actors; they can also play out at the organizational and interorganizational levels of analysis. For instance, organizational cultures can provide actors with an identity-related framework through which they understand their settings and the problems that affect those settings. Those cultures may exist within different subdivisions of one organization or across different organizations When challenged in the midst of a sensemaking event, such cultural identities play a role in helping organizational make meaning of the event and shape relevant responses (Balogun & Johnson, 2005; Beck & Plowman, 2009; Vaara, 2003).

Retrospect

The Retrospect dynamic encapsulates the fact that organizational actors often draw upon past experiences to make meaning of present situations. Events presenting novel or surprising characteristics, by definition, do not adhere to the descriptions set out in procedures and protocols. Moreover, sensemaking events often challenge organizational actors to enact responses under time constraints. Given both a lack of guidelines to help actors understand what is happening around them and constricted time, organizational actors often turn to the tools they have at their disposal, such as hands-on

experience, intuition, common sense, and tacit knowledge. These tools allow organizational actors to engage in quick-paced decision making with minimal thought (Rausch, 2009; Zhao, 2009).

In order to build these tools, organizational actors and their organizations must have retrospective experiences upon which to draw. Therefore, the events experienced by organizational actors in the past provide a basis for how future events may be interpreted. In terms of emergency response, past experiences with emergencies can serve as learning opportunities for handling similar situations in the future (Lampel, Shamsie, & Shapira, 2009; Smith & Elliott, 2007).

Salient Cues

Salient Cues references how organizational actors pick up on clues to make meaning of an unfolding event. In that Salient Cues describes a practical process by which organizational actors take stock of the situation around them, Salient Cues can be overlooked for its significance in the sensemaking process. It involves more than being a good detective or being highly perceptive. Rather, Salient Cues is a characteristic that links the processes of identifying the observations and information that might be useful in understanding a particular scenario, elaborating that data to make meaning of that event, and taking action based on those interpretation. In other words, Salient Cues refers to the processes of "noticing" relevant information, "bracketing" this information so that it can be reinterpreted in light of past experiences, and "labeling" the information so that it becomes a meaningful story on which to base responsive actions (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005).

Ongoing Projects

Ongoing Projects involves the role that time plays in an unfolding event. The length of time an event takes to unfold, either short or long, may enable or constrain different aspects of sensemaking. In critical situations, time is important because responders may have different capacities for sensemaking at different moments during a critical event (Stein, 2004). Likewise, different levels and contexts of emergency scenarios introduce different levels of interruption into the responsive procedures. For instance, in the case of 9/11, events unfolded rapidly, constantly interrupting and complicating the actions of responders on-the-scene. However, in the case of an earthquake recovery, the event has already taken place. The frequency of interruptions are variably spaced out and the severity of their impact on responder's actions different. Time is important with regards to emergency response in that the frequency or nature of interruptions may have specific impacts, positive and negative, on organizational meaning making (Quintis & George, 2003).

Plausibility

Plausibility refers to organizational actors' abilities to look forward and imagine how a particular situation may evolve over time. It calls upon actors to consider alternate ways in which a situation might unfold and to take action based on the scenarios deemed most plausible by the responders. Take, for example, the shootings at Virginia Tech, wherein questions emerged about whether the shootings in the academic building should have been foreseeable given an earlier shooting in the residence hall (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007). After the first shooting in the residence hall, police had collected evidence to believe that the gunman had left campus. Based on the presumption that the first incident could be related to a domestic disturbance, it seemed highly likely to the

police that the gunman had completed his task, fled from the scene in order not to be caught, and would not return. The possibility that the gunman would return to campus and continue his shooting spree in an academic building across campus hours later did not seem realistic. Similarly, the 9/11 report questioned whether the attack on the World Trade Center came about as a failure to imagine such a scenario (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004). When an organization bases its actions solely on retrospective lessons, it misses opportunities for imagining alternate permutations of an events' evolution thereby limiting the creativity and effectiveness of responsive actions (Ford, 2002). Therefore, Plausibility moves organizational actors away from thinking about evolving scenarios with regards to accuracy or probability, and towards considering possibility (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005).

Enactment

Underlying the sensemaking conceptual frame is the assumption that organizational actors not only interpret events, but act in response to them. Much in the fashion presented by the above outlined literature on structuration, Enactment is the link between how an organization is impacted by an event and how that event is recursively impacted by the sensemaking processes it undertakes in response (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). For instance, Bean and Keränen (2007) found that government communications about post-9/11 threat risks not only shared relevant information universities, but shaped the ways in which universities prepared for and responded to emergencies on campus. Email bulletins detailing actions related to threats on homeland security caused university administrators to notice, bracket, label and take action on incidents that otherwise would have been considered isolated and dismissed as

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idiosyncratic. In such types of actions as information giving, questioning, probing, or even responding through trial by error, organizations have the capacity to shape the environment around them.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for this dissertation draws upon Feldman and Pentland's (2003) conceptualization of flexibility in organizational routines and Weick's (1995) sensemaking framework to understand what drives administrators' decisions about adhering to or departing from emergency response protocols. Although neither organizational routines nor sensemaking have been employed widely to conceptually understand emergency response in a higher education context, both are well-suited to categorizing, mapping, and analyzing related dynamics. On one hand, the ostensive-performative conceptualization of organizational routines provides a structure for identifying, breaking down, and organizing the basic building blocks of emergency response protocols. On the other hand, the seven properties of sensemaking provide tools to help locate the triggers causing change in those emergency response protocols. In addition to the benefits of its general application for understanding social constructivist processes, sensemaking has had a long history of use as a tool to examine emergency response scenarios and actions (e.g., Boudes & Laroche, 2009; Kayes, 2004; Landgren, 2005; Roux-Dufort, 2007; Weick, 1988, 1993).

As suggested by Feldman and Pentland (2003), one way to understand why routines change is to compare its ostensive characteristics against its performative characteristics. Based on its written protocols and shared understandings, any general

ostensive emergency response routine can be reflected by a series of procedural steps

(Figure 2). At the same time each step guides responders as to how s/he might adhere to

**Ostensive Emergency Response Routine
(Written Protocols & Shared Understandings)**

Step 1

↓

Step 2

↓

Step 3

↓

Step 4
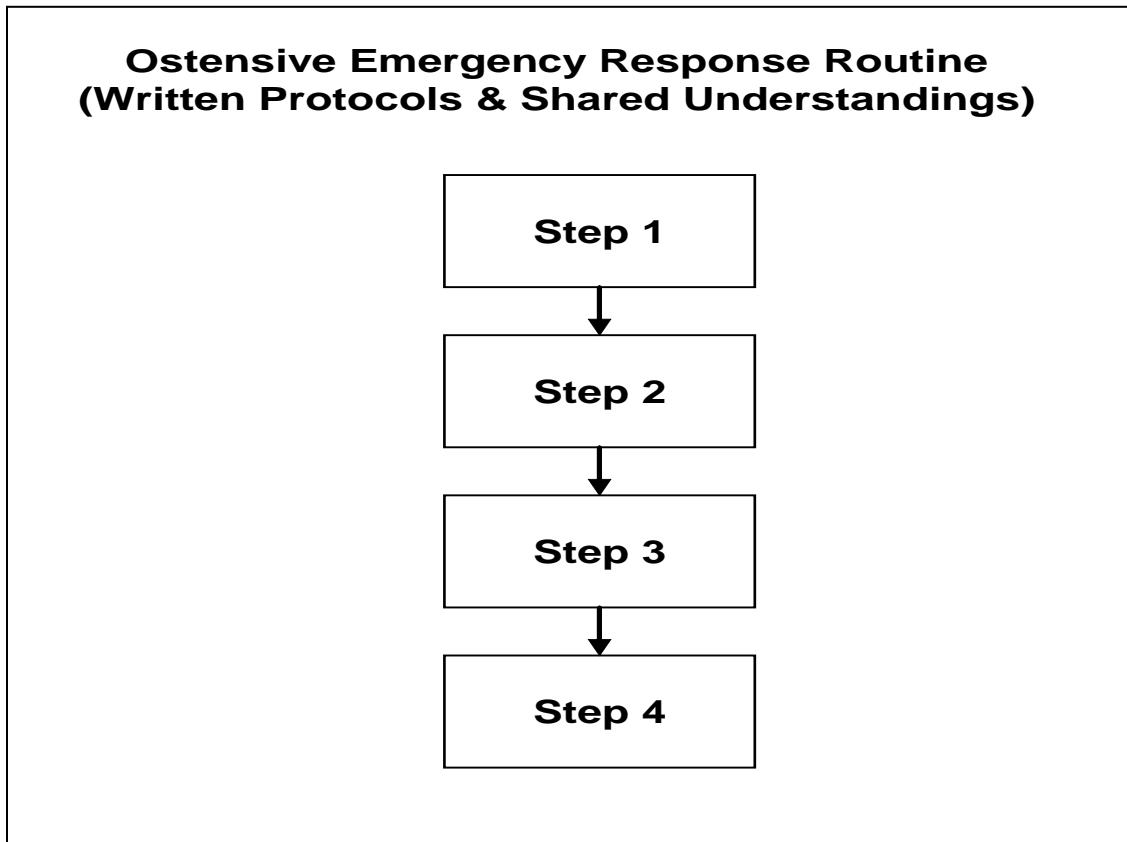
Figure 2. Outline of a General Ostensive Emergency Response Routine

the routine, each step also provides an occasion for departing from, or changing, that

routine (Figure 3). Therefore, a comparison of an ostensive routine and its corresponding

performative routine is likely to exhibit instances where steps have been altered and

others where steps have been enacted as-planned (Figure 4). According to the social

constructivist view built into Feldman and Pentland's (2003) conceptualization, one can

understand the nature of the comparison by delving into why any two corresponding

routines mirror or depart from one another. More specifically, why performative routines
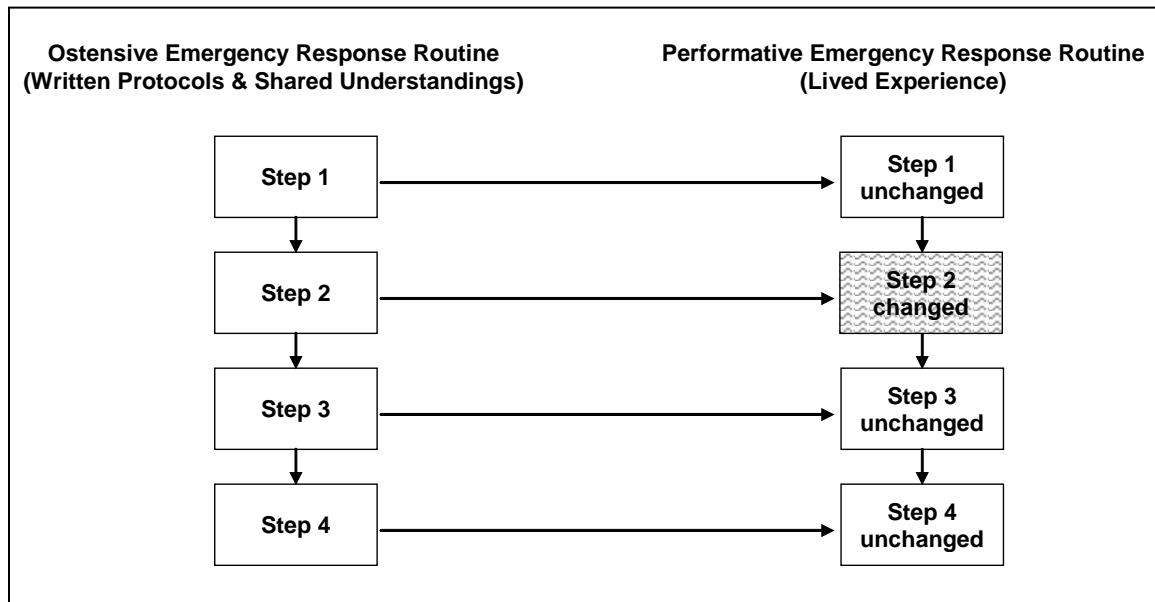
Figure 3. Ostensive Steps as Occasions for Performative Change
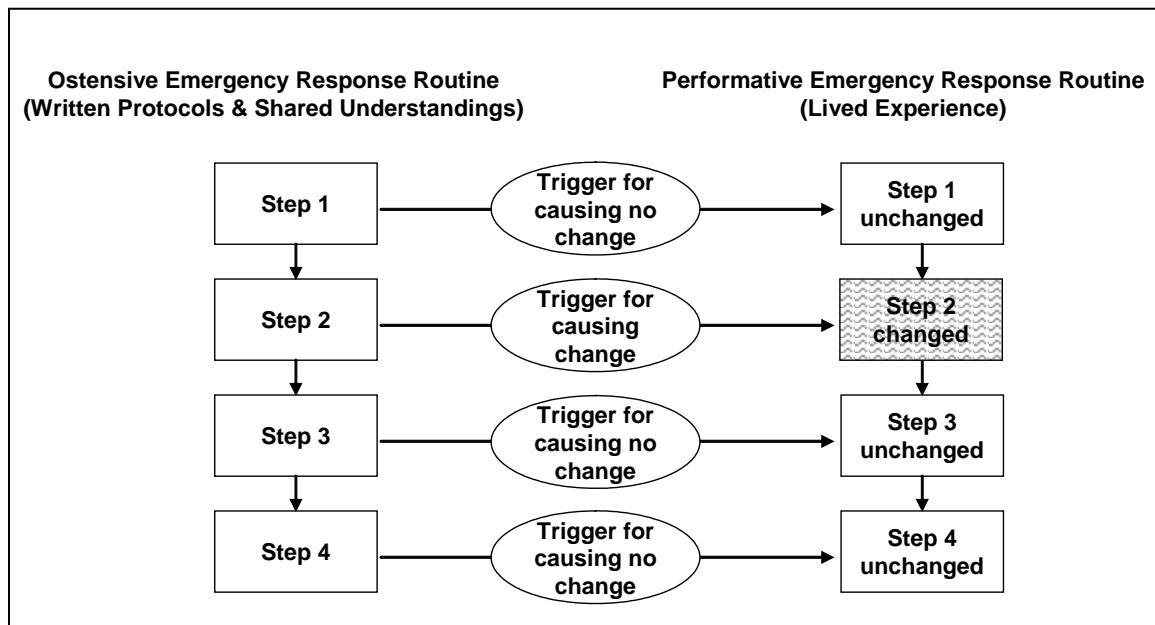
Figure 4. Triggers for Causing Change between Ostensive and Performative Routines

depart (or do not depart) from their ostensive counterparts can be attributed to

sensemaking dynamics (Pentland & Feldman, 2005). Hence, the seven sensemaking

properties should illuminate why espoused organizational routines (and in this case

emergency response routines) undergo change when enacted in a real context (Figure 5).
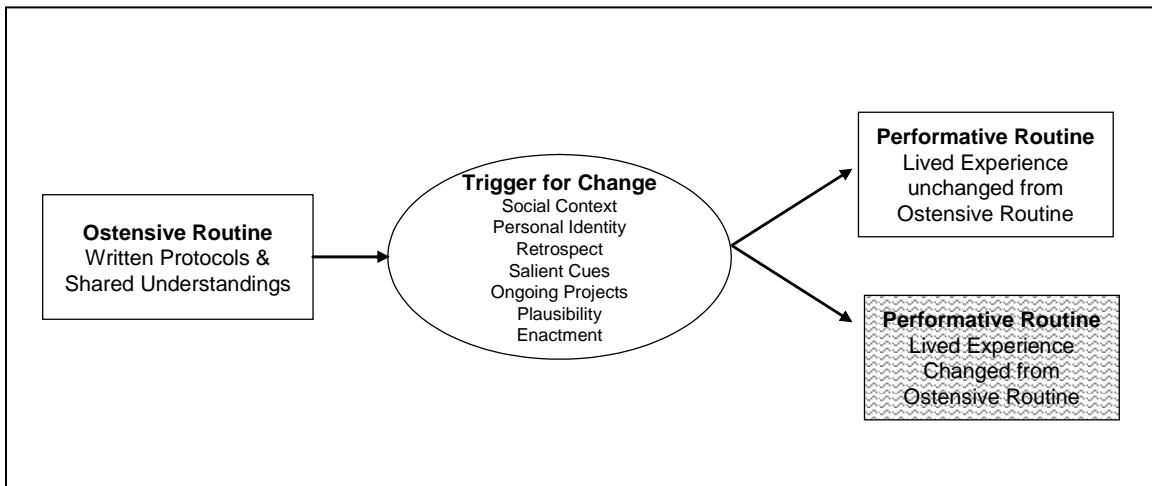
Figure 5. Sensemaking as Triggers for Change in Emergency Response Routines

Therefore, recast in light of the conceptual frame, the research question at the center of

the study examines the sensemaking dynamics that trigger change in university

emergency response routines.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Research Design

Anchored by the conceptual frame developed in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 outlines the methodological design undertaken in this study to answer the question: What sensemaking dynamics trigger change in university emergency response routines? The first section discusses the selection of a qualitative approach for the study as well as its interpretivist and social constructivist philosophical orientations. The second section explains the data collection strategy: An organizational ethnography of a Residential Life Office over the course of the 2008-2009 academic year at one, large, urban research university in the southern region of the United States. In addition to reviewing and substantiating the use of organizational ethnography in this research design, the section walks the reader through the ethnography's parameters (i.e., site selection, entrée, timeline, data sources, and recordkeeping).

The third section of Chapter 3 details the study's stepwise analytical strategy. Herein, qualitative coding facilitates investigation at different levels of analysis, beginning broadly with ethnographic data and drilling down to examine data at the levels of embedded case studies and further embedded work routines. Ethnography is used to illuminate the nature of emergency response in the context of Residential Life work and

four case studies are drawn from theoretical sampling to examine specific instances of emergency response. This section also offers explanations both of how the conceptual model is applied to map ostensive-performative comparisons in emergency response routines and how qualitative coding is employed to elaborate triggers for change in these routines. The final sections of Chapter 3 discuss issues related to writing style and methodological limitations.

Philosophical Orientation

The conceptual frame upon which this study is based argues that emergency response, as a type of work routine, is shaped by people and their efforts to make meaning of that work (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Pentland & Feldman, 2005). Therefore, the research reflects both social constructivist and interpretive paradigms (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998). Social constructivist and interpretive paradigms hold that organizational actors mutually shape and are shaped by both their interactions with others and with the environment. Therefore, by collecting the perspectives of various participants on a particular topic, a researcher can make meaning of related dynamics (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 2000).

In accordance with these assumptions, a qualitative approach has been selected for this study. Such an approach allows the researcher to inductively understand emergency response as a function of both context and participants (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998). Further, since this study of emergency response routines requires both a broad understanding of the work context in which emergency response occurs and an in-depth understanding of how emergency response is enacted in specific situations, the

methodology is anchored in a strategy that includes both ethnographic data collection and embedded case study analyses.

Data Collection

Following the guidelines of the conceptual frame, this study requires data illustrating the university organizational context, emergency response routines, and the routines' related characteristics (i.e., written protocols, shared understandings, and actions). Each of these types of data, however, is likely to be elicited through different sources. For instance, while protocols may be evidenced in procedural handbooks, actions are better ascertained through observations. Given the need for diverse types and sources of data, the overriding data collection strategy for this study is centered around organizational ethnography

Research Strategy: Ethnography

Ethnography is an anthropologically-derived research method that immerses a researcher in the lives and culture of a particular group over time (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). In ethnographic research, the role of the researcher often revolves around the notion of participant-observer, or a technique that allows the researcher to examine a group from a holistic and context-rich perspective (Stewart, 1998). The goal of a participant-observer is to locate herself within a group to experience their culture, everyday activities, and lifestyles.

Owing to its focus on context, ethnography has become a useful methodology for examining organizational processes and change dynamics (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Van de Ven & Huber, 1990) as well as subtleties that might otherwise go unnoticed with alternative methodologies (Neyland, 2008). Ethnography is also regarded as a strong

method for elaborating theory in organizational contexts (Snow, 1999; Van de Ven & Huber, 1990). Thus, organizational studies research on work routines is an area particularly benefited by this methodological approach (Barley, 1990, 1996).

When ethnography addresses an organizational setting, as opposed to other settings (e.g., a tribe, a neighborhood, or a town), it is referred to as *organizational ethnography.* Although an offshoot of traditional anthropological ethnography, this arm of ethnographic inquiry has evolved distinct characteristics of its own (Neyland, 2008; Rosen, 1991). For instance, while traditional ethnography examines groups that often have no particular goal, organizational ethnography focuses on groups brought together around a specific set of activities. Additionally, whereas traditional ethnography is designed to study cultures and geographies completely foreign to the researcher, organizational ethnography is designed to study people similar to the researcher in settings relatively familiar.

Another point of departure between traditional and organizational ethnography is the extent to which data collection efforts are premeditated. Traditional ethnography is generally considered to be an unstructured pursuit wherein the researcher does not set out with a strategy for data collection (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). However, because the organizational ethnographer must become intertwined in complex and widespread organizational activities, a research strategy is deemed critical for maintaining focus throughout a study (Neyland, 2008). That is not to say that researchers should adhere unilaterally to predetermined plans of action. The benefit of ethnography as a methodological strategy still lies in the natural setting and its ability to offer organic, and sometimes unforeseen, opportunities or insights. Rather, the researcher should set out

with a roadmap for action, but exercise flexibility toward activities while in the field (Neyland, 2008). Either way, an added benefit of following an ethnographic action plan is that it allows the research to progress with transparency. Such transparency increases objectivity by allowing for deliberations over whether the data collected is robust or reflect the research question (Stewart, 1998).

Ultimately, whether ethnographic methods are applied to traditional settings or to organizational, the goal of this technique is to illuminate the "truth" of a particular context (Rosen, 1991; Stewart, 1998). This aim contrasts positivistic methodologies that strive for reliability, validity, and generalizability as central goals of research. Yet, although positivistic goals are technically irrelevant in ethnography, ethnographic research design can benefit from being mindful of these principles (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Stewart, 1998).

Stewart (1998) offers an alternative set of criteria reinterpreting measures of reliability, validity, and generalizability for use in constructivist research (Table 2). One

Table 2. Comparison of Epistemic Values for Quantitative vs. Ethnographic Methodologies (Stewart, 1988).

	Methodological Tradition	
	Quantitative	*Ethnographic*
Epistemic Value	Validity *Does the study measure what it sets out to measure?*	Veracity *Have researchers observed what their findings claim?*
	Reliability *Are measurements unbiased, replicable, and stable?*	Objectivity *How well does this study transcend the perspectives of the researcher?*
	Generalizability *Are measurements applicable to populations beyond this study?*	Perspicacity *How fundamentally does this study explain?*

benefit to using such criteria is that these values can provide guidelines to help ethnographic researchers structure methodologically sound studies. Another benefit is that these values allow researchers across different methodological traditions to undertake meaningful dialogues about studies and their findings (Stewart, 1998).

Based on the premises of organizational ethnography outlined above and upon the practice of structuring a plan of action for data collection, this study has been designed to yield data relevant to the conceptual frame. In other words, the data collection strategy is structured to a) examine activities around emergency response routines in the context of a university setting; b) gather insights into their ostensive and performative characteristics; and c) collect information about the sensemaking in which administrators engage when enacting said routines. Following is a detailed account of the action plan related to this effort.

Site Selection

In qualitative inquiry, there is a tradeoff between the range of sites studied and the scope of analysis the research can achieve. While studying several sites provides a broader view of the dynamics being examined, studying fewer sites opens opportunities for analyzing dynamics in depth. Because ethnographic researchers aim for depth rather than breadth in their research, efforts are typically focused on a limited number of settings, often just one (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). An extension of this premise might be that, within larger organizations, ethnographers are also served by delimiting studies to the smallest level of analysis still meaningful to their research.

For instance in the case of emergency response, it is nearly impossible to observe the work routines of the university as a whole. As outlined in the introduction, most institutions are large, complex organizations comprised of many different subdivisions. Additionally, the types and nature of emergencies (and therefore emergency responses) vary widely across these subdivisions. There are only so many activities that an ethnographer can be privy to in such an expansive and diverse setting. Narrowing the parameters of the site (e.g., by division or department) allows the researcher added depth with regards to observing activities and analyzing contextually rich data. Accordingly, this study takes place in a single university setting. To further focus its efforts, the study hones in on the emergency response activities that take place in that university's Residential Life office.

The University

Owing to its focus on the organizational dynamics of American colleges and universities, this study takes place at one, urban, research university located in the southern region of the United States. The site was selected based on a number of practical and research-related considerations. First, as the university was in close proximity to the researcher, it allowed participation to take place more fully and consistently with regards to weekly observations of the setting. Second, based on its large size, urban location, and overall organizational complexity, the university was anticipated to produce frequent and diverse types of incidents over the course of the study. More frequent incidents, in turn, would offer abundant opportunities to encounter fully articulated cases of enacted emergency response routines. Finally, given that emergency response raises concerns of confidentiality for workers and students alongside issues regarding public relations, the

study required university administrators who were comfortable with the parameters of the study and with me, personally, as the on-site investigator. Therefore, the university was selected based on administrators' agreements to enter into a long-term research relationship that included access to potentially sensitive data.

The Office of Residential Life

This study is also delimited to examine one particular setting within university administration: the Office of Residential Life. Offices of Residential Life are departments found in many contemporary American institutions spanning liberal arts colleges to research universities. The primary function of such departments is to provide housing facilities and administrative support to students who live in on-campus facilities during their academic pursuits. However, in addition to landlord activities and maintenance of facilities, Offices of Residential Life have also evolved to provide a host of additional university services, including co-curricular and social programming, health and wellness education, counseling, advising, and emergency response (Schuh, 2004).

For the purpose of examining the dynamics of university emergency response through ethnographic methodologies and a work routines conceptual lens, the Residential Life setting is ideal for several reasons. First, having served as a Residential Life professional for 10 years, I knew such departments to engage in emergency response on a weekly, if not daily, basis. Therefore, conforming to the conceptual frame, emergency response could be considered more of a routine for Residential Life than it might be for other university departments. Further, in that emergency response is prevalent in the daily work of Residential Life, the setting promised ample opportunities to observe these routines in writing and in action.

Second, based on previous work experience in Residential Life, this setting allowed me the benefit of an insider's perspective for locating relevant data and for deliberating the relevancy of findings. Such a perspective is helpful when negotiating complex organizational settings with nuanced cultures and processes (Neyland, 2008) or interpreting the cultural artifacts and language of a given context (Rosen, 1991). Entering the field with an insider's perspective can also be a tool for increasing veracity such that the researcher can better discern whether she is observing what the study claims to examine (Stewart, 1998). Third, as has been evidenced by situations occurring at Virginia Tech and Eastern Michigan University, large-scale crises can easily stem from incidents first occurring within the Residential Life setting. Residential life departments are highly significant, yet under-researched in issues of emergency response.

Access, Rapport, and Trust

Gaining access is a critical aspect of ethnography and also one of the most challenging (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Neyland, 2008). Because participants must often be assured that they can trust the researcher's intentions and capacity for fairly depicting their daily lives, entrée into any culture takes particular consideration with regards to how and when introduction should occur (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002). Therefore, when embarking upon an ethnographic study, important decisions must be made about how to establish relationships, trust, and rapport. From entrée to data collection, trust and rapport are the foundation of ethnography (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002; Neyland, 2008). On the one hand, trusted researchers are more capable of eliciting high-quality data (Coffey, 1999; Rosen, 1991). Not only are they able to ask sensitive questions, but they also are privy to the candid perspective of organizational informants.

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On the other hand, rapport can enhance veracity by increasing opportunities for checks and balances on observations and findings (Stewart, 1998).

One trust-related decision ethnographers must make is whether deception will be used as a means of gaining entrée and engaging in study activities (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Related to this point, I knew at the onset of the study that incidents such as Laura Dickinson's murder at Eastern Michigan University and the Virginia Tech shootings were still fresh in the memories of Residential Life administrators. Based on cautions from professional colleagues, I was also aware that administrators were consequently sensitive to external judgments about emergency response procedures. To mediate related skepticism, I opted to present the research and my intentions with as much transparency as possible. Initial conversations with the participants revealed my background as a Residential Life professional and my openness to questions about the study. In addition to developing trust and rapport, these actions demonstrated my understanding of how to behave appropriately within the Residential Life culture (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002).

A second set of trust-related decisions involves demonstrating a two-way concern over ethical and practical considerations (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This was a particularly important point given the sensitive nature of examining emergency response routines. Although the staff allowed broad access to their daily work activities, certain activities and venues were deemed off limits due to complications around confidentiality and safety of potential participants. For instance, I decided not to shadow frontline responders during an actual emergency response. Likewise, because of legal concerns regarding confidentiality, I opted out of a set of

meetings designed to exchange details about recent and emerging student concerns. From a research standpoint, these activities would have provided an excellent window into emergency response activities on campus. However, from a relationship-building standpoint, such decisions were important in demonstrating professional scrutiny and reinforcing trust.

Timeline

Another important consideration in ethnographic research is the length of time the researcher will spend in the field. Just as insider experience can increase the likelihood that the researcher is observing what they claim to have been observing, so too can extended time in the field (Stewart, 1998). Extended time in the field allows the ethnographer to continually assess past data in light of new data and check the relationships that she has developed over time. In this way, it allows the researcher to develop thick descriptions of the setting and increase the reliability of the results (Neyland, 2008). For organizational ethnography, it is important to stay in the field at least long enough "to learn the subjects' rules for organizational life, to interact with them for a frequency and duration of time 'sufficient' to understand how and why they construct their social world as it is and explain it to others" (Rosen, 1991, p. 5). For this study, one academic year was deemed an appropriate timeline for understanding Residential Life work around emergency response.

The decision to observe a Residential Life office's emergency response procedures over the course of one academic year was predicated on an insider understanding of typical university and departmental calendars. At a broad level, Residential Life work cycles are based on the university academic calendar. Although

variations exist, the most common academic calendar includes two 15-week sessions often referred to as fall and spring semesters. The academic year typically begins in August of one year and ends the following May, although many of today's colleges and universities bridge academic years by offering an additional summer term, from May to August. Within the parameters of such a university calendar, Residential Life departments maintain a relatively consistent schedule of events from year to year. Table 3 provides a sample calendar for one work cycle of a typical Residential Life department.

Table 3. Sample Residential Life Calendar for One Full Work Cycle

Month	Academic Calendar	Residential Life Calendar
August	Summer/Fall Transition New Student Orientation	RA Training Residence Halls Open New Student Move-In Day Returning Students Move In
September October November December	Fall Semester	
	Winter Break	Health and Safety Inspections Residence Halls Close or Operate at Partial Capacity Graduating Students Move-Out
January February March April	Spring Semester	RAs Interviewed and Selected for Following Year RHCs Interviewed and Hired for Following Year
May	Spring/Summer Transition Commencement	Residence Halls Close Room Inspections Room Cleaning in Preparation for Summer Residents Student Move-Out or Transition to Different Residence Halls
June July	Summer Term	Summer Students Housed Summer Conferences RHC Training Building Maintenance

Following the academic calendar, one work cycle for a Residential Life department is based on fall semester and begins with preparations for the upcoming academic year. Related activities include staff selection, staff training, and residence hall opening. The same work cycle can be seen as ending one year later, after the department has closed the residence halls, assessed damages, cleaned rooms, and made repairs. Accordingly, this ethnography was designed to engage in one full Residential Life work cycle, August 2008 to August 2009.

To establish a consistent presence among the staff over the course of the 2008-2009 academic year, campus visits were made weekly to participate in meetings, attend events, collect artifacts, observe work in action, and interact informally with staff members. Whereas some activities were attended as time or opportunity allowed, a set of activities were deemed central to establishing myself as a regular presence amongst the staff. These included the entire two-week staff training in August, in-service staff training every other week, and weekly staff meetings throughout the year.

Visits to the data collection site were weighted more heavily toward fall semester and tapered off in the spring semester. During fall semester, the frequency of visits ranged from four to six days per week. An emphasis on early visits was necessary for initiating relationships, becoming familiar with the site, and integrating into the daily work lives of its participants. Early visits also allowed ample opportunities to develop trusting relationships through both formal and informal interactions. In the spring, visits ranged from one to three weekly. Decreasing the frequency of visits over the second half of the study was necessary so that emphasis could shift from data collection to data analysis and follow-up.

Data Sources

Also important in developing an ethnographic data collection strategy is anticipating the types of data necessary for elaborating the conceptual model and sources within the organization where these data might be found. Ethnography inherently involves data collection across a diverse range of sources (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Neyland, 2008). Such a range of information provides a more accurate picture of the site in question thereby increasing veracity (Stewart, 1998). Rosen (1991) guides ethnographers to collect data broadly, such that the researcher might see patterns or connections in data otherwise passed over.

At the onset, this study set out with a broad goal: to identify data sources for elaborating the context of Residential Life work and emergency response routines, the ostensive artifacts of those routines, and the performative actions involved. As was the case with establishing appropriate entrée and timelines for the study, past experience as a Residential Life administrator aided in identifying they types of data that would meet these ends and where to locate it within the Residential Life office being observed. However, respecting the fact that my past experiences may not anticipate context specific types and sources of data, early conversations with participants allowed on-site administrators to amend the list accordingly. A summary of these data sources can be found in Table 4 and is elaborated below.

Context, Culture, and Setting

The first set of data relevant to the study involves the context, culture, and setting of the Residential Life department and the university. Such data provide important tie-ins to understand the larger context in which emergency response routines take place. Over

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the course of ethnographic observations, related activities included touring the residence

halls, attending office and university events, and observing different types of staff

meetings throughout the year.

Table 4. Data Sources and Theoretical Foci

Data Collected	Theoretical Focus		
	Context	Ostensive	Performative
Documents and Artifacts			
RA Manual		X	
Desk Attendant Manual		X	
Student Handbooks		X	
Office Website		X	
Training Handouts		X	
Residence Hall Newsletters	X	X	
Residence Life Videos	X	X	
End-of-the-year reports		X	X
Weekly Staff Reports			X
Incident and Police Reports			X
Training Activities			
RA Training	X	X	
Bi-Monthly Staff In-Service Gatherings	X	X	
Meetings			
Weekly Central Staff Meetings	X	X	X
Weekly Residence Hall Coordinator Meetings	X	X	X
RA Staff Meetings	X	X	X
Division Meetings addressing Emergency Response	X	X	X
Key Events			
Residence Hall Opening	X		
Residence Hall Fire Drills			X
Weekend Overnight Stay in Residence Hall	X		X
Additional Activities			
Residence Hall Tours	X		
Programming Events in Residence Halls	X		
Statewide RA Conference	X		
President's State of the University Address	X		
Division of Student Affairs Programs	X		
Staff Social Events	X		
Interviews and Focus Groups with Staff Members	X	X	X

Ostensive Routines

The second set of data involves the ostensive characteristics of emergency response routines, both artifacts and shared understandings. With regards to artifacts, sources that encode an emergency response procedure employed by Residential Life staff were sought. These included staff training manuals and student handbooks, as well as policies posted on university websites. With regard to shared understandings, activities were observed wherein staff members shared, discussed, or reflected upon emergency response policies and procedures. These included staff training at the beginning of the year, ongoing staff in-services throughout the year, and weekly staff meetings.

Performative Routines

The final set of data involves the performative representations of emergency response routines, or how individuals actually enact protocols on-site and in context. Herein, taking into account both practical and ethical considerations related to data collection proved a particular challenge. Specifically, the staff, university, and the site's Institutional Review Board were concerned about issues of confidentiality and safety. The concerns revolved around observing students unknowingly, coming across incidents that involve legal issues or heightened confidentiality, and work-related risk associated with gathering sensitive performance information among supervisors and supervisees. Understanding the nature of Residential Life emergencies, I too had anticipated these problems and was concerned about preserving the well-being of the university's employees and student community.

Therefore, a negotiation was reached related to ongoing observations. Generally, I agreed not to directly shadow staff members as they responded to emergencies on-site.

However, the staff agreed to follow-up on specific incidents with me soon after a relevant response occurred. A semi-structured interview protocol was developed for instances where a follow-up interview or focus group was appropriate. In other instances, data were gathered through observations of staff meetings and office discussions related to particular incidents. In addition to these primary sources, the staff allowed me to review their weekly reports, incident reports, and police reports designed to record and recount the actions taken in response to different events.

Record Keeping

In ethnographic studies, the documenting of data is as important a task as observing context, participating in activities, and speaking with participants (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Van Maanen, 1988). For this study, different methods of documentation were employed for different types of data. In addition, various documents were collected through the course of the year. These are outlined below. Ultimately, however, all materials were transformed into electronic format and analyzed using the qualitative coding software program, NVivo 8.

Documents and Artifacts

Documents such as student handbooks and staff manuals were collected as electronic files when available. Otherwise, hard copies of all paper documents were collected, scanned, and transformed into electronic format. In the case of websites, NVivo 8 has the capability to link directly to the site. Therefore, the link to the website was entered into the NVivo 8 sources file. All videos were captured either via a website or an electronic file, and were downloaded similarly into the NVivo 8 sources file.

Training Activities, Meetings, Key Events, and Additional Activities

Because people may describe their views differently than they carry them out, analyzing speech-in-action can help to enhance veracity (Stewart, 1998). Therefore, in addition to observations, reports, and informal interactions, proceedings of training and weekly meetings were captured by taking minutes. For a majority of training activities and meetings, I observed events naturally occurring in their regular work context. In most cases, administrators permitted me to sit in the room with a laptop computer and collect data by recording minutes of the proceedings. During breaks, I annotated the minutes with field notes to describe the context, make additional observations, note potential data sources, and raise potentially relevant questions for future scrutiny. In some cases the Director and/or Assistant Director of Residential Life asked that direct transcriptions not be created. In instances where the laptop was inappropriate or not available, I waited until after the event to create field notes. Within 24 hours, I recorded both my account of the events and related reflections, paying careful attention to not include particularly sensitive information.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Two semi-structured interview protocols were developed for facilitating introductory meetings with staff members (Appendix A) and follow-up interviews or protocols about specific emergency events (Appendix B). Throughout the study, 18 semi-structured interviews or focus groups were conducted with administrators about their roles in emergency response and following up on particular incidents. Formal consent was obtained for these interviews, which were audio-recorded. Throughout the study, opportunities to engage in unstructured interviews and/or focus groups also presented themselves. In these cases, verbal consent was acquired from the participants. For

situations where pen and paper were available, hand-written notes were taken during the interview and then later elaborated into field notes. In cases where handwritten notes were not possible, I recorded my account of the interview and related reflections within 24 hours.

Periodic Reflections

At various points throughout the study, I was compelled to record personal reflections about the status of the research, questions arising during the study, sources of data, and future research strategies. These were developed into field notes and included in the data.

Data Analysis

As a data collection strategy, ethnography provides an appropriate means of gathering a diverse range of artifacts, observations, and perspectives related to Residential Life work and corresponding emergency response activities. However, it provides little direction for analyzing the data in light of the research goals and conceptual model. Alongside an action plan for data collection, therefore, ethnography is enhanced by incorporating a strategy for data analysis. Not only does such a plan make the processes of organizing data, coding data, and interpreting findings more manageable, it enhances perspicacity, or the level to which the data fundamentally explains the question at hand (Stewart, 1998).

Labeling, Organizing, and Coding Ethnographic Data

The analytical plan for this study began with the task of labeling and organizing the expansive ethnographic data using coding methods related to grounded theory (Strauss, 1987). First, open coding labeled data with regards to the type of insight they

offered (i.e., either the Residential Life work context or the nature of Residential Life emergency response). Next, axial coding separated data into one of these two categories and delineated higher level themes as to the insights each portrayed about Residential Life work context or emergency response.

For instance, regarding the Residential Life work context, axial coding collected data into themes referencing issues such as staff structure and demographics, professional attributes, professional culture, professional values, professional skills, work tasks and responsibilities, work schedules, workplace settings, and workplace rewards. Likewise, regarding Residential Life emergency response, axial coding collected data into themes referencing the nature of Residential Life emergencies, emergency preparation, characteristics of emergency responders, policies and procedures, shared understandings, examples of enacted emergency response, and common challenges found in Residential Life emergency response. These themes and their data, in turn, became the basis for depicting the Residential Life work context and emergency landscape outlined in Chapters 4 and 5.

Theoretical Sampling to Identify Embedded Case Studies

The analytical plan continued by drilling down into the ethnographic data for specific examples of emergency response. This step was taken to correct a potential deficit involved in using ethnography to study organizational work routines. As discussed, ethnographic methods are particularly strong for constructing a holistic picture of an organizational context and its processes. Accordingly, these depictions are certain to enhance higher education's broad understanding of Residential Life and emergency response work routines. However, such a sweeping approach could also unintentionally

wash over details pertinent to understanding emergency response routines in light of the conceptual model. Opportunities could be missed altogether for gaining deeper insight about the micro-level dynamics of sensemaking as triggers for change in emergency response routines.

To examine a particular question such as this, ethnographers often expand their analysis by sampling within cases (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007), or employing a technique known as theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling calls upon the researcher to identify several cases of one phenomenon occurring under different circumstances in order to compare and contrast elements of the theoretical construct under different conditions (Johnson, 2004). Therefore, theoretical sampling was employed to identify specific instances of emergency response, or a subset of embedded case studies.

The case study is an in-depth examination of a phenomena bound in some way by setting, time, or activity (Stake, 1995). The strength of case study as an analytical technique is especially relevant to this study owing to its central concepts of emergency response, work routines, and sensemaking in the university setting. First, case study techniques are particularly robust for studying phenomena deeply situated in context (Vaughan, 1992; Yin, 1981a). Work routines, emergency response, and sensemaking are all dynamics strongly related to the context of the site being studied. Second, case studies allow the researcher to examine phenomena across levels of analysis (Vaughan, 1992). Involving dynamics ranging from micro-level work to macro-level sensemaking, analysis of change in work routines requires such a capacity.

Third, case studies allow the researcher to elaborate complexities without constraints on the number of variables that must be accounted for in the model (Harding,

Fox, & Mehta, 2002). Emergency response in the context of universities inherently

entails complex organizational structures and concepts. Finally, although scholars

increasingly defend case studies as means of analyzing causal arguments (Gerring, 2006;

Lieberson, 1992; Steinmetz, 2003), traditionally case studies have been seen as best

addressing explanation, exploration, or description (Yin, 1981b). Rather than suggesting

causal relationships or testing models, this study endeavors to elaborate new vocabularies

and conceptual frames for future research.

Thus, distinct instances of emergency response were elicited from the axial code

reflecting examples of enacted emergency response. Each of these examples conveyed a

self contained story about an emergency that unfolded in or around 2008-2009 and the

Residential Life's corresponding response. Via selective coding, these stories represented

a set of performative routines. For each performative routine, selective coding also mined

data from the policies and procedures theme to represent corresponding ostensive

routines. Combined, the ostensive and performative provided the data necessary for

analyzing specific instances of emergency response routines in accordance with the

conceptual frame. The criteria used for selecting these cases are outlined at the end of

Chapter 5.

Mapping and Coding Case Studies based on the Conceptual Frame

The next phase of the analytical plan involved applying the conceptual frame to

individual cases. Once the cases were selected for further analysis, the data related to

each were exported into a separate NVivo 8 file. Subsequently, each case underwent

further analysis involving: a) mapping the ostensive and performative routines for a

particular case of emergency response; b) locating deliberations about discrepancies

between the two; and c) using selective coding techniques (Strauss, 1987) within the cases to examine the sensemaking triggers causing such deliberations. This mapping and analysis approach is carried out in Chapters 6-9 of the dissertation across four case studies. The detailed steps involved in this process, however, are elaborated below.

Step 1: Labeling

First, open coding techniques were used as a means of labeling data as they related to contextual or conceptual issues. Open coding is an emergent process wherein the researcher draws upon the data to identify relevant themes (Strauss, 1987). With regard to context, the goal was to identify characteristics that might provide rich illustrations of Residential Life work at different levels of analysis: the university setting, the division, and the nature of Student Affairs work. Although all types of work routines were coded, special attention was focused on labeling data related to emergency response routines, in particular. With regards to the conceptual frame, open coding identified which type of routine specific data represented (e.g., suicide response, altercation), whether that data was indicative of a routine's ostensive or performative characteristics, and whether it represented a particular case of emergency response.

Step 2: Organizing Data and Identifying Case Studies

Second, axial coding techniques were used as a means of further developing the contextual and conceptual analysis. Axial coding reorganizes the themes derived from open coding into a higher level of meaningful categories (Strauss, 1987). To elaborate the Residential Life work context, themes were regrouped into emergent categories depicting organizational characteristics such as roles, values, and responsibilities. To elaborate emergency response routines, open codes were reorganized into groups based on specific

emergency response routines. Therefore, each group represented all ostensive and performative examples of a particular routine. In essence, the goal was to identify a smaller collection of cases for which ostensive and performative data were available. After reviewing the resulting cases, four were selected for further analysis. Cases were selected based on how they represented an emergency response undertaken by the Residential Life staff in or around the time of the study. They were also selected based on demonstrating more than one perspective of response. Whether or not a change had actually occurred in the routine was not as much a factor as whether the deliberation process over that decision was evident.

Step 3: Individual Case Study Analyses

Third, each of the four cases was analyzed separately using a stepwise process of mapping related ostensive and performative routines, comparing the two maps, and employing selective coding to hone in on the involved sensemaking dynamics:

1) The written protocols and shared understandings were collected for the emergency response routine in question.

2) The ostensive emergency response routine was mapped by placing the step-by-step procedures from the written protocol and shared understandings in sequence. Even though the two were mapped together as one routine, the map distinguished written protocols from shared protocols so that observations could be made later in the study.

3) Based on the narrative provided by the case study, the step-by-step procedures taken to enact the emergency response were identified.

4)   The performative emergency response routine was mapped by placing the enacted step-by-step procedures in sequence.

5)   The ostensive and performative maps were compared and attempts were made to line up similar steps across the routines.

6)   Steps in the protocol were marked as occasions for change when discrepancies existed between ostensive and performative routines or where the lack of discrepancy between the two routines appeared to be significant.

7)   For each of these occasions, the case study narrative was referenced for evidence suggesting why changes (or the lack thereof) took place.

8)   Based on Table 1, selective coding was employed to identify the sensemaking dynamic(s) responsible for triggering change in the emergency response routine. .

Comparative Case Study Analysis

Next, results of individual case study analyses were compared across the set of case studies to identify dominant patterns. Even though a single case study can be useful, in and of itself, research results can be enriched by comparing results across case studies. Gerring (2004) suggests that all case studies have an element of comparison built in, even single case-studies. He reflects that researchers examining an organization at one point in time or state of being do so with an unstated comparison (e.g., of the same organization in the past or the ideal) in mind. However, where possible, it is instructive to intentionally build within-case comparison into the research design. Not only does within-case comparison provide added levels of structure and validity to a study, it also addresses concerns researchers have about studying emergency situations, namely the potential to

draw biased conclusions from studying only one event or extreme dynamics (March, Sproull, & Tamuz, 1991). Results from the comparative case studies are detailed in the discussion found in Chapter 10.

Data Checks

Finally, the analytical plan incorporated means of data checks. Insider and outsider checks on data aid in the objectivity of a study by providing opportunities to confirm or disconfirm interpretation of events (Stewart, 1999). To strengthen the study in this regard, observations were regularly shared with an on-site Principal Investigator and with the participants. In addition, the on-site Principal Investigator, study participants, and a professional colleague have reviewed and provided feedback on the results.

Writing and Writing Style

A primary trade-off encountered in ethnographic research is that of providing quick versus thick description. Although it is more expedient to provide quick description from organizational ethnographic research, true ethnographies involve efforts toward detailed and thick description (Neyland, 2008). Further, because the process of writing ethnography is as important as the methodology used to carry it out, selecting a writing style is an important decision. Not only does it represent the work, but the findings and conclusions may be further realized through the writing process (Neyland, 2008; Rosen, 1991).

Based on these considerations, two voices were blended in the writing of this study, impressionistic and realistic (Van Maanen, 1988). The impressionistic voice allows the researcher to incorporate his or her own experiences into the depiction of the fieldwork site, thereby bringing the reader into the setting, culture, and context of the

overall experience. In contrast, the realistic voice takes the researcher out of the narrative, focusing more on a matter-of-fact depiction of the fieldwork site and experience. The former was selected for the beginning of Chapter 5 as a means of introducing the reader into the setting. The latter voice was selected thereafter as a means of presenting data in a more traditional research format.

Limitations

In addition to the specific limitations addressed throughout the methodological design, there are other more general limitations to consider when scrutinizing this study. First, ethnographers often situate themselves within a setting for long periods of time, extending often beyond a year. Comparatively, owing to time constraints, this study has been developed for a relatively short period of time (i.e., one academic year). At the same time that this window of time might capture some dynamics and processes of change, it may miss other important factors for understanding triggers for change. Second, given a climate in which administrators have a heightened sense of concern over the misinterpretation of actions, work repercussions, or negative public relations, the possibility exists that participants habitually represent emergency response differently to outsiders than to insiders. Finally, in ethnographic studies, there is an inherent tradeoff between depth and breadth. Whereas studying one research provides rich insight into the triggers for change relevant to that school and that department, the resulting model may not be representative of other departments, institutions, or other types of organizations.

CHAPTER 4

Organizational Contexts

According to the conceptual frame, emergency response routines are functions of the context in which they are enacted and the people who enact them. Therefore, in order to understand why and how emergency response routines change, we must first understand the cultural norms that shape them. Chapter 4 presents ethnographic findings depicting Residential Life work at Traditional University East (TUE), an urban research institution in the southern region of the United States. The chapter begins by bringing the reader along on a trip to Eastcity, TUE's hometown. It continues by sequentially drilling down levels of analysis (i.e., the university, Division of Student Affairs, and Office of Residential Life) to provide a broad overview of the philosophies, personnel, expectations, responsibilities, and practices that cause the need for emergency response in the first place and shape its ostensive-performative characteristics.

Driving to Eastcity

When considering which colleges to attend, students in the southern state where this study takes place have a handful of options with regards to public universities. Two of the larger schools often found on their lists are Tradition University (TU) and its satellite campus, Tradition University East (TUE). Whether students select TU or TUE is

a matter of taste. Although only an hour apart off of a busy highway traversing the state, the two could not present more contrasting environments in which to study, learn, and engage in community life. While TU boasts a sprawling, old, tree-lined campus known for its long-held traditions of sororities, fraternities and football; TUE bustles as a contemporary campus interwoven with urban business, industry, the surrounding neighborhoods, and a large teaching hospital that bears its name.

A drive across the east-west corridor only punctuates these differences. For 45 minutes between TU and TUE on the highway, drivers mostly encounter green woods, farmed fields, and the occasional truck rest stop. In one direction, on Fridays preceding home football games at TU, pilgrimages of trailers, SUVs, and cars fill the highway - each decked out with painted windshields, streamers, and flapping plastic window flags. In tow on their own set of wheels are the smokers in which barbecue and pulled pork will be smoked for up to 24 hours preceding game time. BBQ is a time-honored tradition and a source of pride in the south, the centerpiece of the southern social gatherings and family reunions that comprise pre-football tailgating at TU.

In the opposite direction (both literally and figuratively), cars speed along, weaving in and out of traffic as they make their way to Eastcity, home of TUE. Closer to the city limits, the forested landscape gives way to signs of business and industry. Over the treetops, increasing numbers of stores, auto dealers, factory smokestacks, and corrugated metal warehouses are visible. Rather than ushering families to football games and tailgate parties, the city exits lead drivers to the outlet mall, gas stations, city neighborhoods, and a Home Depot. At an exit just at the outskirts of Eastcity, a police officer writes a speeding ticket on the side of the road, there is construction on the

overhead power lines, and a homicide investigation is taking place. Such activities foreshadow the buzz of events students can expect to encounter at a university in the middle of an urban center,

TUE's buildings are visible just after this exit, set against the backdrop of the Eastcity skyline. Considerably smaller than Chicago or New York, Eastcity still has the distinctive profile of an urban center. In the distance, The Mountain creates a wall separating the south side of the city from its affluent suburbs. Metal television and radio towers with blinking lights rise above the trees and buildings on The Mountain. To TUE administrators, these towers are somewhat foreboding, a reminder that news reporters are ever perched above the campus, watching. The reporters have been known to monitor Eastcity's police scanners, waiting for signs of an university emergency in hopes of finding a good leading story for the nightly news or an engaging "sweeps week" exposé on college safety.

Tradition University East (TUE)

At the TUE exit from the highway, a maze of ramps drops visitors into an industrial neighborhood marked by fenced-in and barbed wired parking lots, warehouses, overgrown weeds, and gas stations. After a few stoplights, a beat-up green sign promises that the university is nearby, although you have to look close to notice. Most of the letters are worn off the sign and it passes rather quickly if you do not know to reference it.

The city surroundings are more than a passive setting in which TUE operates; Eastcity is part of TUE's institutional identity and mission. In the annual State of the University address, the President describes TUE's trademarks as "urbanicity, diversity, and modernity." Offering connections to Eastcity's business, healthcare, industry,

educational systems, and communities, TUE attracts an enrollment of over 15,000 students interested in related academic and professional pursuits. Mirroring the city's demographics, TUE also educates more students of color and international students than the average university.

Although integrated into the urban landscape of Eastcity, TUE's administrators have made great efforts to differentiate city from university through its architecture and landscaping. The efforts are evident when making the transition from the outskirts of campus to the center. Square plots of newly sodden grass and manicured flower beds increasingly line the fronts of buildings to present a more inviting appearance than the barbed-wire fences a few blocks back.

This landscaping softens the look of the older university facilities which look like 1970s office buildings. The stark linear design of brick or concrete and narrow windows (uniformly either horizontally or vertically arranged) memorialize the era in which TUE was founded. Following the student uprisings of the 1960s and the need for assistance from forces such as the National Guard, buildings erected in the following decade on campuses throughout the country referenced fortress-like design. The landscaping also draws attention to the architecture of TUE's newer buildings: Warm, red-brick buildings with large, contemporary, tinted windows.

Outside, TUE banners darting out from the sides of old-fashioned looking lampposts evidence TUE's main street, or The Boulevard (Figure 6). Running the length of campus for several city blocks, The Boulevard is a large avenue with two lanes of traffic buzzing by in each direction. Here, five minutes before the top of any hour, droves of students wait to cross street, weaving in and out of cars. Although many of the

university hospital, office, and academic buildings line this boulevard, the campus stretches back for several blocks in both directions.

Of particular note is a large lawn known as The Square, an expanse of grass with a geometrically arranged set of walking paths set inside (Figure 6). The entry to the Square on The Boulevard side is flanked with two of the aforementioned newer buildings, the student sports complex and an academic building. Along its perimeter are the residence halls, student dining center, and other academic buildings. This is the footprint for activities related to TUE's Division of Student Affairs generally, and the Department of Residential Life more specifically.
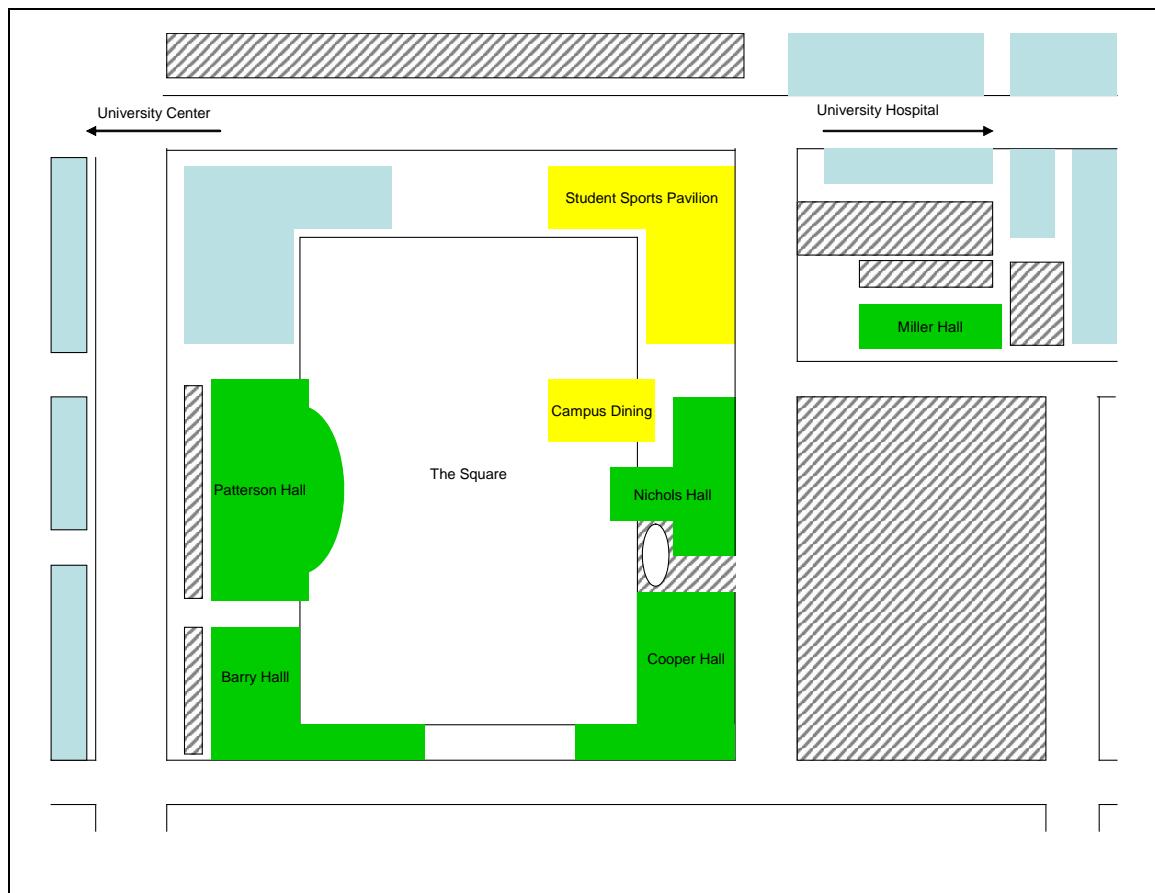
Figure 6. Residential Life Inset of TUE's Campus Map.

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The Division of Student Affairs

The university is a complex organization comprised of multiple divisions, offices, and departments. To understand Residential Life work and activities, it is first important to locate its place within the university organizational structure. Not only does such an understanding serve an important function in clarifying the organizational actors involved in Residential Life emergency response at the institution, but later in the study it will also provide a clearer view of how channels of communication for emergency response operate within the university context. TUE's organizational chart is helpful in this regard, mapping both the horizontal and vertical hierarchical relationships within Residential Life and the ties that the Residential Life office has to other university departments and campus administrators (Figure 7).

The Residential Life Department falls under the umbrella of the Division of Student Affairs. The Division of Student Affairs reports directly to the President of the University and is considered among the university's primary functions along with academic affairs, research, university hospitals, information technology, and business. Under the leadership of TUE's Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Steve Taylor, the stated mission of the division is to "create an environment that enables student learning by providing opportunities for all students to optimize their educational experience and maximize their holistic development." To carry out this mission, the Division provides student services related to enrollment management (e.g., admissions, orientation, retention), student life (e.g., non-academic judicial affairs, counseling services, campus ministries), and operations (e.g., campus bookstore, student center).

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                          ┌──────────────────────┐
                          │  President's Office   │
                          └──────────────────────┘
                          ┌──────────────────────┐
  Provost, Research,      │ Division of Student   │   Hospitals,Technology,
  Business                │ Affairs               │   Diversity
                          │ Vice President for     │
                          │ Student Affairs        │
                          │ Dr. Steve Taylor       │
                          └──────────────────────┘
                          ┌──────────────────────┐
  Enrollment Management   │ Student Affairs        │   Student Life
                          │ Operations             │
                          │ Assistant VP for       │
                          │ Student Affairs        │
                          │ Kevin                  │
                          └──────────────────────┘
                          ┌──────────────────────┐
  Campus Bookstore        │ Office of Residential  │   Student Center
                          │ Life                   │
                          │ Director               │
                          │ Hank                   │
                          └──────────────────────┘
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Facilities	Residential Life	Housing
Assistant Director (AD)	Assistant Director (AD)	Assistant Director (AD)
Ken	Emma	Tina

Residence Hall Coordinators (RHCs)

Patterson Hall	Miller Hall	Nichols Hall	Cooper Hall	Barry Hall
Natalie	Stu	J.B.	Liz	Andre

Resident Assistants (RAs) and Desk Attendants (DAs)

15 RAs	5 RAs	30 RAs	10 RAs	15 RAs
20 RAs	20 DAs	40 DAs	20 DAs	20 DAs

Figure 7. *The Arm of TUE's Organizational Chart Encompassing the Division of Student Affairs and Office of Residential Life.*

At TUE, Residential Life is administered from the Operations arm of the Student Affairs Division, placing it alongside other facilities-centered administrative tasks such as running the campus bookstore. Assistant Vice President for Operations, Kevin, shares that this arrangement can be explained by the institution's history as a commuter campus. Originally intended to supplement the more traditional, residential offerings of TU, TUE's residential facilities were never initially envisioned as "residence halls;" only as temporary quarters for professional school students who wanted the convenience of living close to campus.

Today's notion of "residence hall" living at TUE is tied to a strategic goal set by its Board of Trustees over the past decade. In order to support the growth of the university and expansion of its academic offerings, TUE's leaders deemed it necessary to focus institutional resources toward improving the undergraduate experience. To do so, the university committed to developing a housing operation that no longer simply provided facilities for eating and sleeping, but offered programmatic, developmental, and social experiences intended to supplement in-class learning. Given such a goal, leaders saw a Residential Life approach to housing as:

> A way to connect a group of students to TUE very early on and to make them feel like they are part of the university…it's very easy for those students who live over The Mountain or in those surrounding communities, to come in, go to their classes, get back in their cars, go to their part-time job, come back to another class, get in their cars and go back home and never feel any real connection to the university and maybe not even a connection to the department that they're majoring in. But I feel like, with two thousand students living in housing, we can make a better pitch for a connection to the university, for a legacy to build in the university, to get them involved in what we do here and to care about what we do here.

Yet, even though the university sees both practical and developmental rationales for expanding TUE's commitment to Residential Life, the tradition of treating Residential Life as a managed set of facilities remains unchanged in the organizational chart today.

The Department of Residential Life

The Department of Residential Life is simultaneously a set of residential buildings and a university department charged with the functioning of those facilities. Although clustered on one end of campus (Figure 6), Residential Life operates out of five separate high-rise buildings (Nichols, Patterson, Cooper, Barry, and Miller). The closest residence halls in proximity to one another, Nichols and Cooper, share a small parking and drop-off area known as The Circle (Figure 6). The halls furthest from one another

(Miller and Barry) are about a 10 minute walk apart. The buildings range in age from about 30 years to only three years old. Even though some were built more recently than others, they are all patterned after a similar design: Sprawling, five to nine story, red brick facilities, with the TUE logo and the name of the residence hall displayed in large, white letters on the face of the building most visible to approaching cars. Each building houses anywhere from 200 to 600 residents, for a total occupancy of about 2100 students.

Three Functions of Residential Life Facilities

The primary function of the five buildings is to serve as residence halls to enrolled students who opt to live on-campus while pursuing their studies. From a practical perspective, then, the buildings are large apartment complexes with shared laundry rooms and banks of numbered mailboxes in the lobbies. Most of the buildings offer suite-style accommodations, wherein one suite includes two bedrooms, a common area, a bathroom, and a kitchenette. Younger students are usually assigned to a suite in groups of four, such that two students share each of the bedrooms. Older students can request suites designed to accommodate four or two. There are a handful of single rooms available on campus, often saved for upper-level undergraduate and graduate students.

Although students and staff are generally accustomed to the university's urban setting, the staff does not take for granted the potentially narrow boundaries between the two. Concerned for student safety, all of the outside glass doors of the residence halls are locked down. Further, students must swipe specially programmed campus ID cards at the front entrance to gain access. Herded through the lobby to enter the building, all students are greeted by a front desk and a Desk Attendant. Ideally, the Desk Attendant ensures that only registered residence hall residents are entering the building and going up into

student rooms. However, guests and outsiders always seem to slip by unchallenged. All other building exits are locked down with fire alarm bars. When students leave through these doors, an alarm sounds. Therefore, in-theory, there are many ways to exit the building quickly in the case of an emergency, but only one way to officially enter.

A secondary function of the residence hall facilities is to provide students with opportunities that support academic, personal, and social growth. As introduced above, the focus on student development is an important distinction between the role of TUE's Residential Life in the past and the present. One staff member commented, "They define dorm as a place where people just live—they eat, sleep, you know, whatever—and we have a residence hall which is supposed to imply that it's a living/learning experience." I was not surprised to hear a similar theme from across Student Affairs and Residential Life administrators. Since my introduction to Residential Life work over ten years ago, the "dorm" versus "residence hall" mantra has become a important distinction shared profession-wide. Its lesson is ingrained into new paraprofessionals and professionals in graduate preparation programs and job training activities. In some circles, it would be considered sacrilege to describe Residential Life's mission as anything but student development centered.

A third function of the residence hall facilities is to house offices for the personnel directly overseeing each building's operations. Offices for the building manager and the maintenance crew can often be found on the first floor of the buildings. In some cases, these offices are located directly at the entrance, easily distinguishable as the administrative arm of the building. In other cases, the offices are tucked away among resident, study, and computer rooms. Although some of the offices are stand-alone spaces

allocated specifically for work, other offices connect directly to the apartments where the building managers reside.

The Residential Life Staff at TUE

As will be described later in this section, Residential Life work involves a wide range of tasks. To oversee the varied Residential Life activities, the upper-level administrators rely upon the efforts of both career professionals and student employees (Figure 7). At the head of the Residential Life Department sits the Director of Residential Life, Hank. Serving as a liaison to upper-level administrators and the campus community, Hank is responsible for administering all facets of Residential Life operations, including emergency response. He sees his main role as "overseeing and facilitating…making sure things are getting done...initiating projects that need to happen." These projects often fall into one of three areas representing the pillars of Residential Life operations: facilities, housing, and residential life.

To oversee different facets of Residential Life operations, Hank directly supervises three Assistant Directors (ADs). The AD for Facilities is responsible for the physical plant of TUE's housing operations, including both the residence halls and the grounds surrounding them. All tasks related to the renovation, maintenance, and upkeep of Residential Life property fall under the purview of the Facilities AD, along with facility-related safety. A second AD, Tina, is assigned to manage the housing responsibilities of the Residential Life operation, or functions related to leasing rooms, billing, staffing the office, managing student data, and maintaining contracts with external vendors. A final AD, Emma, oversees issues related to student interactions, staff leadership development, and social/educational programmatic efforts. Whereas the other

two AD positions are oriented toward operations and business matters, respectively, the Residential Life AD is oriented toward counseling, education, and leadership development.

Just as the Office of Residential Life is an organization unto itself under the larger umbrella of the Student Affairs Division, so too are the residence halls under the larger umbrella of Residential Life. Housing populations of 100-500 students each, the residence halls require on-site building managers. These building managers are known as the Residence Hall Coordinators (RHCs). Broadly, RHCs carry out all of the responsibilities outlined by the three subdivisions of Residential Life (i.e., facilities, housing, and residential life). However, rather than performing related tasks at the office level, each RHC is responsible for administering these tasks for his or her respective building.

Supervised by the RHCs, each building also has a staff of 5-30 Resident Assistants (RAs). The number of RAs assigned per building is based upon on the size of the residence hall population. At TUE, the RAs represent a range of class levels, from sophomore to graduate student. Not professional staff members, RAs are students who have applied to hold the position as a campus job. In many cases, students apply for RA positions because they want to develop leadership, interpersonal communication, counseling, advising, mentoring, and other helping skills. Although, several will secretly admit that the housing and meal plan benefits were the main attractions of the job.

RAs are hired for one-year terms. If their job evaluations prove satisfactory, they are permitted to reapply from year to year for as long as they are registered students at the university. The RAs serve a variety of functions in their residence hall communities. One

RA explained that, as an RA, "You are there to help in any way, shape, or fashion that is required. That can include answering questions, getting up early to let a locked-out student back in the room, handling roommate conflicts, or just about anything." Often, being a helper means that RAs are at the frontline for gathering information about their residents, assessing their communities for potential threats, conversing with students about emerging problems, reporting potential issues to the professional staff, and being on the scene when emergencies present themselves.

The final members of the Residential Life staff are the Desk Attendants. Since their role in emergency response is less consistent than other Residential Life staff members, discussions about their positions will be limited. However, it is important to know that, stationed at a front desk in the lobby of each residence hall, the Desk Attendants serve as security monitors, information resources, and receptionists 24 hours a day. In some cases, Desk Attendants are full-time employees of the university. In other cases, the Desk Attendants are work study students hired to fill in the remaining hours. As part of their job expectations, RAs are required to fill a certain amount of Desk Attendant hours every week. In terms of emergency response, the Desk Attendants play an important, but limited, role. If they become aware of a situation requiring attention, they are to immediately contact an appropriate Residential Life staff member and/or 911. Additionally, they add a level of support by serving as a communications hub and managing crowd control when an incident is taking place in their buildings.

Philosophy of Residential Life Work

Residential Life work is premised on a particular set of philosophies that regard on-campus living as a value-added resource for university students. On the first page of

the RA manual, the vision and mission statements for the Office of Residential Life at

TUE read:

> Our Vision: TUE Student Housing and Residential Life supports the university's commitment to the development of a positive living and learning environment by working together to promote the total success of our students through social interaction, academic support and personal growth and responsibility.

> Our Mission: To provide a student-focused, safe, and clean on-campus living environment where residents can realize academic and personal goals.

Combined, the vision and mission statements reflect values espoused by TUE's

Residential Life office. Moreover, these statements suggest a range of activities the office

must undertake to reach such goals. On the one hand, these activities involve resources

related to social interaction, academic success, and personal growth. On the other hand,

the activities call for the oversight of safety, physical plant, administrative, staffing, and

management. At TUE, as at many other institutions, the former set of responsibilities falls

under the moniker of "Residential Life" and the latter under "housing." Hank explains:

> Within housing, I see budgets, marketing, process, assignments, paying bills, interacting with other departments, those kinds of more global things. Residence Life is its own animal and entity within housing that is designed to deal more with student development.

Philosophically, student development refers to the activities offered by

universities to support the personal, social, and academic growth of its students. In some

cases, these activities are designed to have a direct relationship with faculty and in-

classroom efforts. In other cases, student development activities are designed to

encourage learning, growth, and development outside of the classroom. Although their

goals compliment one another, Residential Life and housing functions are often

delineated into separate offices. At TUE, both of these functions are located in the same

office.

Residential Life Work Responsibilities and Tasks

Given the focus of this study, it is instructive to note that emergency response is neither the primary goal of Residential Life nor even an explicit aim. Rather, emergency response is an activity that helps promote other philosophical goals, such as maintaining a safe environment and looking after students' overall development. The profile of work in Residential Life offices spans a wide range of tasks and responsibilities extending beyond emergency response. Understanding this profile is the key to understanding both the types of incidents in which the Residential Life staff becomes involved and the organizational characteristics that drive emergency response therein.

Noted above, TUE's Residential Life Office can be divided into three large subcategories: facilities, housing, and residential life. The facilities area captures any tasks and responsibilities related to the upkeep, maintenance, safety, and renovation of Residential Life buildings and grounds. Housing covers all of the functions involved in leasing rooms, billing, staffing the office, managing student data, and maintaining contracts with external vendors. Residential life spans a wide range of responsibilities from student education and programming efforts to staff training and leadership development. Yet, however neat and tidy these divisions seem on-paper, they are not so in actuality.

In order to carry out any of the primary tasks outlined above, the staff must also accomplish a variety of secondary tasks. For instance, in order to provide events to fulfill the programming mission of the office, the Residential Life staff must engage in communication. Likewise, in order to funnel questions, concerns, and problems to the appropriate administrator, staff members must correctly complete and route various types

of paperwork. These secondary tasks take on a life of their own, becoming as much a part of the formal work landscape as do primary tasks. As a result, any list of Residential Life work seems broad and diffuse. Aside from the emergency response responsibilities on which this study is focused, the data from TUE revealed 16 different categories of responsibilities involved in regular Residential Life work (Table 5).

This work takes place on three different levels of analysis: the office, the residence hall, and the floor. In keeping with the structure of the organizational chart, the office level includes activities undertaken by the Central Staff, or the Director and Assistant Directors of Residence Life. One step down, the residence hall level involves the activities involved in RHC work. One RHC is assigned to each building. Still one step lower, the floor level references activities in which the RAs engage. RAs are assigned either to an entire residence hall floor or a section of that floor. Those assignments, however, are based on the floor's overall population. Ideally, one RA is assigned to an average of every 20 residents (although this ratio varies from building to building).

At the office level of analysis, it is easy to divide responsibilities by the operations, housing, and residential life categories such that individual staff members assigned to each area can focus his or her efforts accordingly. At the residence hall level, however, RHCs must cover all three areas for their assigned buildings. In addition, RHCs are responsible for facilitating communications, concerns, and paperwork to the ADs and the Director in the central office. Similarly, RAs must cover all three areas for their assigned residents at the floor level of analysis, again funneling communications, concerns, and paperwork to their RHC supervisors. Essentially, the lower one's position

Table 5. Overview of Residential Life Tasks Other than Emergency Response

n	Task Category	Responsibilities
175	Programming	Events Planning, Events Setup, Facilitation, Bulletin Boards, Community Building, Fundraising
165	Housing	Housing Paperwork, Housing Assignments, Move-In Move Out, Leasing, Cable TV, Ancillary Uses for Halls
158	Human Resources	Compensation, Dress Code, Payroll, Scheduling, Staff Evaluation, Staff Hiring, Staff Issues, Supervision
138	Communication and Delivery	Information Gathering, Information Dissemination, Delivering Mail and Packages
107	Meetings	Committees, Floor Meetings, One on Ones
105	Safety and Security	Health and Safety Inspections, Protecting Students
101	Enforcement and Discipline	Conflict Mediation, Documentation, Interventions, Judicial Hearings, Referrals
96	Monitoring	Awareness, Front Desk, On Call, Rounds
82	Maintaining a Presence	Accessibility, Availability, Office Hours, Building Relationships with Students, Networking
80	Administration	Business Planning, Assessment, Financial Transactions, Marketing, Paperwork, Reports
70	Academics	Academic Achievement of Staff, Academic Success of Residents, University Retention
65	Leadership	Advising Student Groups, Coordinating Tasks
61	Buildings and Grounds	Facilities Improvements, Sanitation, Maintenance, Operations
27	Involvement	Attendance, Participation, Recruit Students to Events
20	Represent the Office	University Events, Tours, Show Rooms
10	Community Service	Donations, Volunteering

on the organizational chart, the more staff members at that level must be capable of

performing the wide range of primary and secondary responsibilities.

Beyond providing a more detailed depiction of daily work in the TUE Residential

Life Office, there is a more specific point to examining the range of tasks and

responsibilities involved therein. From the outside, onlookers often muse over the

appearance that Residential Life work simply entails fun, games, busy work, or even

ancillary services. However, Residential Life employees, both student and professional, understand their responsibilities to have important tie-ins to endeavors such as emergency prevention, recognition, and response. For instance, leadership development in the way of get-to-know-you games and team building exercises help staff members develop the capacity for remembering details about their residents and for group problem solving. These skills are critical for distinguishing normal from abnormal behavioral patterns in students and for determining a plan of action when ambiguous emergency situations unfold. Likewise, tasks related to monitoring residence hall activities (e.g., Desk Attendant shifts, on-call shifts) help the staff to establish an authoritative presence within the community, thereby strengthening their credibility when confronting students. Therefore, getting past the outward appearance of fun and games, all facets of residential work enhance the staff's capacity for effectively mediating emergencies.

Residential Life Work Cycles

Meeting the goals of the mission and vision statements and undertaking the responsibilities to do so takes time; time often dictated by the constituents Residential Life serve. As an arm of the university, the Residential Life office at TUE must enact practices consistent with its overarching business policies and procedures. Likewise, as a provider of customer service to students, the Residential Life office must also cater to their needs and schedules. Yet university administrators and the student body keep diametrically different hours: the former 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. during the regular work week, and the latter pretty much any time outside of that interim. The Residential Life office accommodates both of these schedules, operating "twenty-four hours a day, seven

days a week, three hundred and sixty-five days a year." They do so by staggering schedules amongst the Central Staff, the RHCs, and the RAs.

For instance, work hours for the Central Staff (i.e., the Residential Life Director and ADs) are designed around the typical work day, 8a.m. – 5 p. m. At the same time, scheduled events (e.g., all-staff meetings, orientation events, late-night programming events) and unscheduled events (e.g., emergent emergency situations) often draw Central Staff back on campus at night and on weekends. Available by cellphone, the Central Staff consider themselves constantly on-call for supporting subordinate staff members with emergency response or for being on-scene to handle larger emergencies directly.

Because RHCs are required to interact both the other university administrators from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. and with RAs and students from 5 p.m. on, it is not unusual for an RHC to work from 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. on a typical weekday. Their schedules account for daytime business responsibilities (e.g., committee meetings, Central Staff meetings, interaction with other university administrators) as well as nighttime RA and student responsibilities (e.g., RA staff meetings, educational and social programming events).. Although RHCs are not required to not attend all university or residence hall events, they attend quite a few. This schedule gets stretched even further if the RHC happens to be assigned to overnight on-call duty or is called into action for a late night or weekend emergency response. One RHC remarked that he gets in the office around 10:00 a.m. and, "On a general day, I usually don't get back into my room until about nine, ten o'clock, from the office… Some days I even go in at eight or nine, depending on how much you need to get done. It's a huge time commitment." For RHCs, Residential Life can be a constant, all-consuming type of job."

RA schedules occur from 5 p.m. through 8 a.m. the next morning. This interim covers the period of time that the RAs and their students are not in class. It also accounts for the hours when few other administrators are available to provide student services, answer questions, and respond to emergencies. Like their RHC counterparts, RAs experience extended schedules if they are slated for overnight on-call duty or for overnight shifts monitoring the front desk. Such schedules make RAs feel that they are constantly working, either for class or for Residential Life. Many feel that it is difficult to maintain such a schedule and excel at these responsibilities at the same time.

Structure and Flexibility in Scheduled Routines

There is some structure to the never-ending cycle of work. For instance, on a yearly basis, Residential Life events are scheduled in accordance with the academic calendar. Essentially, the activity of the residence halls is largely dictated by terms when most students are enrolled in full-time classes. There is a predictable ebb and flow of events year in and year out. There is also predictable ebb and flow to weekly work routines via regularly scheduled staff meetings, committee meetings, performing regular rounds in the residence halls, daily checking email, and attending programming events. However, there is always the expectation that regularity can be interrupted at any time, especially where students are involved. One RHC explained:

> Life happens for these individuals after five, so if you can think about everything that you personally have experienced in your life, at home, at school, you multiply that times 487 different lives that are going on at every second and, at any moment, I mean, it can snap and then something go wrong. Most of time, it's great but it's life on overdrive.

Unexpected events can arise during any period during the academic year, any day of the week, and any time of the day or night.

Owing to an environment that is simultaneously predictable and unpredictable, Residential Life workers develop a great capacity for dealing with interruptions, disruptions, and other types of departures from their regular routine. In essence, irregular routines are considered regular among TUE's staff. Emma, the Assistant Director of Residential Life, remarked:

> I have a colleague and I love his philosophy. You may know what's going to be on your calendar for the next day but, in the matter of just a phone call, that can completely change. And that could be anything from an actual emergency situation or it could be just dealing with a parent who becomes so all-consuming or dealing with a judicial issue that has then developed and evolved into something greater than what you expected.

To accommodate such unpredictability, the staff employs various mechanisms of flexibility into their work. For example, in publishing the schedule for staff training (a two-week event that is planned precisely and well in-advance), Emma always places a disclaimer at the bottom: "Schedules subject to change." Further, staff members at all levels engage in the practice of checking text messages or taking cell phone calls while attending staff meetings and events, especially if s/he are the staff member on-call at the time. If a situation requires immediate attention, staff members often quietly excuse themselves from the gathering, handle their business, and rejoin the conversation seamlessly. As a result, Residential Life staff develop habits of multitasking and working in the background to use every minute to its fullest.

Ambiguous Boundaries between Professional and Personal Lives

Because Residential Life operates on such an ongoing basis, it comes as no surprise that there are few boundaries between Residential Life staff's personal and professional lives. Ambiguous boundaries are practically built into the job description. RAs and RHCs are required to live in the buildings where they work. In many cases,

RHC offices are attached directly to their apartments. At the higher levels of Residential Life organization, the ADs and Directors make themselves always accessible either through open-door policies or by cell phone.

Emergency response is one area particularly difficult for the staff to separate personal and professional lives. On-call duty requires that at least one RA per building and one RHC per 24 hour period to be available at all times to handle students' questions, concerns, and emergencies. The Director and AD consider themselves permanently on-call. Not knowing if or when an event will occur, the staff members on-call cannot avoid trying to have a personal life. But they also have no control over the timing in which events occur. Ken talked about the fact that there is no difference between professional and personal life in Residential Life work. "You just never know what might come up…What do you want to do? Let's go to the movies. You get a call – you leave the movies. Or you get a call at 2 a.m., you gotta deal with that issue. You definitely must have a flexible personality."

Owing to the fact that staff members work where they live and they work potentially all the time, ambiguous boundaries often extend into social life. Birthdays are occasions for a staff lunch outing at local restaurants. One staff member's wedding called upon Resident Assistants to help facilitate her Hollywood-themed reception. The death of another staff member's grandmother called for a group visit to the funeral home. It is not uncommon for RHCs to call each other for coffee or to gather for dinner. The staff members at any level of the organization keep the same schedules, face the same challenges, and often hold similar values. They are a close-knit team while "on-the-clock" and often friends when "off-the-clock."

At the same time such closeness can be considered a positive aspect of Residential Life work, it can also create problems in the workplace. RHCs are encouraged not to enter into a relationship with their RAs. Likewise, RAs are strongly encouraged not to date one of their residents. Issues of authority and the appearance of favoritism have the capacity to weaken staff members' capacities for doing their jobs. On a different note, closeness to the job and to colleagues makes it difficult for staff members to detach. Kevin reflects:

> It's a constant day in and day out in some of our roles. Even when we are away from campus, be it on vacation or at a professional meeting, we still have to have that tie back to the campus. I think one has to probably join the Boy Scouts and go camping in the Rockies or whatever in order to truly be un-gettable and get away sometimes.

Yet, given the intensity of the job, Residential Life staff all know it is important to get away once in awhile or to have a life outside of work. Whether or not staff members are successful at finding the balance between personal and professional life, there is an undeniable guilt associated with being off campus or inaccessible.

CHAPTER 5

Emergency Response in Residential Life

Extending the contextual findings reported in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 overviews some broad observations regarding emergency and emergency response in Residential Life. The chapter first lays out the diverse types of emergencies that TUE's Residential Life administrators anticipate in the scope of their work. The chapter then discusses the means by which TUE's Residential Life administrators develop policies and procedures for emergency response and share these guidelines among an inherently transient staff. As a lead-in to next section of the dissertation, the chapter concludes by reviewing the selection criteria used to identify four examples of emergency response enacted by TUE's Residential Life team in or around 2008-2009. These include emergencies related to protocols for Committed Suicide, Attempted Suicide, Guest and Staffing Protocols, and Noise and Disruptive Activities.

Landscape of Emergencies Anticipated in Residential Life Work

At the same time depictions of Residential Life structure, staffing, responsibilities, and scheduling illustrated in Chapter 4 all help in understanding the broad nature of work in this setting, they also illuminate the landscape of emergencies and emergency response. The types of emergencies planned for by the staff covers an

almost limitless range of events related to housing large groups of students in close

proximity, serving students with diverse problems and needs, facilities embedded within

an urban context, and environmental conditions that cannot be prevented. Derived from

policy handbooks, procedural manuals, and observations made throughout the course of

the study, Table 6 outlines a sample of the types of emergencies TUE's Residential Life

staff anticipates year-in and year-out.

Table 6. Sample Overview of Emergencies Anticipated in Residential Life Work

Category	Incidents/Emergencies
Adjustment	Distress, Stress, Life Struggles
Ancillary Services	Mail Issues, Vending Machine Malfunction, Laundry Machine Malfunction
Behavioral Problems	Anger Issues, Beligerent People, Disgruntled People, Noncomplience
Death	Suicide, Family Death
Disruptive Behavior	Noise, Parties, Suspicious Activity, Sports in the Halls
Entry and Access	Building Entry, Room Entry, ID Cards
Facilities	Lighting, Power Loss, Elevator Problems, Flood, Trash, HVAC, Toilet Problems, Appliance Problems, Window Problems, Plumbing, Pest Control
Fire Hazards	Appliances, Incense, Cooking, Fire, Fire Alarm, Fire Extinguisher, Smoke Detector, Smoking
Health Hazards	Bodily Fluids, Biohazardous Materials
Illegal Substances	Alcohol and Drug Posession, Solicitation, Use,and Intoxication
Interpersonal Conflicts	Tolerance, Harrassment, Hygiene, Altercations, Arguments, Disgruntled Parents, Relationship Problems, Respect, Roommate Conflicts
Medical Emergency	Hospitalized Resident, Injury, Person Down, Self Injury, Suicide Attempt
Property	Damage, Abandoned Property
Psychological Issues	Depression, Disturbed Students, Eating Disorders, Mental Health Issues
Residents and Visitors	Missing Person, Guests, Loitering, Strangers, Suspicious Person
Room Search	Room Inspections, Health and Safety Checks
Sexual Misconduct	Sexual Assault, Sexual Harrassment
Telecommunications	Cable, Computing, Telephone
Theft	Theft, Mugging
Threats	Bomb Threats, Gunman
Vandalism	Grafitti
Violence	Altercation, Assault, Domestic Violence
Weapons	Guns
Weather Emergency	Hurricane, Tornado, Winter Storm

Reviewing this list, it is important to note that not all anticipated emergencies are

evidenced by written protocols. Many were derived from observations of the staff as they

shared insights into policies, procedures, and emergency readiness. Observing staff in the

act of sharing policies and procedures was not hard to come by, because a great deal of

activity in the Residential Life setting revolves around sharing and updating such information. This is largely due to the fact that any Residential Life staff is comprised of a largely transient staff.

Transient Staff and Related Implications for Training

The Residential Life staff at TUE, and Residential Life staffs generally, are transient in nature. At the RA level, mass changeovers of personnel are expected from year to year. RAs (who comprise the largest number of staff members in any Office of Residential Life) can only hold their positions as long as they remain registered students in good academic standing. Moreover, RAs take different positions on campus and ultimately graduate. With only a few exceptions, they are inherently short term Residential Life employees.

Even at the RHC and AD levels, changeover is expected. For example, over the course of our year together, one AD and four RHCs (or just over half of the non-RA Residential Life staff) moved on to jobs at different school. This is due to a professional norm in which any one job is considered preparation for the next. In other words, when a staff member is hired onto the Residential Life staff at TUE and learns to become a productive member of in that setting; s/he is also developing competencies for becoming a productive administrator within the broader Student Affairs profession. As a staff member develops such professional skills, it is not unusual for Residential Life supervisors to focus supervisees on achieving a promotion in the field either within the university or at other institutions across the country.

In fact, among Residential Life professionals there are shared expectations about how long a staff member should potentially occupy a given administrative station before

moving on. RHCs are often expected to stay in that position for two or three years. ADs often serve another two to eight years in that capacity (with some exceptions). The Director, who has reached the highest level of Residential Life before applying to Dean of Students and VPSA positions, tends to stay in that position for the longest stretch of time.

Such departures leave Residential Life with staff vacancies, some of which are filled immediately and others of which remain open until the time for hiring is convenient. Residence halls are open year round, but the academic calendar creates slower and busier times. The best time to experience a vacancy is as close to the summer semester as possible. At that time, the number of students in residence is lower and the operational activities slower. The less ideal, but sometimes unavoidable, time to lose a staff member is in the middle of the semester when Residential Life activities are in full motion.

For the purposes of this study, the importance of understanding the transient nature of staff members lies in the fact that gaps are left in the emergency response team whenever a staff member leaves. If the turnover of a staff member occurs at an inconvenient time during the semester, remaining staff members often must compensate for the loss. If the turnover of a staff member occurs at a convenient time, attention is drawn from tasks such as emergency response and refocused on tasks such as employee hiring. Moreover, whether remaining staff members are taking up new responsibilities or whether new employees are hired onto the Residential Life team altogether, significant efforts must be taken to train them for their new responsibilities. This means that remaining staff members are often thrust into positions of expertise with little training,

themselves. It also means that Residential Life professionals must draw upon various means for passing emergency response policies and procedures from one staff member to the next.

Developing Ostensive Capacities around Emergency Routines

Because of the vast turnover in Residential Life, it doesn't take long before new staff members are considered "seasoned" professionals. Tina reflects, "The first year I was at TUE, I was the new RHC. There were two people that had been here—one of them quit mid-year so that building didn't have an RHC for a little while. And then, at the end of the year, the other person left and we got two brand new RHCs. So, [in one year], I was the old person [on staff]." Owing to relatively frequent staff turnover, there isn't a long apprenticeship before RAs, RHCs, or even central office staff are expected to be active on-the-job. One impact that such fluidity has on Residential Life work routines is that the staff develops various means of filling in gaps during staff transitions. Often this results in remaining staff members "taking up the slack" left by the vacancy. Because of this possibility, every staff member often has a working knowledge of other jobs in the office. The other impact of such fluidity, though, is that the staff must always find means of sharing the norms, practices, and values of the family from one generation to the next.

Staff Manuals

The obvious answer to how TUE might share norms, practices, and values with an ever-changing roster of personnel is to create manuals. The staff manual is the responsibility of the Assistant Director of Residential Life. Its target audience are RAs, but the document also serves as the primary guide for RHCs and central office

administrators. Although tweaked from year to year, the manual has not undergone a complete review and revision since its inception.

The manual is comprised of eight sections, covering a range of topics from human resources to emergency response. A preface introduces staff members to an office mission statement, a value statement written by the professional organization for housing administrators, and statement reinforcing the student-centered values of Residential Life work. Chapter one situates the staff within the larger context of the university by providing an organizational chart, and a list of important campus phone numbers. Chapter two provides a human resources overview, outlining basic expectations, job descriptions, the RA contract, a code of ethics, and timesheet instructions. Chapter three outlines expectations for programming and community development, including events planning and student interactions. Chapter four provides guidelines for policy enforcement, confrontation skills, and judicial hearings. Chapter five details facilities-related procedures, such as completing room inspections, health and safety checks, and work orders. Chapter six addresses emergency information, addressing incidents primarily by topic (Table 7).

Table 7. Incidents Addressed in the Emergency Response Chapter of the Staff Manual

Requests for Emergency Assistance	Intoxicated Students
General Emergency Situations	Medical Emergency
Bomb Threat	Power failure
Rules of Crisis Intervention	Report a Weapon in the Residence Hall
Handling drug Cases	Sexual Assault
Elevator Emergency	Suicidal Resident
Fire Alarms and Evacuation Procedures	Tornado
Flood	

Chapter seven includes information about student behavior, counseling, mentoring, making referrals, and mediating the potentially conflicting roles of disciplinarian and mentor.

Although protocols exist in a manual form, it is important to note that not all staff members use it as a direct reference for emergency response. Throughout the year, Central Staff members recognize the reality that RAs (and even RHCs) do not necessarily read through the manual page by page. Rather, they use it as a reference, looking up specific scenarios when they present themselves. In fact, the Residential Life staff starts from the premise that protocols are no more than guidelines. One of the Central Staff members admits:

> I don't live in a glass tube—I understand that, most of the time, the students don't read that document. They don't read that book. And so it's kind of like a reference manual, like your car owner's manual. You use it when you need it— when the light comes on on the gas gauge, how many gallons do I have left? My tire pressure sensor light is on—what does that mean? How do I get it reset? You know, stuff like that. So the information that's expected—your expectations, your roles, your responsibilities, who do I need to talk to about this, that, whatever, crisis management, conflict resolution and mediation—those details have to be in there. But we also know that the individual is probably not going to read it cover to cover. If they reference it twice in nine months, they're probably average. So, it's got phone numbers in it, who's in charge of what floor in what building, after-hours maintenance emergencies, and what do I do if there's a tornado. It has to have all of that stuff, but it's also going to collect dust. It's kind of a back-up.

The main artifact guiding emergency response in the office, the RA manual, is static. Because it gets reviewed and updated a maximum of one time throughout an academic year, it does not reflect the entire range of incidents and lessons learned while the year is in motion. Moreover, capturing all the potential scenarios that could happen in the scope of Residential Life emergency response would be overwhelming, if not impossible.

Staff Training

Because there is such a distinct turnover of personnel from year to year, staff training is an annual event. The level of training a staff member receives depends on their level in the department. Central staff members encounter more on-the-job training, than a formal introduction to emergency response procedures. They rely heavily on their past experiences in Residential Life positions, other student services offices, and at other universities to provide guidance.

Newer to the profession, and often new to TUE, the RHCs receive only one day of formalized training by the Central Staff. To avoid inevitable interruptions of daily work, RHC training is held off-campus at a casual location (e.g., an Assistant Director's house). The main thrust of the day is talking about TUE, job descriptions, and general responsibilities. On that day of training, a lot of information is covered in a short time, often following the outline of the staff manual. General tenets about emergency response are reinforced, such as calling up the line. But the staff does not specifically address each of the topics outlined in the emergency response section of the manual. Rather, the Central Staff relies on RHCs' past experiences as RAs, their overall common sense, and on-the-job training to fill in the gaps.

Of all staff members, RAs receive the most detailed training. The event takes place over two weeks, just prior to the start of the academic year. Days often begin as early as 9 a.m. and on the latest days, extend through the evening, with breaks for meals and residence hall set-up. A summary of the schedule is outlined in Appendix C. Training is designed to expand on the expectations, protocols, and values included in the staff manual. However, it is not unusual for training facilitators (i.e., Residential Life Central

Staff, the RHCs, on-campus collaborators, and off-campus emergency response personnel) to share their own interpretation of these guidelines. Therefore, although the manual structures the information attended to in training, the most important lessons imparted throughout training are drawn from the expertise and lived-experiences of upper-level staff members and Residential Life collaborators.

Hiring from Within

One of the ways to circumvent the need for newly educating staff members through the manual or training is to either rehire staff members or to promote from within. In the case of rehiring staff members, the office can rely on at least a few Central Staff members continuing on from year to year. In addition, RAs who are not graduating and who will be enrolled in the following year have the opportunity to apply as a "returners." The upside of hiring from within is institutional knowledge. Because these individuals already have a working-knowledge of the TUE context and Residential Life work routines, such transitions can take place quickly and without much extra effort. The downside to hiring from within is that it is sometimes difficult to reeducate them in the case of a protocol or policy change. Additionally, because the job is intense, there is always the potential for complacency resulting from the high level of burnout.

Collegial Mentorship

Whereas training is a one-time opportunity to share the family trade with professional and student staff members, collegial mentorship provides ongoing opportunities to continue the education process. Meetings allow the staff to address incremental changes in policies or procedures throughout the year. Through meetings, supervisors can also gauge staff dynamics (e.g., the extent to which burnout or

complacency might be setting in). Various levels of staff meetings are one means by which this process happens.

Staff Meetings are weekly opportunities for different levels of the Residential Life staff to gather together, share announcements, review incidents that have transpired in the past week, and discuss any related questions for the good of the order. At the residence hall level, weekly staff meetings are held for each residence hall staff, led by the RHC in charge of that building. RAs have further opportunities to follow up with their supervising RHC at a regularly scheduled one-on-one appointment. Sometimes held in the RHC's office and other times at a local coffee shop or restaurant, one-on-ones provide a forum for RAs to discuss issues arising on their floor, programming efforts, personal development. One-on-ones also allow the RHC an opportunity to provide ongoing feedback and direction about RA job performance. At the central office level, weekly staff meetings bring together the Director of Residential Life, Assistant Directors of Residential Life, The RHCs, and the captain of the TUE residential police. Mirroring the one-on-ones between RHCs and RAs, the Assistant Director of Residential Life holds biweekly one-on-ones with the RHCs. Again, this meeting is a platform for discussing issues specific to their buildings and to their own personal-professional development.

In addition to weekly meetings and one-on-ones, the entire residential staff (i.e., central office, RHCs, RAs) gathers every other week throughout the semester for ongoing training and development. The topics for the all-staff meetings vary, covering procedures for upcoming events, information from other campus offices, professional development opportunities, and venues for providing feedback to the central office. At the beginnings and ends of semesters, the staff forego business to hold banquets for the staff. These

serve as opportunities to socialize, de-stress, recognize individual accomplishments, and thank the staff for all of their hard work.

Another means by which collegial mentorship takes place is through ongoing relationships with past staff members. Staff members who leave their positions remain connected to the office even after they have moved on. In some cases, administrators have been promoted up through the ranks, and are still involved in Residential Life operations. For instance, both Tina and Ken had once occupied the position that Emma currently occupies. That makes for interesting dynamics because, when there is a question about changing policies, procedures, manuals, etc., Emma tries to be conscientious that her colleagues were largely responsible for putting these in place. Likewise, when Emma proposes a change in policy or protocol, Ken and Tina balance their role in providing an historical perspective on the issue with their interest in allowing some berth for Emma to make meaningful contributions as she sees fit. In another example, Ken's predecessor left the office when she retired. Although he was left a manual outlining many of the procedures for facilities-related problems, Ken regularly contacts her to ask questions about the job. He jokes that he has a "hotline" to his predecessor, who is open to helping whenever necessary.

Hands-On Experience

How TUE's Residential Life staff learns their trade starts with how they originally came into the Residential Life business in the first place. Some staff members reported that they learned the basics first from watching others. Every one of the staff members was once an undergraduate student and most lived in the residence halls during that time. Their education about the norms and practices of Residential Life started immediately,

through observations of their own RA staff. That is not to say that all role models were positive. In some cases, they learned about what not to do. But in most cases, each has a story about how a Residential Life professional in their past solved a problem, made a difference, or made an impact in their lives.

Either because they were inspired to replicate a good staff member or motivated to change the approach of a bad staff member; whether purposefully or accidentally; most of the current TUE entered the Residential Life profession as an undergraduate RA. This hands-on experience is where the current staff members attribute their most significant learning. Emma remarked of her Assistant Director position, "I could not have come into this position had I not been an RA, had I not been a hall director, had I not been an area coordinator…I draw on what I did as an RA, I draw on what I did as a hall director, even though those are some time ago." Emma goes on to acknowledge that the information she uses is not just that which she gained at TUE, but from every institution at which she has worked. At the upper levels, the staff members have all served in a Residential Life position or student services position for at least 2 other institutions before coming to TUE. At the RHC level, three have come from another institution and two from within.

Although the staff members who came up through the system at TUE are valuable for their historical knowledge of the department and its policies, there is always a question of whether having such longitudinal experience at one institution is beneficial or detrimental to the staff. There is an inherent value placed on having experiences at different institutions, so as not to operate under a myopic view of what the Residential Life experience is about, how Residential Life work should be structured, or how to engage incident response. In essence, there is a sense that it is easy to become too

comfortable or complacent only having experience at one institution. People with broader

experiences bring in new ideas and perspectives, which all help the Residential Life

division to continue adapting and growing.

At one institution or many, if staff members have the opportunity to experience

graduated promotions throughout the field of Residential Life, the result is a progressive

ability to put the pieces of a complex puzzle together. Hank reflects:

> When you're an RA, you don't understand the inherent value of an inventory
> sheet. If you move from being an RA to being a hall director, it becomes a little
> clearer. You know, my butt's on the line here and as the building supervisor, if I
> don't make an accurate assessment of these rooms … then there's consequences
> for me because I didn't monitor the process well enough. Well then, if that hall
> director then becomes a facilities coordinator or assistant director or something
> like that, ooh, they get even more of an insight because then it's all tied to budget.
> And so we're spending sixty thousand dollars in repairs and we're only recouping
> eight thousand because we didn't do a great job of billing and our billing
> receivables have declined in three years instead of increased or at least remained
> flat. So why is that? And, again, it just kind of rolls down the hill, and then with
> every year of experience and opportunity to get to another level within this field,
> those little details become so much more important.

Clearly, hands-on past experiences help staff members build an archive of lessons

learned. But they also create a repertoire of professional experiences that help them see

patterns about their work that are otherwise difficult to identify.

Drills, Simulations, and Behind Closed Doors

Given that hands-on experience is so important to learning the craft of Residential

Life work, the fact that there is a higher proportion of newer to senior staff members

creates a problem. Essentially, newer staff members have less hands-on experience to

guide their actions. In terms of emergency response, this is a particular challenge. To

mediate this barrier, the senior members of the Residential Life staff place newer staff

members into emergency simulations, such as drills and role plays. The idea of the drill is

fairly straightforward, and is often reserved for practicing responses to threats such as fires or tornadoes. As for role plays, no experience is more important to instructing and learning emergency response skills than Behind Closed Doors, a type of simulation exercise employed by staffs across the country. The best way to describe this exercise is to provide a brief glimpse into its execution based on direct observations of the activity.

In the initial days of new staff training, the AD for Residential Life and RHCs gather with 10-15 returning RAs who have distinguished themselves as experienced leaders amongst the staff. The task set before them is to identify 10 scenarios that represent the most common types of emergencies new RAs are likely to face during the course of their first year on-the-job. After some deliberation, the returning staff members generate the list that will serve as the foundation for the Behind Closed Doors experience: Roommate Conflict, In-Staff Conflict, Guest Policy Infraction, Noise Violation and Possible Party, Racial/Sexual Orientation Tolerance Issue, Intoxication, Medical Emergency, Firearm in Room. AD, Emma, assigns each RHC two of the identified issues, two returning RAs, and charges each group to develop a role-play related to the issue. Each role play will take place in an assigned setting in a residence hall (e.g., student room, hallway, lobby front desk) and may involve as many of their RA colleagues as necessary to create a realistic scenario from which trainee RAs can learn response techniques. Following is how one scenario plays out for a group to which I am assigned.

A Walkthrough of the Behind Closed Doors Experience

On the first day of Behind Closed Doors, trainee RAs all meet in the lobby of Barry residence hall. Assigned to a guide (1-2 returning RAs), the trainee RAs are split

into groups of 4-5. The guide explains that each group will rotate through a series of five scenarios on day one and five scenarios on day two. For each scenario, the guide will ask two volunteers to act as the emergency responders for the situation. Although the responders may be provided preliminary information about the scenario (akin to what they might know if a resident has called in a complaint), they will have little knowledge of what lies in wait for them. The object for the responders is to handle the situation given them to the best of their ability, recounting both the lessons learned in training and drawing upon common sense. Trainees are reminded that this is a safe space to try out skills and even to make mistakes. The guide, other trainees in the group, and one RHC will be in the room as observers. At the conclusion of the scenario, the entire group will debrief the experience along with the RA "actors" to discuss the responders' reactions to the scenario, responsive measures that were effective, and areas for improvement.

Our group starts off down the hallway on the first floor, a long straight corridor with fluorescent lighting, pastel paint on the walls, and solid wood doors lining the expanse on either side. All of the room doors are closed, the hall is quiet, and there is no way of knowing what lies in store for the RAs. The guide stops the group in front of a room and asks for two volunteers. Two women raise their hand and the guide reads the following scenario from a piece of paper, "Ashley, Kim, Lauren, and Lisa are roommates. Ashley has called the RA because she and Lisa have been having issues with their other roommates Kim and Lauren. Ashley and Lisa claim that their roommates constantly eat up their food and allow their company to disrespect their property and eat their food. Kim and Lauren always have male guests signed in. At the same time, Kim and Lauren have issues with Ashley and Lisa claiming that they do not clean up after themselves."

On cue, we can hear two people yelling at each other from inside the room. The guide prompts the two volunteer RAs to knock on the door and begin the scenario. When they do, a returning RA playing the role of "angry resident" cracks open the door and peeks out in to the hall. The RAs ask if anything is wrong. The angry resident lets the two RAs inside while the rest of the group files in behind them to serve as observers. RHC, J.B. is sitting at the perimeter of the room to serve as facilitator and observer as well. Upon entering, the volunteer RAs notice a couple of students sitting on a couch at the far end of the room, seemingly upset. Another student, the one who answered the door, walks into the room with the RA. A fourth student, shirtless, crosses the room and goes into the refrigerator. He seems unaffected by the others in the room and ignores the rest of what is going on.

The volunteer RAs ask, "What is going on?" The angry resident tells her side of the story with a voice that gets louder as she goes on. As the angry resident is doing so, a girl on the couch starts interjecting points by yelling across the room. Another resident jumps in to contradict the girl on the couch, raising his voice as well. A third student raises his voice in defense of hi friend. Before long, all of the students are yelling at one another in a fight escalating around the RAs. It is clear that the volunteer RAs are nervous about saying something. They stand back, nearer to the rest of the group rather than going into the middle of the room, glancing at each other to figure out what to do. A couple of times, they look back at the guide and at the group, hoping for help. But the room gets loud and there are multiple fights happening between the residents in the room.

RHC, J.B., recognizes the volunteer RAs are over their heads and pauses the activity. He affirms that this situation this situation is particularly difficult to handle.

Situations like this might arise, but they probably will not be quite as extreme. He continues to debrief the situation and offer advice. First, he notes that when RAs come into the room, they should figure out who lives there and who doesn't. If individuals do not live in the room, have them leave. In many cases you want to separate people. Talk to people one on one so that fights don't escalate and so you aren't overwhelmed by the number of people trying to talk at once. J.B. then asks the trainees to reflect on what they noticed in the room. Their answers include issues such as one guy eating all of the food, an overnight visitor, and loud noise.

J.B. continues to provide feedback and invites the actors to join him: "So there are issues with the visitation policy. Know that each room is responsible for setting their own visitation policies. So it is not the same from building to building, necessarily. Residents of a room have to abide by the code that they set." Additionally, "It is always good to keep one RA between you and the door. You always want an escape route in case things elevate or someone gets threatening."

The advice continues to ring from different staff members, with little structure to how it is being conveyed. "Call someone if things are getting out of hand. You don't have to handle things alone. Call the police if you need them. They are always available to handle situations you think are over your head." "Never touch a resident or anyone else while you are handling the situation." "Try not to ask anyone to calm down. They often will take offense to that and get even more belligerent. Rather, encourage them to share their side of the story. Get them to talk." "Try not to raise your voice. That often will escalate a situation. Use a low voice, it has a tendency to calm people down." "Don't tell everyone to get out of the room. Talk to two of the residents in the hall, if you need to so

that they are separated. Keep the door open, though. If you need to, put your foot in the door. This will make sure that you are not locked out after you converse in the hall." "Make sure, also, that everyone gets a chance to speak. You don't want to start additional conflicts by having people feel like their side hasn't been heard." "Don't take sides. Don't hesitate to go to a veteran if you don't know what to do." "Don't let the residents argue with one another and let it get out of control. Talking with individuals one at a time can be a helpful strategy in keeping things calm."

J.B. asks whether the trainees have any questions, but they say very little. Mostly, they all look shell-shocked. J.B. acknowledges that the RAs did a great job, especially for their first Behind Closed Doors scenario. The actors in the room share in J.B.'s encouragement and promise that each scenario will become easier as the trainees gain more experience in handling situations. Our group then leaves the room and reconvenes down the hall with a visible sigh of relief. One of the RAs who had volunteered as a responder to the last situation said, apologetically, "I didn't know what to do." The guide reassures the group that it was a hard scenario and that they will feel better and better as the day goes on.

This pattern continues on through four more simulations on day one and five on day two (see Appendix D for descriptions of additional scenarios). As promised, each subsequent scenario goes more smoothly for trainees playing the role of responders especially as they incorporate the lessons learned from earlier scenarios into later responses. Gradually, as scenarios seems to come to closure faster, fear of the unknown is replaced with cheers, a thumping of the chest, and pats on the back within the group. By

the final simulation, it even gets to the point where trainee RAs are eager to role-play the responder role.

Behind Closed Doors serves two purposes. It gives the RAs a chance to practice carrying out procedures in a real situation. It reiterates the variability of context and the need to make judgments in a quickly unfolding situation. However, the practice also begins to build up the RA's bank of experience upon which they will learn. In addition, Behind Closed Doors prepares RAs for the emotional reactions they will experience when faced with unfolding emergency events. Knowing what to expect helps boosts confidence and breaks down fear of the unknown.

Professional Networks

Evidenced by the fact that Behind Closed Doors is a common experience for RAs across the country and that professionals carry lessons about Residential Life work across the borders of the institutions where they have worked; Residential Life work is not only the business of TUE. The norms, values, and practice of Residential Life work are shared amongst professionals across the country. There are several ways that TUE taps into these resources to help inform their own practices. First, although there is no undergraduate degree program for Residential Life administrators, many of the professional staff hold master's degrees in Student Affairs programs or related fields. Second, TUE encourages its staff to participate in local, regional, and national organizations oriented toward Residential Life workers. Third, the TUE staff regular interacts with their colleagues at neighboring colleges and universities. Through these professional networks, Residential Life colleagues deliberate and create shared understandings about Residential Life work and how it should be carried out. Moreover,

it is common practice in Residential Life to use these networks for trading ideas, programs, and solutions that can be customized specifically to the context of different universities.

Overview of Case Selection

A broad perspective on the setting and type of work that occurs in Residential Life provides a foundation for understanding the landscape of emergencies and emergency response in that university department. However, while helpful, these perspectives fall short of describing exactly why enacted emergency response routines depart from protocols and what triggers such changes. Necessary is a view of emergency response from a more micro-level perspective, or one that parses out the ostensive and performative routines in a manner suited to the conceptual frame. The following four chapters achieve this goal by focusing attention on the routines involved in four emergency response cases studies.

Given the fact that the cases selected for further analysis stem from real-time observation, it is difficult to elicit examples of emergencies similar to one another. Therefore, cases were selected on alternative criteria. More important than similarity across the context of emergencies represented by the cases was the ability of each case to highlight ostensive-performative comparisons and deliberations about change therein. Accordingly, cases were selected based on the existence of data that a) illustrated a type of emergency response routine relevant to Residential Life work; b) demonstrated both the ostensive and performative aspects of that routine; c) reflected deliberations about whether or not to enact change between the protocols for and actions involved in that routine; and d) showed involvement of the same general core of responders.

Following these guidelines, four cases generally focused on the Nichols Hall staff are represented in Chapters 6-9. The first involves the Residential Life staff's response to a committed suicide. The second follows the staff's response to a suicide attempt in a subsequent semester. The third addresses changes to guest and staffing policies enacted in response to a series of past emergencies related to an off-campus event. The final case analyzes reflections on responding to noise and disruptive activities emerging in the wake of President Obama's 2008 election victory.

CHAPTER 6

Committed Suicide Case Study

Summary Overview of Case

The first case study recounts the emergency response routine enacted by TUE's Residential Life staff when faced with a student who has committed suicide in the residence hall. Amongst Residential Life professionals at TUE, as with colleagues profession-wide, there is an understanding that a student suicide is a very real possibility in the course of any academic year. So, although anticipated, one staff member explains, "Suicides always come as a surprise because you hope and pray…" Staff members also reflect on the fact that committed suicides present themselves as complex scenarios, involving simultaneous investigation and response, collaboration between various levels of university and non-university personnel, and the potential for the original incident to cause secondary situations requiring responsive actions. Therefore, no two suicide scenarios present themselves in the same manner.

To accommodate ambiguity with regards to how a committed suicide incident might present itself to the staff or evolve, relevant emergency response protocol is loosely structured around seven interrelated subroutines: Calling 911, Calling up the Line, Reporting on the Scene to Help, Collecting and Sharing Pertinent Information, Gossip

and Crowd Control, Providing Support Services, and Notifying Parents. The first six subroutines are referenced directly in the staff manual as written protocol, although the outline lacks specificity with regards to sequence, timing, and personnel. While regularly practiced, the seventh protocol, Notifying Parents, is not reflected in the written guidelines. Gaps in the written protocol are further detailed and elaborated by the shared understandings staff members have created through deliberations over past experiences, simulated training exercises, and emergency response dialogues that take place during staff training. Combined, the manual and shared understandings represent the ostensive routine for responding to committed suicide incidents.

According to the TUE Residential Life staff, no two sets of suicide scenarios present themselves in the same manner. Therefore, at the same that Residential Life staffs espouse protocols for such incidents, they also know that real-time actions are likely to shift the original action plan. The case presented in this chapter demonstrates how, across five of the seven ostensive subroutines for a committed suicide incident, Residential Life and related emergency response staff members deliberate the appropriateness of adhering to or departing from protocols and act accordingly. In the case of each subroutine, a sensemaking characteristic or constellation of sensemaking characteristics serves to trigger such decisions and actions. Each of these triggers and its impact is discussed in detail.

For the Calling 911 subroutine, a breakdown in Plausibility regarding making an emergency call from a cell phone causes delays in the TUE police department's response. With regards to Calling up the Line, administrators' retrospective relationships with one another alter both who is called and when, expanding the network of responders involved

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in the incident. In the Gossip and Crowd Control subroutine, retrospective experiences

responding to a different suicide case leads the VPSA to adhere to the ostensive routine,

supporting efforts to debrief the Residential Life staff. In terms of the Notifying Parents

subroutine, past experiences responding to student deaths combined with plausible

images of disappointing parents because of the way communication is handled convinces

the Dean of Students to make first contact, a departure from the protocol. In addition,

personal identities such as "parent" and "hands-on person" sway the Director of

Residential Life to join in the effort, also a departure from protocol. Finally, based on a

sense of disillusionment with the hero identity when RAs and RHCs are not utilized

according to the Report on the Scene to Help subroutine, a discussion is mounted about

how such a sensemaking trigger might alter future responses.

Ostensive Routine

Incidents such as committed suicides often present themselves to Residential Life

responders as complex scenarios involving vague timelines, information, involved

parties, and potential affects on the community. To accommodate such complicated

contexts, response protocols for handling committed suicide are likewise somewhat

loosely defined and multifaceted. To understand how TUE's Residential Life staff

approaches such incidents, it is important to review both the protocol as inscribed into the

staff manual and the protocol as understood either intuitively or overtly amongst the staff.

With regards to the inscribed protocol for responding to a committed suicide, the

Residential Life staff manual reads:

> Resident Assistant:
> 1. Contact TUEPD at 911.
> 2. Do not touch items in the room so that the TUEPD can view the scene in
>   its original state.

3. Hold the elevator doors for Emergency Personnel
4. Meet Emergency Personnel at the front door and escort them to the room
5. Assist in crowd control

Professional Staff Member:
1. Respond to the emergency and ensure that 911 has been called.
2. Contact additional Resident Assistants for assistance. Station Resident Assistants at the front door to wait for EMS, at the elevator to hold for Emergency Personnel, and at points in the building that may require crowd control.
3. Notify the Director of Residential Life and provide information such as student's name, room number, current location, and roommates' names.
4. Retrieve roommate's necessary items for the night. The roommate should not enter the room until it has been cleaned.
5. Offer and arrange a room change for the roommate. Arrange for Resident Assistants to help the roommate move.
6. After TUEPD has completed their investigation of the room, arrange for clean up of the room.
7. The professional staff member and the Assistant Director of Residential Life meet with the Resident Assistant Staff to give facts of what occurred, gather additional information, start the process of gathering reports, offer counseling services to staff members, prepare to address the community's emotional needs, arrange counseling meetings for floors and individuals, remind staff not to give statements to the media..
8. Refer media to Director of Student Housing.
9. Assist the students in arranging an in-hall memorial service as appropriate.
10. Pack students belongings in collaboration or at the discretion of the student's parents.
11. Arrange for Counseling Center liaisons to meet with individual floor, residents, and staff.
12. Send information reports to the Director of Residential Life.

One of the main contributions of the inscribed protocol is to break down the much

broader task of responding to a committed suicide into a group of related subroutines

(Table 8). Subroutines take into account the multifaceted nature of the scenario and

decrease the chance that important steps will be missed as events unfold. A second

contribution of the inscribed protocol is to identify which staff member is responsible for

carrying out parts of each subroutine. Such designations reinforce the collective nature of

such an emergency response, the fact that each team member has a specific role in the

Table 8. Inscribed Response Subroutines for Committed Suicide Scenarios

Subroutines
Call 911
Call Up the Line
Report on the Scene to Help
Collect and Share Pertinent Information
Gossip and Crowd Control
Provide Support Services

response, and the need for a coordinated team effort therein.

At the same time having an inscribed protocol, at all, signifies an effort toward foresight and detail, the inscribed protocol also has its drawbacks. Although the details of each subroutine will be elaborated in the ostensive-performative comparison discussion at the end of this chapter, it is instructive to note the lack of specificity provided for each of the subroutines referenced. This is especially true of issues such as timing, sequence, or steps a staff member should take to carry out each subroutine. For instance, owing to the ordering of the instructions, it is assumed that the RA will be the first person on the scene, responsible for calling 911. Although the next set of steps involves a "Professional Staff Member," there is no inscribed directive that the RA make a call to that particular person as well. Moreover, as the Professional Staff person is not identified, one can assume that the relevant staff member might be the RHC, an AD, or the Director, whichever is relevant. Yet the subroutines relevant to the Professional Staff Member reference contact with several of these individuals (e.g., Director, AD for Residential Life). Given the inscribed protocol, alone, one has to make a logical deduction that the Professional Staff Member references the RHC.

The more familiar one is with Residential Life work and with Residential Life protocols at TUE, specifically, the easier it is to fill in the gaps left by the inscribed protocol. In one view, familiarity uncovers shared understandings that may not be reflected in-writing, but certainly play out in-practice. These shared understandings, in turn, elaborate the seemingly missing pieces of the inscribed protocol. In fact, from a staff member's point of view, shared understandings may be the only relevant aspect of the ostensive routine in terms of guiding responsive actions. The admission comes as sort of a confession from one longer-term staff member:

> Our manual has a very good section on emergency preparedness, apparently. I was flipping through it one day and I thought, wow, eight years and I'm just now paying this attention. There was actually a list of things to do when someone commits suicide, and I don't think anyone knew it was there. Ironic, but we had it.

Emergency procedures housed in shared understandings often cut across types of emergencies. Building on the earlier example of how the Professional Staff Member gets involved in responding to a committed suicide, from a staff perspective the protocol need not specify whom calls that person into play. The procedure for whom to call next is covered in a protocol related to Calling up the Line. A broader subroutine involved in most any emergency response, Calling up the Line involves one staff member calling his or her supervisor as reflected by the organizational chart. Therefore, the RA immediately contacts the RHC who, in turn, calls the AD for Residential Life. The AD for Residential Life is responsible for contacting the Director, who contacts the AVPSA for Operations, and so forth. Thusly, the shared understanding around calling up the line reinforces the notion that Residential Life emergency response inherently takes place in a social context.

Similarly, when the manual references a Professional Staff Member, that designation ideally refers to the RHC. However, there are many instances where the particular RHC may not be available or another RHC may be nearby. There may be instances where no RHC is available. Throughout training, RAs and RHCs are trained to simultaneously follow the hierarchical guidelines of calling up the line and to improvise when necessary. The priority in an emergency situation is not for protocols to be followed, but for the emergency to be handled. That requires the support of the Residential Life social network and often the extended social network of on- and off-campus responders. Sometimes it does not matter which professional is called in which order, just that someone in the network remembers to call and keep them in the loop when time and context allow.

In another view, not only do shared understandings explain steps in the inscribed subroutines, they can also add subroutines to the larger protocol. For example, there is no reference with regards to who should notify parents in the inscribed protocol. However, in observing and talking to staff members about emergency response, it is clear that there are procedures in place for accomplishing such a task. The notification of parents that a student has died is not only regularly practiced, but the practice is also patterned according to the reflections of the Dean of Students and Director of Residential Life. Indiscriminate between written protocol and espoused protocol, the staff considers both as guides for their emergency response actions. Separately, the inscribed protocols and shared understandings provide pieces of the larger puzzle regarding committed suicide response. Together, the manual and understandings provide a more comprehensive

outline of the protocol's subroutines, sequence, timing, and delegated responsibilities (Appendix E).

There are many manners in which such lessons are learned and shared amongst the Residential Life staff at TUE including personal or collective experiences in similar scenarios, stories shared amongst staff at emergency response training sessions, and simulations involved in activities such as the Behind Closed Doors activity described in the context chapter. The debriefing that takes place after a suicide incident or related event is one of the significant triggers for such sharing. Still, the lessons learned vary based on the context of the incident. Sometimes the staff even rationalizes not learning lessons from potentially informative events. For instance, a string of "close-calls" triggered dialogues around student death in the months preceding the committed suicide referenced in this chapter. In the fall, a student was murdered just off-campus followed by another student driving to campus and jumping from the top floor of a high-rise parking lot. Although these two incidents put staff on alert that similar incidents were possible in the residence halls, the fact that they were out of Residential Life's purview limited the extent to which that department's protocols were addressed amongst the staff. Thereafter, the staff faced three students who had either attempted suicide or were talking about it. In each of these cases, however, an intervention prevented the Residential Life staff from considering the possibility of a student completing the act. Therefore, the staff collectively focused on shared understandings revolving around protocols for intervention rather than protocols for responding to a committed suicide.

Performative Routine

With about a month until final exams, spring semester is about to come to a close and the Residential Life staff looks forward to residence hall move-out and a well-deserved break. Up until this point, academic year 2007 has kept the Residential Life staff on their toes. As noted above, two student deaths at the university, but outside of Residential Life, promoted an awareness about the types of incidents that could take place on or near campus. Likewise, three incidents involving suicidal students in Residential Life emphasized the fact that such emergencies could occur within the residence halls as well. Having successfully intervened in these three incidents, the Residential Life staff is proud of the fact that a suicide had never been committed in TUE's residence halls in its history. That's why everyone is taken aback when the phones start to ring on a relatively regular Thursday afternoon around 3 p.m. (see Appendix F for a map of the related performative routine).

3:00 p.m.: A Student is Found Deceased in his Room

Zack, a resident of Nichols residence hall returns from class to find himself locked out of his residence hall room. He often forgets to bring his keys with him to class because on most days the four roommates in the suite leave the room door unlocked. Thinking nothing of it, Zack goes to his RA, Jenny, to let him in the room. For RAs, performing "lockouts", or letting students back into their rooms when they have somehow locked themselves out, is part of the job's daily grind. RAs have access to a master key for just this purpose. Jenny accompanies Zack to his room, unlocks the door, and turns to walk away, not looking into the room. At the same time, Zack enters. Almost immediately he notices his roommate, Michael, hanging in the middle of the room. Zack immediately calls Jenny back into the room. Both are in shock and shaken up by the

discovery. Instinctually, Zack's first thought is to call 911, which he does from his cell phone. His call dispatches directly to the Eastcity Police switchboard which immediately sends officers to the site. Meanwhile, Jenny's first instinct is to call up-the-line to her supervisor, J.B., Nichols's RHC.

J.B. is a male in his mid 20s and has been on-staff for three years, starting just after earning an undergraduate degree in elementary and secondary education. As a third-year RHC, he is the most experienced staff member at the RHC level. Likewise, as the RHC to the largest number of residents in the most active residence hall, J.B. has been involved with a wide array of emergencies and emergency responses at TUE. He is known by the staff to deeply commit himself to his work and his students, often to the point of sacrificing personal time on nights and weekends. His supervisors constantly urge J.B. to take time for himself and his family so that he can continue working to an optimal level and avoid burnout.

Today is J.B.'s birthday. Having worked well over his hours for the week, he had decided to leave early and join his wife for a movie off-campus. In his car, J.B. is pulling onto the interstate when he gets the call from Jenny. She asks, "J.B., where are you?" Hearing concern in her voice, he responds, "Hey, I just left the building. What's up?" Jenny instructs, "You need to come back." J.B. immediately knows something is wrong. Jenny elaborates, "We found a resident dead in the room." Automatically, J.B. turns the car around and rushes back to campus in an unprecedented three minutes time, all the while asking questions to get a sense of who is involved and what happened. Although she can identify the room and resident, Jenny cannot provide much more information at the time.

As J.B. is speeding back the hall, he continues calling up-the-line to Hank, the Director of Residential Life. Hank is in his mid 40s and presents himself with equal parts realistic grit and good humor. He describes the main thrust of his job as planning, budgeting, supervising, "overseeing and facilitating…making sure things are getting done...initiating projects that need to happen." Over the course of the academic year, however, it is also apparent that he spends a lot of time engaging in emergency response. Unlike many of his colleagues who have academic degrees in counseling or in Student Affairs, Hank's degree is in business administration. Therefore, his emergency response training comes directly from his hands-on experience. Hank originally entered the Residential Life profession years ago at his undergraduate alma mater as a Resident Assistant. Since that time, he has moved up through the ranks in Residential Life positions at several different universities. He believes strongly in the value of common sense. Alongside common sense, however, Hank encourages his staff not to be afraid of making mistakes. As long as actions are taken in accordance with the best interest of the student and with some logical thought, Hank believes that mistakes are the most effective means by which Residential Life workers learn their craft.

3:02 p.m.: The Director of Residential Life Dispatches for Nichols Hall

When Hank gets the call, he is finishing up a meeting with a student to address problems regarding her housing bill and financial aid. With him are a rather large group of administrators, including other Residential Life staff members and a representative from the financial aid office. Hank doesn't recognize the number on the caller ID and is compelled to follow his usual course of action, let the call go to voicemail. However, today and at this moment, he has a feeling he should take the call. When he answers,

Hank recognizes J.B.'s voice and can tell he is in a car. J.B. says, "This is J.B. and I think we may have just had somebody commit suicide in Nichols Hall. Can you go over there?" Hank replies, "Absolutely."

Abruptly cutting off his conversation with the other university administrators, Hank hangs up the phone, jumps up, opens his door and yells, "Ken and Emma, let's go!" Ken and Emma often keep their office doors open and are within earshot of Hank's office. Ken is the AD for Residential Life Facilities, a male in his mid-40s who is generally responsible for emergencies related to facilities and physical plant (e.g., flood, fire, health hazard). Emma is the AD for Residential Life, a female in her mid-30s who is the office's key personnel for handling student-related emergencies on both a preemptive and responsive basis. Ken and Emma immediately stop what they are doing and join Hank. Emma explains, "There is no clipboard of procedures to grab. It doesn't happen that way." But she has enough sense to grab her keys as she has no idea when she will be back in the office. Hank, Ken, and Emma tear out of the central office, headed down the street to Nichols. In as calm a voice as possible and not looking at either colleague, Hank says, "We're going to Nichols. There's been a successful suicide."

As they walk over, Hank has to make sure his boss and the police both know what's going on, but there's no time to stop and do this. It has to happen on-the-move. Hank instructs Ken to call the TUE police captain while Hank is dialing his supervisor, the Assistant VP for Operations. Hank also calls the Dean of Students. Although not directly over Residential Life on the organizational chart, the Dean of Students, Edward, becomes involved whenever a student has died. He helps facilitate related investigations, notifies parents, and coordinates counseling support for staff and students.

3:05 p.m.: The Dean of Students and VPSA Get Involved

When the call comes in to Edward's cell phone, he is in a meeting at the University Center. Seeing it is Hank, Edward interrupts the meeting to answer. He hears, "I need you to meet me over at Nichols right now." Before hanging up, Edward asks whether University Relations had yet been contacted. Hank is just about to make that call, so Edward says, "let me try to get somebody." After university relations, the next call Edward makes is to the individual over both Edward and Hank's functional areas, Dr. Taylor, the Vice President for Student Affairs. When Dr. Taylor receives his call from Edward, he is in a meeting on the other end of campus. At this time, he can not leave what he is doing. He trusts that Edward and Hank can move the emergency response along until a time at which he can join them.

Dr. Taylor is a male in his 50s who has transitioned over the past five years from the faculty (as a history professor) to a university administrator. Although Residential Life is one of many responsibilities under his care, Dr. Taylor admits that it commands a great deal of his time and attention. Residential life is complex in that TUE is responsible for its residents "24/7, all year long." That includes everything from operating facilities to offering activities, managing discipline, and maintaining community standards. Because he did not come from the ranks of Student Affairs, Dr. Taylor freely admits that he relies a great deal on his staff to teach him about the norms and expectations involved in Residential Life administration. At the same time, the Residential Life staff members brand him as a good leader. He brings a great deal of experience in teaching, learning, and academic strategy-building to student services. Although Dr. Taylor's full attention is not focused on Residential Life, he is not a passive actor in its activities. This is

especially the case for emergency response. He checks in weekly on events taking place in Residential Life and is often contacted directly by the Director of Residential Life to share information about evolving incidents, status updates on incidents past, or concerns brewing amongst the residents. Every Monday, Dr. Taylor attends a meeting with representatives from Residential Life, Dean of Students, Counseling Services, and the TUE Police to review recent emergencies, forecast potential problems, and flag students for whom the administration has raised concern.

3:08 p.m.: Collecting and Sharing Information

Although a number of phone calls have taken place on the way over to Nichols, only a few minutes have passed since J.B. initially called Hank about the suicide. J.B. and Hank arrive at Nichols at about the same time. They head immediately to the tenth floor to find some Eastcity police officers already on the scene and others getting there at the same time. There are also two or three Nichols' RAs standing outside the room. Hank knows that everybody wants information and that he is the primary point of contact. He takes Jenny, the RA, aside to ask questions like, "What did you know," and, "When did you know it?" His big five questions are *who*, *what where*, *when* and *how*. He is not worried about *why* just yet, just those five. Hank figures out that nobody has yet walked into Michael's room since originally finding him.

As Hank questions Jenny, the police are asking Hank for the location of Michael's other roommates who have apparently not returned to their room since the incident began. At the same time, J.B. runs down to his first floor office to gather some basic information. He thinks about the type of information Hank and the police might need, like who is this person, what happened, and who are the roommates? J.B. grabs the roster

of who lives in the room, emergency contact cards for residents of the suite, and anything else he could anticipate as being relevant. He brings the information back to Hank on-site, noticing a lot more emergency response personnel now in the hallway outside of Zack's room.

With the information Jenny and J.B. have provided, Hank is piecing together the vital statistics on the deceased student—date of birth, age, name—to provide to whoever needs it, whether that be EMS or the Eastcity police, TUE police, whoever. Hank makes one more call to Tina, the resident expert on the university's information system. Although J.B. has all the information Michael has self-reported, Tina can get any official information the university has on-file. Hank says, "Tina, I need you to look this student up and give me their information." She senses that it is not a time to ask questions and complies with his request straight away.

3:25 p.m.: Dean of Students Arrives on the Scene

Edward arrives on the scene shortly thereafter and Hank shares as much information as he has gathered. Edward immediately gravitates over to Zack and Jenny to ask a few questions and see how they are holding up. When he finds out a little more information, Edward gets on the phone to the Director of Counseling Services, anticipating the need for their help. In critical situations, Counseling Services often join in response efforts to provide emotional and psychological support to involved parties and other affected students. The counselors immediately mobilize to set up a makeshift counseling service on-site and begin planning a group session to help the Nichols RAs work through the situation.

3:30 p.m.: TUE and Eastcity Emergency Personnel Take Charge

Although it takes nearly 20 minutes for the TUE police to get on the scene, they are now present, joined by the Eastcity Police, EMTs, detectives, and the coroner. Hank believes that once the professionals are on the scene, *they're* in charge of the scene. He doesn't try to get into the scene and run the show or tell anybody how to do their work. He tries to stay out of the way and make sure that the Residential Life office is getting information to people as quickly as possible.

4:15 p.m.: Gossip and Crowd Control

Hank notices at least twenty-four officers from Eastcity and TUE. "It bugs the mess out of him that many of the officers seem to be coming through that crime scene just to take a damn look. It is unnecessary. They don't seem to be doing anything, just walking in, walking into the room, standing there for twenty seconds, turning around, coming out, shoving their hands in their pockets, and saying things like, 'Wow. That's pretty bad.'" Time passes quickly and the group has been standing around for literally over an hour at this point. Finally, the EMTs enter the room, pronounce Michael dead, and leave. Then the coroner enters the room and does the same thing.

Meanwhile, crowds are gathering in two Nichols' locations, upstairs outside of the room in which the incident has taken place and downstairs around the front doors of the lobby. Since the first moments of the incident, students have picked up on the fact that there is an emergency of some magnitude happening in the building. Not only can they see the increasing activity, the upper-level administrators, and emergency personnel, but word is spreading by cell phone, text messages, and word of mouth. Upstairs, curious residents from neighboring rooms start trickling into the hallway alongside Residential Life responders and emergency personnel. Once alerted to the situation, RAs in close

proximity head immediately to the floor on which the incident has taken place. Ken is charged with keeping students in their rooms and instructing them not to share any information at this time. He also monitors the emergency personnel coming in and out of the scene and delegate smaller tasks to the Nichol's RAs.

Downstairs, students and media personnel are gathering outside of the building. Additional RAs from Nichols and other buildings report to the front desk in the lobby to see how they can be of help, answering phone calls, monitoring people entering the building, aiding with crowd control, and providing a visible Residential Life presence to the community. Hank puts Emma in charge of coordinating these activities. He also instructs her to set up a makeshift counseling area for students seeking on-site emotional or psychological support from Counseling Services.

As she works to get the lobby under control, Emma is barraged with questions not only about what has happened but about what people have *heard* is happening. RAs report that calls in to the Nichols front desk are asking whether rumors of a bomb threat or a murder are true. Emma feels put on-the-spot trying to decide whether to address such queries and, if so, how. Knowing all of her other colleagues are tied up, Emma decides to acknowledge that there has been an emergency in the building. She emphasizes, though, that everything is being take care of. She feels that she has to make some type of statement to ensure the students that everyone is safe and that the staff has got the situation covered. Nobody would be fooled by an, "Oh, everything's fine," announcement, especially owing to the fire trucks and emergency response vehicles overflowing the parking lot. Once she has everything under control, Emma takes a moment to call her husband. It is now evident that Emma may be on campus late into the

night and she has to make sure he knows to pick up their two-year-old child from daycare.

4:20 p.m.: Contacting the Suitemates

While responders and emergency personnel are taking care of other things, J.B. turns his focus towards getting in touch with Michael's suitemates. Although one roommate, Zack, is on the scene, the other two suitemates have still not returned to the floor. J.B. knows that breaking the news to them will be difficult. They are all best friends. He calls each of them in turn. When one suitemate picks up his phone, J.B. says, "I need you to come back to the building." The suitemate asks, "What's wrong? Is everything OK? Is it about Michael?" Clearly, the suitemate senses something is wrong. From the suitemate's response, J.B. senses that Michael's friends may have been aware of some past issues with depression. But clearly, none of those signs were obvious enough to raise an alert on the part of his RA or large enough for his suitemates to bring Michael to J.B.'s attention. Further, troubled students often find themselves on J.B.'s radar for other incidents. Since the beginning of the academic year, J.B. had never met with Michael for a concern, an incident, or anything. Therefore, he never suspected anything was wrong. This thought weighs hard on J.B., who feels that his he may have missed an opportunity to avert Michael's actions. He calls the second suitemate and has a similar conversation. Both suitemates return immediately to Nichols and meet with the on-site counselors soon thereafter.

4:30 p.m.: Notifying the Parents

As the Dean of Students, Edward feels it is his responsibility to make contact with the deceased student's parents. Therefore, he asks the coroner about their procedure for

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notifying the family. The coroner responds that, "it'll go to the coroner's office and someone from that office will later notify the family." It is already late in the afternoon, just about the end of regular work hours, so Edward is scared that the coroner will not get around to the identification in time to let the family know in a timely fashion. Moreover, they might first find out the news from another source, like the local media or another student. Edward knows what to do next. Notifying Michael's parents in-person is the respectful thing to do. It is the *right* thing to do, period. Edward announces to Hank, "I am going to go see the mom." Hank asks, "Well, who's going with you?" Edward replies, "I don't know." Usually the task would fall on the VPSA, but he has not yet arrived on the scene. Hank doesn't want Edward to have to go alone and so offers to accompany him. Hank and Edward drive to the family's house in a suburb of Eastcity and talk to the mother.

5:15 p.m.: Contacting the Remaining RHCs

Around 5:15 p.m., Emma receives word that Eastcity emergency personnel are ready to move the deceased student from the residence hall to the morgue. She knows the sight will be very dramatic for the students and that the objective is to have the transfer completed as discreetly as possible. Therefore, she instructs the staff to stop all foot traffic in and out of the lobby. As they are taking out the body, it occurs to Emma that the impact of the suicide will now extend beyond Nichols hall. She has to get in touch with the RHCs so that they can respond to questions and concerns by staff and residents in their own buildings. As it turned out, word was already spreading to the other RHCs even before Emma remembers to contact them.

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Taking a full slate of graduate classes, Stu (RHC for Miller Hall) has a packed schedule on Thursday afternoons and evenings. He runs from class to class, with only a short break for dinner. Contrary to his usual habits, Stu turns off his cell phone and does not check messages while in class. Emma calls a couple of times, but the messages go straight to voicemail. During a break in the class, a student says something about a suicide in the residence hall, but Stu writes it off since he has not heard anything from his colleagues. At 7:00 p.m., when class lets out Stu turns his phone back on to find an unusually large number of voice and text messages. The first is from a friend who works on campus, asking whether there was a suicide in Nichols. The next several messages are from Emma, telling Stu to call her immediately.

In Patterson, Natalie's (RHC for Patterson Hall) residents begin asking questions about rumors of a suicide in Nichols. Within thirty minutes of the first question, several of Natalie's RAs call to confirm the rumor. Emma calls, asking Natalie to go to Nichols right away. She doesn't share any details about the situation, but Natalie has a general sense about the scenario at-hand. She could sort through and fit together a picture of what was happening from the conversations with her RAs and residents. Meanwhile, returning from an errand off-campus, Liz notices the flood of fire engines and emergency vehicles in Nichols's parking lot. She instinctually heads directly toward Nichols. On her way, a student asks Liz whether she knew someone had hung himself there. At the same time, Liz's fiancée (who works on campus) calls to let her know rumors of a suicide are being spread around campus. She heads over to the building and is filled in on the details by the counseling staff.

Likewise, Andre (RHC for Berry Hall) drives by Nichols and sees police there. However, he is so used to seeing police on-campus, that he figures it is another passing incident. Upon entering Barry, Andre's RAs begin asking questions about what is going on. Andre recounts that along with the police vehicles, he saw a news truck a few moments ago. This nearly confirms something, if not a suicide than at least the level of a suicide, has occurred. Uncomfortable about asking questions, especially if this is a suicide, Andre calls Emma. He is hearing a lot of stories and wants to know whether to confirm or deny rumors. She gives a brief overview of the situation and Andre heads over to Nichols to help with whatever they may need. When on-site, though, Andre decides to stay back for a few moments. When it seems like Emma has a second, he asks if there is anything he can do. Emma says, "No. But we're going to have an emergency meeting tonight."

6:00 p.m.: Deciding how to Debrief the Community

Throughout all of the day's activities, the Residential Life, Dean of Students, and Student Affairs administrators involved in responding to the suicide have been spread out across Nichols, the campus, and Eastcity, carrying out various tasks and communicating back and forth on their cell phones. Everyone back on campus, they gather together in the lobby of Nichols and pose the question, "What do we do now?" The conversation goes full-circle. "Do we take this approach or do we take that approach?" They are well aware that rumors are rampant across campus. Everybody seems to be in agreement that the residents and the campus community deserve honest answers. Hank notes, "Now that doesn't mean that we have to paint a full picture. It doesn't mean we have to go overboard. But they deserve honesty." The process of briefing the community is tricky.

At the same time you want to be sensitive to the young man's privacy, you want the

community to know what this situation was and to understand that they are not in any

danger. To allay the rumor mill from becoming more aggressive and to start the process

of community healing, the administrators agree that the RAs will be an instrumental part

of the effort. The upper-level administrators also agree that Hank is the most appropriate

person to address the group.

8:00 p.m.: Briefing the RAs

An emergency meeting is called that evening for all of the frontline responders in

Nichols, the RHCs from the other buildings, and administrators from other campus

offices now involved in the response effort. Hank addresses the group with great

gratitude for how they have responded to the incident thus far. Hank then acknowledges

what has happened, calling it a suicide. He addresses what to expect from this point out

and how to answer questions raised by the community. His instructions include not

allowing gossip to be spread. "However if you hear things that are incorrect, correct

them. It is important to be available for your students. We don't want you roaming the

building, going door-to-door, but if students ask, tell them what happened. If they are in

the hallway and they're confused, explain it to them." Counseling Services follows

Hank's talk with an overview of how students respond to critical events, how to identify

students who might be affected by the incident, and how people grieve. Then Hank and

Counseling Services open the floor to questions. They stay until all questions have been

answered. At the end of the meeting, it does not escape Emma or the other RHCs that this

has been a long, emotional day for J.B. and Jenny (Nichols's RHC and the RA involved

in the incident from the beginning). Having been completely level and calm throughout

the day's events, J.B. and Jenny begin to show the first signs of breaking down. The Nichols RA staff gather around them and come to their aid. The rest of the administrators quietly leave the room and let them have a moment. They don't need anyone else right now. They need each other.

From there, the RHCs disperse and go back to their own residence halls. They text message and call their RAs to meet ASAP for an emergency staff meeting. By this time, most of the RAs already know the key facts. Still, the RHCs want to make sure that a consistent message is delivered to all RAs on-campus. In one meeting, Andre directs RAs not to talk about the situation, but to be honest if someone asks questions. He doesn't want the RAs to encourage gossip, because he feels that Residential Life owes at least that much to Michael's family. In another meeting, Natalie talks about the way that suicide could raise issues for students who have encountered a similar experience in the past. In a third meeting, Liz instructs that the RAs need to be sensitive to the fact that students may be affected by this incident, whether or not they knew Michael. The RHCs reinforce that if any RAs or residents have problems coping, even in the middle of the night, they can call the RHC or Counseling Services. Each addresses questions raised by their staffs, gauges how each RA is feeling, ends their meetings, and returns home.

10:00 p.m.: Winding Down

By the time the immediate incident has come to a close and follow-up meetings are completed, it is around 10:00 p.m. Hank reflects that, in an emergency situation, his stress or crisis response goes up automatically. He doesn't have to think about details anymore. There is no sheet of paper or a cheat sheet in his wallet that he breaks out instructing him to do a, b, c, d, e, f, g. It's just a done deal. Time almost slows down and

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he can remember every detail. Then you are back in reality, whoosh—like you are in *The Matrix*. That is a lot to take in. Some administrators don't even let it hit them when they are in the moment. Only afterward does the emotion all come rushing back. So Hank thinks it's important for those taking care of others in emergency situations to get some time to process for themselves. After leaving campus, Hank and the two Assistant Directors go out and try to unwind over an adult beverage.

The Week After: Providing Support

Over the next week, the Residential Life staff continues to deal with the aftermath of the suicide, answering questions and checking in on one another's emotional well-being. The RHCs reach out to J.B. and Jenny to make sure they are doing OK. Counselors make themselves available in the basement of Nichols for any student or staff member who wants to talk. J.B. coordinates with Michael's family to get his belongings from the room and take care of any university business. J.B. also checks in to make sure the family has a good support system in-place. The roommates are moved to other assignments on-campus and arrangements are made to have the room professionally cleaned. Although there are initial plans to keep the room vacant for the following academic year, the Central Staff ultimately seeks out an RA to volunteer living in one side of the suite and sets the other side up as a show-room for prospective student tours. There is talk about arranging a memorial on campus but, unfortunately, the timing is too close to finals and the end of the semester. Still, different staff members, including Edward, attend the viewing or funeral. The central Residential Life staff continues to stay in contact with University Relations, the office in regular contact with all of the local media outlets. But interestingly, there is nothing on the news during the following week.

Ostensive and Performative Comparisons

In a quick comparison of the ostensive and performative routines for this committed suicide case (Appendix E and Appendix F), it is apparent that remarkable similarity exists between the two. Overall, if one can glean a positive outcome from a suicide case, this response is deemed a "success" by the staff. Still, even in a largely consistent response scenario, there is evidence to suggest that alterations were made throughout. Further, even in some instances where the ostensive and performative routines are identical, data suggests that such decisions were not uncalculated. In both types of change scenarios (i.e., that were change occurred and where change did not occur between ostensive and performative routines), specific sensemaking dynamics emerge as triggers for change in the ostensive-performative relationship. Here, we will focus on the changes found in the following subroutines and the sensemaking dynamics that triggered them: Calling 911, Calling up the Line, Reporting on the Scene to Help, Gossip and Crowd Control, and Notifying Parents.

Calling 911: A Breakdown in Plausibility Leads to Delayed Police Response

The first subroutine in which a sensemaking-triggered change is evident occurs within the first minutes of the scenario. Specifically, a failure related to Plausibility causes the staff responders not to double-check where the original 911 call was directed, thereby altering responses of the TUE police department (Figure 8). Consequently, in reflecting on the lessons learned from this case, the Calling 911 issue stands as the concern most closely considered a breakdown in the larger response routine. The instruction to call 911 is not only addressed in the manual as part of the suicide response

	Ostsensive Routine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Performative Routine

Upon finding a deceased student — **RA call TUEPD at 911** *from a campus phone* → Plausibility → **3:00 p.m.** Roommate calls 911 from cell phone

TUEPD dispatcher notifies Eastcity police & emergency personnel

Within 5 minutes — *TUEPD officers arrive on-site & take charge of scene*

Within 10 minutes — *Eastcity police & emergency personnel arrive on site & take charge of scene* — **3:08 p.m.** First Eastcity Police Officers Arrive

3:30 p.m. TUEPD arrives on-scene

Eastcity EMTs, Detectives, and Coroner Arrive

Figure 8. Plausibility as a Trigger for Change in the Calling 911 Subroutine of the Committed Suicide Case.

protocol, but also on a page more generally discussing the need to contact 911 in any

emergency. That protocol reads:

> In campus emergencies, call the TUE emergency phone number. If 911 is called from any campus extension, it will access the TUE Police. Notify dispatchers of

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the situation especially if paramedics are needed. "Dispatch" will have Eastcity Police respond to the scene and ensure that paramedics are responding.

The key issue with this protocol involves an assumption that staff members and students are calling 911 from on-campus phones.

Like many urban institutions, TUE has access to two separate police departments, the TUE Police Department and the Eastcity Police Department. In the case of a residential hall incident, it is preferred that the first contact go out to the TUE Police. Whether a responder calls 911 or the alternative TUE emergency number, all landlines are connect directly to the TUE telephone system and will route an emergency call to the TUE police. Once the TUE officers have been sent to the scene, the TUE dispatcher immediately turns around and contacts the appropriate Eastcity personnel (e.g., Eastcity police, EMTs, fire department). The idea is that TUE officers are on-site, can respond quicker, and are more familiar with the maze of buildings on the college campus than are Eastcity Police. College campuses are notoriously difficult for emergency personnel to navigate, owing to the fact that residence halls house large groups of students under one address, some addresses are not actually directly located on city streets, front entries are locked down or guarded, room numbering systems are not always obvious to outsiders, and incidents may take place in unnumbered common spaces. TUE officers can get to the scene of an incident almost immediately, opening the secured doors, identifying additional barriers respondents might face, mediating immediate danger, and guiding additional emergency personnel to the site of the incident. They are also more familiar with individual Residential Life staff members and their roles, and so collaborate more easily with regards to notifying professional staff members, sharing information, and coordinating crowd control.

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However, in the time between the 911 protocol originally being penned and today, an important shift has taken place in communications: the cell phone. Because cell phones are independent of the campus telephone system, 911 calls do not route automatically to the TUE police department. Calls from cell phones go directly to the Eastcity Police Department. In this suicide case, the cell phone call omits TUE police from the performative routine and, therefore, causes a delay in their response. No staff member blames Zack, Jenny or the other staff members for not remembering this detail. After all, calling 911 is ingrained into our collective psyches in the case of crises, on or off campus. Additionally, the misdirected call did not compromise the response or cause harm to any of the people involved. The hitch in the 911 routine is not in the action departing from the protocol, but from the protocol perhaps not being altered in the first place. On the one hand, past experience inhibited the original responders from changing their ingrained routines of calling 911. However, on the other hand, a failure to imagine a 911 call coming from a cell phone inhibited additional staff members from questioning whether TUE police were in the loop.

After the Nichols suicide incident, the 911 lesson becomes a reference point for the staff on-campus at the time of the event. It becomes part of the wisdom gained by hands-on experience. Having experienced a breakdown resulting from the 911 protocol, the staff now recognizes the cell phone mistake as a real possibility. Given their ability to construct a plausible story wherein an emergency call misses the TUE police altogether, the staff now proposes to consider the possibility and remedy its effects in future incidents involving emergency response. Although the 911 protocol has raised an important lesson for the Residential Life staff, they do not change their policy in writing.

However, a great deal of attention is focused on changing the shared understanding among professional staff and RAs, especially for individuals who have joined the team in the year following the Nichols suicide. In almost every training session relevant to emergency response, the staff is reminded constantly call the TUE emergency number rather than 911, if they are calling from a cell phone. The RAs are instructed that they can call 911 or the TUE emergency number interchangeably, only if calling from a campus landline. At one point, Hank even has all RAs take out their cell phones and program in the TUE emergency number. I observe no subsequent issues with the 911 calling protocol, throughout the year that I spend with the staff after the event. It remains to be seen whether the change in shared understanding is enough to avert this breakdown in the future.

Calling up the Line: Retrospect Alters Phone Tree and Extends Responder Networks

A second subroutine for which sensemaking triggers change involves Calling up the Line. In contrast to Calling 911 being associated with a breakdown in procedure, Calling up the Line is actually considered a successfully enacted protocol by the staff. An RHC remarks:

> You can have a procedure, but there are so many different situations that can affect whether you follow it or not. You can have a roommate find their roommate dead and the roommate freak out and run down the hall screaming it. You can have the roommate find them and then just call the police without calling anybody. You can have the RA find them; you can have the RA break down; you can have the RA actually handle it correctly. This one, I think, happened correctly and as close as a procedure can happen, I guess. It went up the line.

The Calling up the Line protocol is a mandate designed to pass emergency-related information quickly across a wide spectrum of Residential Life and Student Affairs

administrators. The subroutine also ensures that any one responder can quickly engage other responders for support in making decisions and reacting to the emergency first-hand.

To enact a chain of command from the RA level, upward, using the organizational chart (Figure 7) as a guide. RAs are the eyes and ears of the operation, familiar with activities at the front line and on the ground level. When an issue arises, they have to make the determination as to whether the incident is likely to rise to emergency status. However, they don't always have all of the pieces of the puzzle. A student may have been in trouble in a different residence hall the day before or have hurt themselves in years past. So the next level up is the Residence Coordinator. Depending on whether immediate feedback is needed, a consultation about further action is required, or information must be passed up the line so that nobody is surprised, the Director of Residential Life is next. Depending on the nature of the incident and how widespread its impact might be, the chain of command continues upward potentially to the president's office. Given the committed suicide case, changes occur to the Calling up the Line protocol in two manners. Either calls are enacted out-of-order or individuals outside of the Residential Life reporting lines are added to the call list. The sensemaking trigger responsible for both of these changes is Retrospect and its impact, an instantaneous expansion of the responder network.

With regards to altering the order of the emergency phone tree, subtle evidence of this change can be found throughout the case (Figure 9). For instance, at the beginning of the case, protocol instructs RHC, J.B., to call his direct supervisor, Emma, the AD for Residential Life. But, at the time of the incident, J.B. knows that Emma has only been on-

	Ostensive Routine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change		Performative Routine

Upon finding a deceased student
- *First person on the scene call RA* — 3:00 p.m. — RA on-site when student found deceased
- *RA call RHC* — RA calls RHC

Within 5 minutes
- *RHC call AD for Res. Life* → Retrospect → 3:02 p.m. — RHC does not call AD for Res. Life
- **RHC call Director** — RHC calls Director
- Retrospect → Director instructs ADs to join him
- Retrospect → AD Facilities calls TUE Police Chief

Within 20 minutes
- *Director call AVPSA & Dean of Students* — 3:05 p.m. — Director calls AVPSA & Dean of Students
- *Director call University Relations* → Retrospect → Dean of Students Calls Univ. Relations

As incident evolves
- **RHC call additional RAs & *RHCs* for support**
- *Dean of Students calls VPSA* — Dean of Students calls VPSA
- Retrospect → 3:08 p.m. — Director calls AD Operations
- Retrospect → 3:25 p.m. — Dean of Students calls Counseling Services
- 5:15 p.m. — AD Res Life calls additional RHCs
- 9:00 P.M. — Additional RHCs call non-Nichols RAs

Figure 9. Retrospect as a Trigger for Change in the Calling up the Line Subroutine of the Committed Suicide Case.

the-job for about three weeks. Additionally, J.B. has over a year's worth experience

working directly with the head of the department, Hank, the Director of Residential Life.

J.B. knows that Hank will want to be immediately involved in such a serious emergency.

Therefore, in-the-moment, J.B.'s Retrospect influences him to skip over Emma and go

directly to Hank with his call. The Call up the Line subroutine shifts again ever so

slightly when Hank instructs Emma and Ken to join him in responding. On one hand, his

invitation to Emma corrects the omission made by J.B. moments before. On the other

hand, Hank's invitation to Ken points to another instance of Retrospect-triggered change.

Since the suicide is not a facilities-related emergency, there is no measure in the

ostensive protocol to involve Ken (AD for Facilities). Yet, further exploration shows that

Hank and Ken have worked with each other for the past three years. Additionally, Ken

previously held Emma's position and has experience handling Residential Life

emergencies at TUE. Part of Ken has not yet given up his past role as emergency

responder. Further, based on their three-year relationship, part of Hank has not given up

his past habit of relying on Ken to fill that role.

With regards to expanding the responder network, several contacts are made

during the Calling up the Line subroutine not reflected in the Ostensive Routine. Once

again, the addition of these individuals can be attributed to Retrospect. For example, one

of the first people phoned by the ADs while on the way to Nichol's Hall is the Chief of

Police. Although he is likely to hear of the incident via the Calling 911 protocol, past

experience informs the Director and ADs that his direct help will be necessary for

responding to an emergency of this magnitude. Later, the AD for Operations, University

Relations, and Counseling Services are all contacted via the phone tree. Referencing past

experiences with the AD for Operations, the Director knows that she has the skill and

access required for drawing student information from the university's computer system.

Based on retrospective experiences with other large-scale emergencies, the Director of

Residential Life and Dean of Students know that the media are likely to show up on the

scene, introducing additional levels of complication to the emergency response.

Likewise, from past experiences, both know that emergencies related to student death

will require on-site support from Counseling Services. In each case, Retrospect not only

informs the administrators as to who might be helpful in responding to a suicide-related

emergency, but also organically expands the network of responders involved in the

performative routine.

Based on Retrospect, or a tacit knowledge, allowing for flexibility in the way the

Calling up the Line subroutine is enacted leaves opportunities for the Residential Life

team to check and correct their internal actions. At the same time, the flexibility allows

the Residential Life team to improvise in the midst of emergency response. Both of these

sensemaking-triggered changes rely upon and perpetuate a social context built into the

emergency response work of Residential Life offices. During staff training, the Director

of Residential Life emphasizes the importance of this shared understanding:

> Always try to work in a team or in a pair, especially if you're responding to some
> type of an emergency or issue that could become escalated. It's always helpful to
> have two extra eyes, two extra hands, two extra ears, just to validate and confirm
> what the situation was when you got there, what the students said, what you said,
> what was observed.

Further reinforced by the staff manual, many of the situational protocols include

directives to address emergency situations with a collective mindset. According to

Emma, it is the blend of experience-related common sense and teamwork that lead to an

effective response in this instance. She remarks, "We've certainly all had attempted suicides, we've had other medical emergencies, and, with each one, you gain more skills and more awareness and you learn from it and what you'd do different next time. But, again, I think it's a real testament to even who we were as a team at that time."

Gossip and Crowd Control: Retrospect Influences VPSA to Support Staff Debriefing

As discussed in an earlier section on the conceptual frame, a changing routine is not an either-or proposition. Rather, change is an outcome that occurs along a continuum from *no change* to *complete change*. In this study, understanding the level to which a routine changes is not as important as understanding the sensemaking trigger affecting that level of change. In the Gossip and Crowd Control subroutine, there is no noticeable change between ostensive and performative routines. There is, however, evidence to suggest that a sensemaking trigger is at the center of why there is no discernable difference between the two. Namely, Retrospect teaches the VPSA that debriefing the staff is a better means of gossip control than keeping information about a suicide-like issue private.

Even though Residential Life falls under his purview, the VPSA, Dr. Taylor, is not a Residential Life professional. If there is anyone in the emergency response hierarchy likely to enact response "by-the-book," it is he. Unlike the Residential Life staff he supervises, Dr. Taylor admits he does not have a great deal of past experience upon which to judge appropriate measures for many emergency responses. He relies upon the expertise of the Residential Life staff, and especially its Director. Yet Dr. Taylor has the ultimate authority to approve or disapprove of the emergency response routines

espoused and enacted by that same staff. With respect to the Gossip and Crowd Control subroutine, a reflection on allowing the staff to debrief details of the suicide evidences how Retrospect becomes an important trigger for maintaining that protocol.

In the fall prior to the incident at hand, Dr. Taylor was involved in responding to a different suicide case involving a student who did not live in the residence halls. Dr. Taylor shares that, back then, he did not support debriefing staffs about such personal matters. His first instinct in a suicide scenario was to respect a family's privacy and keep everything as quiet as possible. Yet, this instinct backfired. Rather than simplifying the situation, not sharing important details about the suicide only complicated it more. Students had a hard time adjusting to the bad news and Student Affairs staff had no information available to help students work through the grief. In Retrospect, Dr. Taylor realized that, given even broad details, Student Affairs staff could help identify students potentially affected by the suicide and/or keep an eye out for their welfare. Similarly, not sharing details about the suicide left the door open for misinformation to spread amongst the community. From this outcome, Dr. Taylor learned that:

> Uncertainty breeds its own system of information that isn't always accurate. You can't always make sure the most accurate information is out there. No matter what, people still tend to make up their own stories – but you have to be open with information. Otherwise, strange stories get out there. It's like a ripple in the pond. It just keeps going out there and that information is going to spread no matter what. So you might as well use your network to be sure that the information that's out there is correct and that those people are there to help students.

Faced again with a suicide and a request from subordinates to debrief the Residential Life staff on the matter, Dr. Taylor's retrospective experiences from the fall drive his support for the initiative (Figure 10).

	Ostensive Routine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Performative Routine
Within 5 minutes	**RHC delegates RAs to monitor personnel & activities at key locations in building**		**4:15 p.m.** — AD Facilities monitors personnel and activities on-site
			AD Res. Life monitors personnel and activities in lobby
	RAs *& RHCs* aid in crowd control		RAs aid in crowd control
As incident evolves	**Director *& University Relations* address media**		
	AD for Res. Life & RHC debrief RA staff	Retrospect	**6:00 p.m.** — Dean of Students, Director, & ADs meet to discuss debriefing
			8:00 p.m. — Dean of Students, Director, & ADs debrief Nichols RAs and all RHCs
			9:00 P.M. — Additional RHCs debrief their own RAs

Figure 10. Retrospect as a Trigger for Change in the Gossip and Crowd Control Subroutine of the Committed Suicide Case.

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Notifying Parents: Retrospect, Plausibility, and Identity Trigger Residential Life Staff to Initiate Contact

In the preceding examples, sensemaking dynamics all trigger either subtle change or no change at all in the emergency response routine. In the subroutine, Notifying Parents, sensemaking triggers the opposite outcome, or a novel response. Specifically, according to the ostensive routine for a student death, it is expected that the Eastcity Police will take the lead in notifying the parents accordingly. On behalf of the university, the VPSA often follows-up with the parents. The ostensive protocol does not necessarily call upon the Dean of Students to fill such roles. There is also no precedent for the Director of Residential Life accompanying the Dean of Students on such a task. However, in this suicide case the Dean of Students recognizes that notification by Eastcity Police will not be timely. Additionally, the VPSA is not available to make the university's first contact. Influenced by sensemaking around Retrospect, Plausibility, and Personal Identity, the Dean of Students and Director of Residential Life change the ostensive routine by initiating contact on their own (Figure 11).

At a key point in the committed suicide case, Edward goes against protocol and decides to notify Michael's parents of their son's death. Further, he decides to drive to their house and do so in person. As specified above, three sensemaking dynamics motivate Edward's actions therein. First, Edward remembers another instance in which he had to inform a set of parents about their daughter's death. He recounts how quickly information spread about that incident, both by word-of-mouth and via the media. In the moment where Edward realizes it is near the end of the work day and that there may be further delays in the Eastcity Police's efforts to notify Michael's parents, these

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Ostensive Routine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Performative Routine
As incident evolves *Eastcity police contact parents of deceased student*	Retrospect Plausibility Personal Identity	**4:30 p.m.** Dean of Students decides to notify parents of deceased student in-person
VPSA contact parents of deceased student	Personal Identity	Director of Residential Life decides to accompany Dean of Students to notify parents

Figure 11. Retrospect, Plausibility, and Personal Identity as Triggers for Change in the Notifying Parents Subroutine of the Committed Suicide Case.

retrospective memories trigger an image in his head. In that image, Michael's family walks up to Edward's office at seven o'clock that evening or even the next morning, challenging, "Why didn't you tell us?" If Retrospect is not enough to concern him that the Notification of Parents subroutine is undertaken in a timely and appropriate manner, Plausibility fills that gap.

Beyond Retrospect and Plausibility, Personal Identity also enters into Edward's decision to alter the Notification of Parents subroutine. Ultimately, Edward is an empathetic person. As he is deciding whether to enact his own measure of notification, Edward thinks about what it is like to be a parent, sending a child off to a large school. He also thinks about being a neighbor to Michael's mother, someone he sees in the grocery store every so often. Casting himself in the role of parent and neighbor, Edward feels responsible for providing Michael's parents with due diligence. Moreover, Edward feels that his responsibility extends beyond his own Personal Identity. His due diligence

reflects on the identity of the university, as well. Edward believes strongly in the notions that TUE is a community and should be a personable place. In his tenure as Dean of Students over the past ten years, the Student Affairs Division has worked hard to eradicate past images of TUE being a big, cold, and impersonal place. As the Dean of Students, Edward believes it is his job to embody this image of community, doing the respectful and right thing by its students and parents. He explains:

> This is all part of the process of practicing what we preach. The more you can act small and personal and one-on-one with people, the less likely they're going to feel like we sent them a memo to tell them about their child's death or even waited to send them a letter of condolence afterwards. Parents have entrusted TUE with their best and brightest. They have to trust that you will do the right thing by them, no matter how horrific it is.

Building upon Retrospect and Plausibility, this combination of concern over personal and professional identities serves as a catalyst for change in the Notifying Parents subroutine.

If there is little ostensive precedence for Edward to notify Michael's parents in-person, there is even less of a foundation for Hank joining him. Such issues are often left to the discretion of the Dean of Students and/or the VPSA. However, in deliberating with Edward over the Notification of Parents subroutine, Hank opts to make his own change to the response by accompanying Edward on the notification. Hank provides two motivations for this action, both related to Personal Identity.

First, like Edward, Hank is motivated to alter the Notification subroutine owing to his identity as a parent. Hank is a parent in real-life, and he reflects on how he might feel if in the same situation as Michael's parents. Second, Hank feels that Edward should not have to undertake the task of notifying Michael's parents alone. Hank self-labels himself a "hands-on" person, someone who is best when on-site and in the middle of the action. It is a trait common to many Residential Life professionals, evidence of which can be seen

throughout the suicide case. For instance, even though the ostensive routine calls for subordinates to respond on the front-line, Hank takes it upon himself to respond directly. He is one of the first people on-the-scene. He stays with the response from afternoon to evening, collecting information, supporting the professional emergency response personnel, and directly addressing the RAs in the debriefing session. Knowing his staff may need support, he takes them out for a drink in order to process in person. Owing to this ingrained quality, Hank knows where he needs to be when Edward and he discuss notifying Michael's parents. He feels that Edward should not have to embark upon such a challenge alone. Even though this is Hank's first notification, he feels more comfortable accompanying Edward and being on-site rather than letting him go alone.

Reporting on the Scene to Help: Identity Lost Leads to a Paralysis of Action

In the final subroutine for the suicide case, a sensemaking dynamic again triggers deliberations around change in the overall emergency response routine. However, in this instance, the outcome is neither complete change nor a lack thereof. Rather, with regards to Reporting on the Scene to Help, sensemaking triggers a response akin to a paralysis. More specifically, when younger professionals find that they cannot be helpful on-site, or invoke a deeply ingrained hero-identity, they simply do not know what to do or how to respond (Figure 12). Although such an outcome has no real effect on the suicide case at hand, the observation is important with regards to understanding Residential Life work and how such a dynamic might affect responses in alternative scenarios.

Reporting on the Scene to Help is not only a subroutine incorporated into the suicide response protocol, but it is also part of the larger shared understanding about Residential Life work, in general. One might say that it is a strong enough expectation

	Ostensive Routine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change		Performative Routine
Within 5 minutes	**RHC report to site of incident**		3:00 p.m.	RHC drives back to Nichols
			3:02 p.m.	Director and ADs depart for Nichols
			3:08 p.m.	Director, ADs, and RHC meet at Nichols
			3:25 p.m.	Dean of Students arrives at Nichols
	Additional RAs report to site of incident to offer help		4:15 p.m.	Nichols RAs report to the scene to help
Within 10 minutes	**RA aid emergency personnel**			RAs aid emergency personnel
				Counseling Services arrives at Nichols
As incident evolves	*Eastcity police & emergency personnel dictate how response will proceed*			Eastcity police & emergency personnel dictate how response will proceed
		Personal Identity	5:15 p.m.	Additional RHCs begin arriving at Nichols

Figure 12. Personal Identity as a Trigger for Change in the Reporting on the Scene to Help Subroutine of the Committed Suicide Case

that Residential Life administrators see helping as part of their professional identities. Offering unsolicited help can involve anything from lending a hand to set-up an event to taking on on-site responsibilities during an emergency response. In the culture of Residential Life work, it is often difficult to distinguish between what professionals do and who they are. Further, as evidenced by former discussions on the Notifying Parents subroutine, Residential Life professionals experience a great deal of crossover between personal and professional identities. Therefore, not only do Residential Life professionals bring themselves into their work, but Residential Life work brings itself into the identities of its professionals. Throughout the study, data evidenced 54 identities held by participants, aggregated into 15 categories (Table 9).

The most commonly referenced identity on this list is that of hero. More specifically, hero is the most commonly referenced identity for Residential Life workers newer to the profession, such as RAs and RHCs. In contrast, veteran professionals were more likely to reference identities such as "parent" when discussing Residential Life work. On one level, the hero identity takes on a superficial presence among the staff, serving as a creative theme for initial staff training and ongoing staff development activities. On another level, the hero identity is deeply ingrained in younger professionals with regards to how they see their roles in emergency response scenarios. That is why, given this particular suicide case, an interesting reflection arises from the fact that the hero identity does not surface at all.

The Hero Identity Reflected, Reinforced, and Internalized

Each year, the RHCs select a theme upon which creative aspects of staff training are based. The 2008 theme, "superhero," pervaded nearly every aspect of the event. For

Table 9. Professional Identities Involved in Residential Life Work

n	Identity Category	Identities
28	Hero/Rescuer	Hero, Security Blanket, Medical Professional, Firefighter, Police Officers, Soldier
22	Advsior/Counselor	Helper, Counselor, Advisor, Social Worker, Mentor, Listener, Sounding Board, Confessor, Motivator
19	Role Model	Role Model, RA for RAs
16	Liaison	Communicator, Channel, Conduit, intermediary, Mediator, Negotiator, Messenger, University Representative
12	Parent/Big Sibling	Parent, Big Sibling
7	Administrator	Building Manager, Supervisor
7	Disciplinarian	Disciplinarian, Bitch, Enforcer, Judicial Officer, Stickler for Rules
7	Information Clearinghouse	Information Resource, Clearinghouse, Oracle
5	Detective	Inspector, Secret Service Agent, Suicide Police, Undercover Agent
5	Facilitator	Facilitator, Sheepherder, Salesperson
5	Friend	Friend, Girlfriend, Ally
4	Gatekeeper	Gatekeeper, Security Guard, Doorman
3	Educator	Educator, Teacher
2	Doer	Doer, Go-To Guy
1	Student Housing Professional	Student Housing Professional

example, the front cover of the RA manual depicted a picture of a dark cityscape lit only by a batman-like beacon overhead. However, instead of generic buildings, the cityscape represents each of TUE's residence halls. Replacing the familiar bat signal in the middle of the emergency beacon are the letters, "RA." The VPSA, Dr. Taylor, extended the superhero theme in his opening remarks. Confessing that he probably knows more about superheroes than he should, Dr. Taylor engaged the group in a discussion comparing Superman and Batman as two types of heroes: "Superman is a guy with natural ability and Batman an ordinary guy with tools he has acquired." In a final lesson to the RAs, Dr. Taylor instructed RAs to aspire to be more like Batman than Superman:

Superman was a hero of his own birth. His ability to help people relied on his inherent superhuman powers. In contrast, Batman was a regular human who became a hero through careful training and the use of special tools. The upper administrators in Student Affairs and Residential Life do not expect RAs to be superhuman. They expect that the RAs will engage in training, learn about their tools, and use them wisely in the interest of their residents.

By the end of training, the superhero theme seemed to have its desired effect. RAs and RHCs were energized to enter their communities, ready to solve any problem that crossed their doorsteps.

Beyond training, the hero identity continued to surface throughout the study. Unsolicited, the theme continued to emerge even in discussions about the emergency responder role at TUE. Often, however, the hero identity proved to be a challenge for participants rather than a point of clarity. For example, each staff member interviewed for the study was asked to recount three of the most important instructions for carrying out emergency response in Residential Life settings. Most shared a directive deemed "the number one rule of emergency response" by the Director and ADs. Namely, "keep yourself from danger." Consequently, the same staff members who so definitively identified "keep yourself from danger" as an espoused expectation for emergency response, grappled with that same rule when asked about enacting real emergency responses. One staff member confessed, "The thing with the 'keep safe' – I would definitely tell everyone else that. But honestly, say someone had a gun, I don't know what I would do. I know to keep myself safe, but I think I would really try to intervene." Another staff member admitted that, even given clear directions by supervisors not to put himself in harm's way, "If I think I can do something to help the situation, I probably would. But, shhhh." A third staff member summarized her deliberations through the lens of Virginia Tech:

> That's a good lesson that we could take from Virginia Tech. An RA heard some gunshots, went to go investigate, and he got shot. I mean, it's a good example. It's a horrible circumstance to happen but that's the thing—you hear gunshots, you do need to stay away. You don't need to put yourself in harm's way. You just sit tight…you know? But our instinct as leaders is to make sure that everybody else is protected, and that's what we do. I don't know what I would do if I heard gunshots. I could be under the desk or I could be out in the hallway trying to figure out what's going on, with something in my hand. I don't know. I have no idea. Fight or flight? I don't know.

Ultimately, RAs and RHCs giving these responses reflected a dilemma likely to surface in emergency response scenarios. Namely, even though shared understandings exist about keeping yourself safe in an emergency situation, it would be difficult to fight the internalized notion that Residential Life professionals are, first and foremost, people who help in times of danger.

The Lost Hero Identity Triggers a Disconnect

Since the hero identity and deliberations around that identity had occupied such a strong place in the broader ethnographic part of the study, it was surprising to find the theme all but absent from the committed suicide case study. In the wake of the suicide, the actions of RAs and RHCs suggest that they began to enact the hero identity, in accordance with outlined protocols. For instance, when observations, rumors, and phone calls signal something bad is happening in Nichols, various staff members respond. Drawing on the Batman references from training, the signal goes out over the city and the heroes respond, with no idea about the situation they may face. Clearly J.B. and Jenny are on the scene, ready to perform any duties necessary, as are RAs who get to the scene in the first hour. Therefore, for early responders, the Report on the Scene to Help subroutine is enacted as expected.

However, the later-responding RAs and RHCs recount a different experience. When RAs and RHCs show up on-the-scene after the first hour (many of whom were not contacted via the phone tree or contacted only late in the day), the important tasks have all been covered. There is nothing for them to do, and so, no role to fulfill. They report being most helpful by staying back and waiting for instructions. Moreover, even though J.B. and Jenny are involved early, there is evidence of them feeling helpless as the situation evolves and professionals take over the scene. They too express a certain level of anxiety when remembering the feeling of no longer feeling useful. Apparently, not being able to help is a difficult role for many of the staff members to take on, especially given an emergency scenario clearly among the most critical TUE Residential Life had faced that year. For a host of heroes, being unhelpful or helpless is an identity lost.

Rather than leading to a particular change or lack of change in the Reporting on the Scene to Help subroutine, a loss of the hero identity leads to a sort of paralysis of action. In the case of emergencies, front-line responders are trained and reinforced to act the role of hero, either preemptively or responsively saving residents from harm. They are trained to get on the scene and help, no matter what the situation. In addition, like Hank in the Notifying Parents example, RAs and RHCs report being "hands-on" people. When harm has already occurred or if there are already enough people on the scene, it causes younger professionals to grapple with their roles and freezes their participation in the routine. Who are they if not heroes? What are hands-on people supposed to do if there is nothing to be hands-on about? Given a situation where they cannot proactively be involved, RAs and RHCs are left to contemplate whether they are actually failed heroes, or perhaps just civilians, like the rest of the students on campus. The challenge to their

hero and hands-on identities leaves RAs and RHCs unsure of whether they were useful in this particular suicide case. Moreover, although such uncertainty had little impact on this particular emergency response case, one wonders whether the loss of the hero identity herein might affect how the same RAs and RHCs respond to future emergencies.

CHAPTER 7

Attempted Suicide Case Study

Summary Overview of Case

The second case study follows the TUE Residential Life staff and Student Affairs collaborators engaging in an emergency response routine related to attempted suicide. Given an environment where students are challenged by new surroundings, life transitions, intense emotions, and choices ranging from personal development to career preparation, the fact that college students exhibit signs of depression and/or suicidal thoughts does not come as a surprise to Student Affairs administrators. In training, TUE's Counseling Services instructs that depression and suicide are prevalent amongst college students, especially at times of the year where stress is high (e.g., during the first weeks of school for first-year students, around final exams, and as graduation approaches for seniors). Residential Life professionals who live amongst students and interact with them directly every day regularly monitor for early warning signs and are trained to respond quickly when threat levels to a student's self or others appears to elevate.

Because an attempted suicide can stem from seemingly passing incidents such as a student exhibiting signs of depression, the Attempted Suicide protocol is predicated on the procedures for responding to a Suicidal Student. Written into the staff manual, these

procedures include subroutines, Call Up the Line, Oversee Response, Provide Support Services, Collect and Share Pertinent Information, Evaluate Threat Level, and Follow Up. Similar to the Committed Suicide protocol, Notifying Parents is an additional subroutine not written into the manual but widely understood as a critical step in the protocol.

The case itself traces the six-week evolution of an incident that begins as a roommate conflict and ends with a student suicide attempt. Correspondingly, the case traces the progressive emergency responses that Residential Life administrators take in accordance with escalating incidents. At the onset, concerns are raised about a particular student's emotional well-being and relationship with her boyfriend. Recognizing these issues as troublesome, but not harmful, administrators respond by suggesting she visit Counseling Services. When the same student is found with a bag of pills later in the week, response is escalated to the Dean of Students and the student is asked to undergo a psychiatric evaluation. On the day of the evaluation, the student indicates to the Dean that she is depressed and will not show up for her appointment. This sets in motion procedures for admitting the student to the hospital for a required psychological evaluation. Weeks later, after the student has returned to the residence halls, she is found in the hallway with pills and a knife. The Dean of Students readmits the student to psychiatric services based on a progressive history of concern for the student's well-being, incrementally serious attempts to harm herself, and concerns that future attempts will be made.

Given a comparison of the ostensive and performative routines for this attempted suicide case, four emergency response subroutines and the sensemaking dynamics that

trigger routine-related change therein are discussed. For the Calling up the Line

subroutine, a series of incidents creates a familiarity with the case among its responders.

As a result, administrators enact the phone tree for each subsequent incident with fewer

steps and increased efficiency. Regarding the imperative to build trust between

responders and troubled students involved in the Providing Support Services subroutine,

Personal Identity and Social Contexts are deliberated as triggers for maintaining

conflicting roles. Regarding another aspect of the Providing Support Services subroutine,

Salient Cues, Retrospect, and Plausibility are discussed as triggers for change in decisions

on whether or not to mandate hospitalization for a suicidal student. Finally, the Notifying

the Parents subroutine is revisited, reflecting on the roles that Identity and Plausibility

play in causing administrators to enact that set of procedures.

Ostensive Routine

Similar to the preceding case, the prescribed procedures for responding to an

attempted suicide can be elicited from both protocols inscribed into the manual and

shared understandings developed within the Residential Life staff. In the staff manual,

there is no differentiation between a student who has expressed suicidal thoughts,

exhibited suicidal tendencies, or has actually taken action to harm him or herself. Each of

these cases is covered by the same written guidelines, or the suicidal student protocol.

The protocol written into the staff manual reads:

> Residential Assistant
> 1. Take every reference to or threat of suicide seriously. Once you are aware that a resident is suicidal, contact your supervisor immediately.
> 2. Review the intervention steps with your supervisor and then talk with your resident about your concerns
>> Suggestions on How to Approach the conversation

- When you enter the room you may need to spend a little time building a rapport and talking about general areas such as friends, work, school, organizations, etc.
- During your discussion you will want to try to determine what areas are causing concern (academics, finances, relationships, etc.)
- Once you have an idea of what areas are causing difficulty, you can express your genuine concern for the resident's well being. You can point to specific behaviors that have caused you or his/her friends to worry.
- You will need to ask him/her directly is he/she contemplating suicide. Do not be afraid to use the word suicide when talking with the resident.
- If the resident is thinking about suicide, then you will need to find out if he/she has a plan and how immediate that plan is. Ask him/her if he/she knows when, how and where he/she would do this.
- Let the resident know that people care about him/her that you care and that you don't want him/her to commit suicide.
- Let the resident know that there are people and resources that can help. Try to get him/her to agree to visit the counseling center. Let him/her know that the service is free and that many students use it. Offer to walk over with him/her. If he/she refuses to see a counselor, try to get him/her to agree to see someone else they trust. Once you get a firm commitment, reiterate the agreement.
- Get the resident to make a contract with you that he/she will come talk to you if he/she is feeling suicidal again.
- Suggest that they call Counseling Services or the after hours emergency numbers.
- Find out what the resident's plans are for the rest of the evening and the next few days. Try to encourage him/her to join you for a floor program, meals, etc.

3. Follow up with your supervisor immediately after the interaction. Professional staff member has resources to get in contact with a counselor in the middle of the night if needed.
4. Continue to be in contact with the resident even after s/he has started going to the Counseling Center.

Professional Staff Member
1. When a Resident Assistant informs you that someone on his/her hall is possibly suicidal take the situation seriously and take immediate action.
2. Inform the Resident Assistant that s/he will need to immediately go talk with the resident. Review the important elements of the conversation. It is important that the Resident Assistant directly ask the resident if s/he is contemplating suicide and if so to find out if s/he has a plan and resources (i.e., knife, pills)

3. Inform the Resident Assistant to call you immediately after completing the conversation. Wait by the phone for the Resident Assistant to call you and inform you about how the conversation went.
4. Based upon what the Resident Assistant reports, determine if you think that the resident is safe for the night and if there is a concrete plan for getting the resident to the Counseling Center in the morning.
5. If you feel that the resident will not be safe for the night, contact TUEPD and discuss the need to get emergency attention during the night. Explain the situation and request to have a professional come out to assess the situation.
6. Notify the Director.

Dominating much of the protocol, the key issue involved in responding to a suicidal student is assessing whether students are serious about hurting themselves, or evaluating the level of threat the student poses to him or herself. However, Evaluating the Threat Level involves simultaneously undertaking an interrelated set of additional subroutines. The written protocol emphasizes six subroutines, in total (Table 10). Again, similar to the committed suicide

Table 10. Inscribed Response Subroutines for Suicidal Students Scenarios

Subroutines
Call Up the Line
Oversee Response
Provide Support Services
Collect and Share Pertinent Information
Evaluate Threat Level
Follow Up

case, the written protocol only provides a broad outline of procedures for handling related scenarios. Observations of and discussions with the staff over time reveal shared understandings that both add to and further elaborate the larger ostensive routine for responding to suicidal students (Appendix G). One example involves the issue of Notifying Parents, a procedure not explicitly outlined in the protocol but obviously practiced and deliberated when the staff discusses the steps often taken in suicidal student

responses. Another example involves further elaboration of the Call up the Line subroutine.

Although the inscribed Call up the Line procedure reflects active involvement on the part of the RA and RHC and a passive role for the Director and Counseling Services, in reality the staff understands that all of these entities will likely be actively engaged as a situation unfolds. Moreover, the AD for Residential Life (Emma) and the Dean of Students (Edward) will most definitely play significant intermediary roles in communications, decision making, and overall supervision of the staff's response. Within the Residential Life staff, the responsibility for student behavior, emergency response, and discipline within the residence halls falls under the AD for Residential Life's purview. In addition, Emma brings to her position an academic background in counseling. Therefore, although not reflected directly by the protocol, the Residential Life staff expects that she will play a vital role in any suicidal student case. Likewise, the Dean of Students position is responsible for student behavior, emergency response, and discipline across TUE's entire student population. Edward also oversees related support services, such as Counseling Services. Once a situation has reached a critical threshold with regard to a student's mental or physical well-being, the Residential Life staff automatically involves Edward in the response. Getting Edward involved means there is harm to self or others, and the danger is imminent. This person needs help *now*, and at the highest level TUE can provide. Ultimately, the final decision as to whether the Residential Life office continues or discontinues responding to a suicidal student situation, or whether that situation is handed off to higher level professionals, lies with Edward.

Because of his integral involvement in Residential Life's suicidal student response efforts, Edward provides additional insight into the challenges wrapped up in such responses. First, the protocol points to the fact that the Residential Life staff anticipates a great deal of ambiguity around labeling a student as truly suicidal. Edward explains that these are the hardest situations to address. The first question he asks is, "by whom?" Without having any behavioral issue to confront, it is difficult to figure out the validity of such a claim. Still, whether the information alleging a student as suicidal is good or bad, it means TUE has institutional knowledge of a potentially dangerous situation. Because the students he deals with are eighteen, he often has to determine the boundary between regular adolescent angst and a dangerous situation.

Second, whereas other emergency response protocols require quick and impulsive responses, the suicidal student protocol enforces a cautious and stepwise approach. Timing is both tenuous and critical in pre-suicide scenarios. Edward often struggles with the issue of how much time should elapse before confronting a situation. He asks, "At what point does it reach a threshold where it's no longer just a rumor, but maybe cause for an intervention?" Edward explains that how such scenarios play out is very difficult, "It is easy to draft a policy that says A, B, C, D, but other factors come into play." He suggests that the protocol tends more toward the language of intervention than emergency response. Compared to calling 911 and expecting an immediate result from an emergency response, the suicidal student protocol signifies the possibility that this type of emergency response may take place over an extended period of time. Moreover, whereas other emergency responses end when a threat has passed, medical professionals take over, or a

problem has been dissipated; the suicidal student protocol suggests that such a situation may not have an obvious point of closure.

Finally, there is a gap in the protocols between following up with a student thought to be suicidal and dealing with a committed suicide. Namely, there is no explicit protocol for dealing with a student who has made an attempt, but is still alive. That gap is filled in with a shared understanding that, if a student has made a suicide attempt, the protocol immediately turns into a medical emergency. The protocol in writing for a medical emergency basically includes calling 911, calling-up-the-line, staying with the student until a professional has taken over the scene, and gathering information for professional response personnel. Although the protocol explicitly instructs RAs not to notify parents, it does state that the professional staff may opt to contact parents in extreme cases.

Performative Routine

It is early in September and the fall semester has been underway for about a month now. There is a lot of activity in all of the residence halls, but none more than Nichols. Nichols is the newest of the residence halls at TUE, housing 500 students and designed to incorporate both living and learning functions into students' daily lives. Beyond student rooms, the hall boasts a large lobby, classrooms, computer room, coffee station, game room, television room, and lounges all well-appointed with the latest carpeting, furniture, and technology. The Vice President for Student Affairs notes that residence halls with higher populations of first year students require extra attention owing to the transition issues they encounter being away from home for the first time, living with roommates, making life decisions, negotiating the geography of the campus, and

living up to the expectations of a new academic experience. Not only do students need help navigating such experiences, TUE also needs assistance identifying students who may be struggling to do so. Therefore, Nichols has the largest staff of all the residence halls with one RHC and 30 RAs. In order to succeed as a staff member at Nichols, RAs have to care deeply about student transitions, work hard to provide a lot of activities (i.e., programming), and be open to a high level of social interaction. One RA elaborated, "The family is a lot closer in Nichols. The overall attitude here relates with my attitude which is just being excited and loving being involved and stuff like that."

At the beginning of the academic year, the thrust of Nichols' staff programming, activities, and interactions involve helping students get to know one another, answering questions about classes and the campus, and engaging them in intellectual discussions. Further, because first year students often do not pick their roommates, Nichol's RAs find themselves mediating numerous roommate conflicts during that first month of classes. Whereas some of these conflicts involve relatively routine disagreements about lifestyles, sleeping schedules, or cleanliness, others turn out to be more than they appear (see Appendix H for a map of the related performative routine).

Week 1, Thursday: A Roommate Problem Surfaces at the Staff Meeting

One Thursday in early September, the Nichol's RHC and RAs gather in the conference room for a weekly staff meeting. RHC, J.B., shares congratulations for accomplishing a smooth and efficient move-in over the past few weeks, reminds the RAs to turn in roommate contracts, and reviews upcoming events. Each RA then provides a quick overview of happenings on their floors, including events and student issues. When Betsy's turn comes around, she shares that one of her residents, Anne, has raised

concerns about her room situation. Anne lives in a suite with three other first-year students. She generally gets along with her suitemates, but as of late has been having difficulty with her roommate, Kim. According to the Anne, Kim has been fighting with her boyfriend a lot and seems to have distinct mood swings. As such situations often occur in the first weeks of the academic year, and especially between freshman roommates with no prior relationship to one another, J.B. instructs Betsy to follow up with Anne and further monitor the situation.

Week 2, Sunday: The Roommate Requests a Meeting with the RHC

The following Sunday, J.B. gets a call from Anne asking to set up a meeting about her roommate situation. Anne is uncomfortable with the situation and wants Kim to be moved elsewhere. In terms of housing policy, J.B. knows that moving a student this early in the semester could be difficult given the limited number of vacancies available on campus. Also, J.B.'s gut tells him that something more is going on than Anne has shared. Therefore, he acknowledges Anne's request and sets up a meeting for Monday. J.B. also sends a "head's-up" email to Emma making her aware of the situation. Not only does he want documentation of the steps he is taking, but he feels that he may need additional support as the situation unfolds. J.B. suspects that the situation might get more complicated and that he is going to need some help sorting through his options.

Week 2, Monday: Allegations of Suicidal Tendencies Arise

On Monday, J.B. meets with Anne to discuss the situation further. As J.B. had suspected, there is more to the story than originally presented. J.B. finds out that Anne and Kim have actually known each other for some time now. They grew up in the same community before they attended TUE. Therefore, Anne knows a little bit more about

Kim than she might about any other roommate to whom she was randomly assigned. Anne explains that Kim's parents are from an international cultural background and are very strict. There has always been turmoil in Kim's family and even rumors of some type of abuse. Just before starting at TUE, Kim began dating another TUE student from a different cultural background than her family. There is no secret that Kim's parents are not pleased with the choice. Making matters worse, Anne knows that Kim is pregnant by the boyfriend in question. The boyfriend is aware of the pregnancy, but Kim's family is not. Kim wrestles with whether to tell her parents, but her boyfriend does not want her to do so. Anne guesses that the pregnancy explains Kim's mood swings and that the loud arguments with her boyfriend have to do with the baby. In addition, Anne knows that Kim has a history of depression and thinks she may even be suicidal over all the turmoil.

Later that afternoon, Betsy (Anne's RA) checks back in with J.B. about the roommate situation. She informs J.B. that Anne's mother has been trying to get involved, calling Betsy numerous times in the past day. From the tone and content of the phone calls, Anne's mother seems to be aware of Kim's pregnancy. The RA guesses that Anne's mother is getting involved because she wants Kim out of her daughter's room. J.B. realizes that, as a student employee of Residential Life, this is becoming a very delicate and complicated situation for Betsy to handle. Therefore, he instructs Betsy not to talk to the mother, but to re-route any future calls to him.

J.B. again calls Emma to fill her in on the new information. After discussing the situation further, she suggests that J.B. meet with Kim. It is important to check in with her and let her know Residential Life is here to help. Emma also suggests that J.B. refer Kim to Counseling Services the next day. The pregnancy, boyfriend problems, and

family issues raise levels of concern more appropriate for counseling to work through than Residential Life. J.B. agrees and asks Kim to see Counseling on Tuesday morning and is pleased when Kim does not put up a fight. He also contacts Counseling Services to let them know Kim may be on her way over. Emma alerts Edward to the situation so that he can guide their preliminary efforts and so that he can be prepared if the situation becomes more serious.

Week 2, Tuesday: RHC Observes Discrepancies in Behavior

J.B. briefly touches base with Kim on Tuesday morning as she, by her own admission, is on her way to the counseling appointment. Contrary to how Anne depicted her, Kim seems happy and responsive. J.B's immediate assessment is that there is a discrepancy between what Anne is saying about Kim and what J.B. observes. Throughout the workday on Tuesday, J.B. is in constant communication with Emma. Given the discrepancy between what J.B. observed about Kim's behavior and what Anne originally reported, Emma deliberates over whether Anne referred to Kim "being suicidal" in a figurative or a real sense. Anne didn't offer evidence that Kim has engaged in suicidal thoughts or actions, but Emma could see how such a response to the current set of circumstances was possible. Emma cautions that there are a lot of pieces of this puzzle that seem not to fit or are still in question. She needs to follow up with Hank and Counseling Services in order to give J.B. further advice. Emma encourages J.B. to keep in touch with her regarding any information. She will follow up with J.B. as soon as possible.

Week 2, Wednesday: Deliberations over Notifying Parents

On Wednesday, the central Residential Life staff (i.e., Director, ADs, and RHCs) gather for their regular weekly staff meeting. During roundtable, J.B. addresses the fact that he is dealing with a potentially complicated roommate conflict involving a pregnant student. Hank, having been briefed by Emma on Tuesday, asks whether Kim has gone to counseling yet. If her parents are close by, he would like them to visit campus, sit down, and have a face-to-face conversation about Kim's situation. J.B. agrees that, in a normal situation, he absolutely would suggest that Kim tell her parents herself. However, the boyfriend won't let her. Also, J.B. agrees with Anne's concerns that the family may be abusive. They are very strict and Kim is concerned about telling them. Emma argues that the staff needs to take these concerns into consideration with regards to making a decision on calling Kim's parents. Another staff member notes that, if Kim becomes suicidal and the parents do not know, the university could face a lot of liability. Residential Life does not want the responsibility if something bad happens.

Hank reinforces that the staff has taken the right steps by requiring counseling. To make a more drastic move, like contacting parents, the situation has to be more of a behavioral issue than a policy issue. Residential Life can only force Kim to tell her parents if Kim has threatened to harm herself. Residential Life can even make it a condition by which Kim would have to abide in order to remain in the residence halls. However, in concert with Emma's concerns, Hank feels that the staff needs more information about how real the parental abuse claims are and how volatile. Over the next few days, J.B. observes Kim in the residence hall while Emma and Hank raise Kim's situation with their superiors. J.B. wants to check up on whether Kim has really followed

through on her appointment with Counseling Services, but knows that they will not release that information in a non-emergency situation.

Week 2, Friday: Student Found with Pills

Thursday passes with no news about Kim. On Friday, Anne returns to her room to find Kim with a bag of pills in hand. Anne grabs the pills, sending them flying all over the room. She recognizes at least six different types of medications and immediately makes the connection that Kim might be making a suicide attempt. Having had regular contact with J.B. over the past week, Anne's first call is to his emergency cell phone. Anne tells J.B. that she just found Kim with a bag of pills. The situation is getting too stressful for nothing to be done. All of this happened after Kim claimed to have gone to Counseling Services. In Anne's eyes, this is the second time Kim has mentioned or made attempts toward suicide. J.B. confers again with Emma, deciding that the pills have heightened the level of concern. This is no longer about student housing, or even a roommate conflict. The situation is much bigger than that. When that is the case, Dean of Students, Edward, is called in to take over the response. Up until now, Edward has watched from an arm's length. Independently, Emma and J.B. both call Hank to brief him on recent developments.

Edward contacts Kim to check in and determines that there is still a lot of ambiguity around whether Kim has actually made a move to harm herself. Without a clear assessment of threat, Edward cannot force Kim to get a psychological evaluation at the local hospital. He can only reinforce Residential Life's original directive that she voluntarily visit Counseling Services. Since the weekend is upon them and staff members will not be around to observe Kim for the next couple of days, Edward provides Kim

with his personal cell phone number and encourages her to check in with him if she has any problems or troubling thoughts over the weekend. Such communications are a way for Edward to check up on Kim. They are also a means of getting to know her better. Although she hasn't taken a specific action to hurt herself as of yet, she can do so at any time. The calls help Edward gauge how quickly he has to react, how he might get Kim into the hands of professionals, and how quickly that might happen. In essence, Edward feels that "those couple of days with back-and-forth phone calls can make the difference between clean-out-your-desk or you-win-this-one."

Week 3, Monday: Campus Administrators Confirm Seriousness of Suicidal Tendencies

The following Monday, Edward and Hank join the VPSA, representatives from Student Health, Counseling Services, and the TUE Police for the weekly Student Concerns Meeting. This meeting allows offices to broaden dialogues about students in distress. If a student-related situation escapes the net of the Residential Life network, then it is important that it gets captured by this extended Student Affairs network. Edward explains that they are all dealing with the same group of students. "That same student is going to be the faculty member's problem in English class and is probably going to be going to the Student Health Center. All of these offices talk to one another and will share whatever is possible without violating students' rights or TUE's legal obligations." Edward can literally track a student around campus using the TUE network. That's the advantage of TUE having a relatively small network.

When Hank raises Kim's case to the group, there is a look of recognition on the faces of his colleagues. Her name is familiar to more than just he and Edward. She has

crossed the paths of several other offices since the academic year began. The group talks about the people involved, share some basic information, and begin to put together the pieces of a puzzle to figure out what might be going on in Kim's life. Bound by confidentiality, Counseling Services cannot share as much information as the other administrators aside from the fact that she has visited their office and was referred to undergo an outside psychological evaluation. But they listen intently to relevant information. The group is mindful about jumping to conclusions, especially when there is no definitive proof that Kim has acted out to hurt herself.

Week 3, Tuesday: Suicidal Student Avoids Dean of Students

After the meeting, Edward reflects on the fact that he has been privy to the discussions about Kim for a week now. During the Student Concerns Meeting, Edward recognizes that Kim's issues have not only come to the attention of Residential Life, but to other offices as well. He is heartened to hear that Kim has gone to counseling and that a recommendation was made for an outside psychological evaluation in the next few days. Although they all understand what has been shared, Edward also understands what is *not* being said in the wake of confidentiality concerns. Edward doesn't need much else in the way of information from Residential Life or Counseling Services. Edward recognizes that Kim's situation is serious and knows immediately what his next move entails. He has to contact Kim to make sure she is following through with the outside psychological evaluation. Edward makes the call to Kim and sets up a meeting for Kim to see him on Tuesday morning.

From past experience, Edward knows the follow-up with Kim will not be easy. His call will inevitably trigger a game of avoidance, wherein Kim will set up a time to

talk. Next, Kim will miss the appointment and ignore Edward's continued communications. In one sense, such a game makes the situation more difficult because the student will not cooperate. In another sense, the avoidance game makes confronting a student less of a slippery slope. After all, why would a student avoid Edward unless there is a reason to avoid him? The avoidance gives Edward a real reason to have a serious conversation with a student in crisis. As predicted, the Tuesday morning meeting passes as do rescheduled meetings for Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday. In each case, Kim sets up meetings with Edward and does not actually show up for the appointments. At 1:00 a.m. on Thursday morning, Edward is surprised to see a call on his cell phone from Kim. Rather than being bothered, Edward is encouraged by the call. If she is calling, she is both O.K. for the moment and reaching out to her resources. Kim shares some excuses for not keeping Edward's meetings over the past couple of days but confirms that she will keep her appointment for the outside psychological evaluation later that day.

Week 3, Thursday: Dean of Students Admits Suicidal Student to Hospital

Later that morning, a half hour before her psychological evaluation, Kim calls Edward. She explains, "I can't come over because I haven't taken a shower in days, you know. I'm too sad to get out of bed." That is the cue Edward has been waiting for, signs of depression often linked to suicidal thoughts. Now, the threat level is clear and so is the imperative for Edward to act. The button has been pushed and Edward can comfortably say, "you *have* to come with me." Without missing a beat, Edward replies, "Well, I'll be right there." Kim seems OK with the plan, but perhaps thrown a little off-guard by Edward's proposition to show up at her door. When Edward arrives at Kim's residence hall room, he helps her gather her belongings and escorts her to the hospital for the

psychiatric evaluation. No stranger with the hospital's psychiatrist, Edward alerts him to Kim's arrival. Once they are in the hospital, Edward feels a little better. He knows she will be getting the necessary help. They are waiting for her.

Almost always, in situations involving suicidal thoughts and a psychiatric evaluation, Edward contacts the student's parents. However, this situation presents some complications which make him deliberate whether now is the right time to make the call. Putting on his alter ego, "Awkward-Position-Edward," Edward confers with University Counsel and the psychiatrist about whether to do so. Edward explains, "OK, this is what's going on. I've got this eighteen year old freshman in a psych ward and the family doesn't know what's going on. I should call them." He goes on to tell them that Kim explicitly instructed Edward not to call anyone. The psychiatrist offers, "Edward, I understand, from an institutional perspective, that you should be calling Kim's parents, but you have already got her the help she needs. As of now, Kim is voluntary because she has not been committed. If you call her parents, she can walk out of here." University Counsel agrees that he should hold off on calling Kim's parents. Kim trusts Edward right now and he is the only one she is talking to at the moment.

Not calling Kim's parents goes against every instinct Edward has. If in the next 10 minutes he receives a call that a student has been in a car wreck and they are being taken the hospital, he is going to be there on-site. He is going to see how the student is and, if the student has sustained more than a scratch or the student has to stay in the hospital, Edward is picking up the phone to call mom and dad. Now if he were not on the scene of the crash, the police would obviously call the parents. Institutionally, that is the procedure with which Edward is trying to be consistent. Furthermore, Edward is charged

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with worrying about the health, welfare, and safety of his students, in absence of their parents. He is the go-to guy for caring in this manner and takes that role seriously. But again, there are a lot of things working against his instincts right now.

Edward knows that the psychiatrist is right about Kim's ability to decline evaluation. According to state law, it's a seventy-two hour window before you've got to tell a judge what you are doing against someone's wishes. Edward is working with this little window of time to get the psychological evaluation going. In addition, Edward knows about Kim's home life, abusive family members, and other things that have happened in her past. At the same time his gut is telling him to go make the call, Edward's people are saying it might not be a good move because it could blow up in his face and she could walk out. If she walks out, Kim will be back in the residence hall, depressed and upset. If that is the case, Edward projects he would feel like he hadn't helped. Ultimately, Kim has not actually done anything wrong at this point and Edward just wants to help this student more than anything else. Therefore, he decides not to call Kim's parents.

Week 5, Thursday: Suicidal Student Returns to Residence Hall

Over the next two weeks, there is little discussion about Kim's situation. She is now hospitalized, which means that Residential Life is largely out of the loop. Once, Edward requests J.B. to collect some of Kim's belongings so that they could be transported to the hospital. Edward also asks J.B. to brief Kim's suitemates about Kim not returning to the room for at least a week. Ultimately, the Residential Life office has no idea whether, or if, Kim will be returning to the hall. However, at the end of two weeks, Kim is released from the hospital. She returns to her residence hall. This comes as

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a bit of a surprise to the residence life staff, who is not privy to the results of her evaluation. They can only assume that she has been cleared and is therefore OK. Her first week back is uneventful, as far as Residential Life is concerned. There are no specific complaints from her roommates or her RA.

Week 6, Thursday: Suicidal Student Attempts to Hurt Herself

A week later, at about 10 a.m. on Thursday, a Nichols resident finds Kim sitting in the hallway outside of her suite with a knife and a bottle of pills. Zara has no previous relationship with Kim and only recognizes her in passing. Unsure of what to do, Zara brings Kim to a study lounge and asks her what is going on. As Kim relates her story, Zara realizes that the situation is much bigger than she had thought. For privacy, the two go to Zara's room and Zara calls an RA for help. The RA immediately calls J.B., relating that Kim has been found in the hall crying, with a knife and a bottle of pills. J.B. immediately heads to Zara's room to assess the situation. When on-scene, J.B. sees that Kim is in distress, but not in medical danger. She has tried to cut herself, but is only marked by a shallow scrape. There is no blood. In addition, she has pills, but doesn't appear to have taken any. This is a gray area for J.B. Normally, when students hurt themselves, he calls 911 immediately. However, Kim seems not to be in immediate danger. Plus, J.B. is well aware of Kim's recent history. To make sure all of the pieces of this puzzle are attended to, he decides to call Emma rather than the paramedics.

Emma rushes directly over to Nichols and to Zara's room. On her way, Emma contacts Edward. When the call comes in, Edward happens to be speaking to psychological services on the other line. Emma says, "Edward, I just got a call from Nichols. Kim tried to hurt herself." She gives Edward the basics, but the conversation is

not long. Since Edward has a lot of history with this situation, he will pick up on the urgency and act accordingly. When the call comes in to Edward, he thinks, "the system worked once, and now it's working again." Although it is a difficult situation, responding is easier the second time around. Whereas the first time Edward confronted Kim on suspicion, now she has taken some action to hurt herself. There is no question in Edward's mind that Kim going back to the hospital. Not only does the second situation give Edward a rationale to rush Kim back to the hospital, it gives him a rational reason for calling her parents. Edward has been with Kim for two weeks, playing along with her wish not to have family involved. But when she tried to hurt herself, she changed the rules of the game – boom. Edward must call whomever he can to get Kim the help that she needs. That includes letting the family know just how serious Kim's situation is so that he can get the family's assistance. Edward dispatches to Nichols.

Emma gets to the room to find Kim laying on Zara's bed. She prioritizes her job as assessing the scene, deciding what needs to happen immediately, and keeping the situation calm until Edward gets there. Although Emma recognizes she is not a medical professional, she agrees with J.B.'s assessment of Kim's condition. It is immediately clear to Emma that Kim is not in immediate medical danger. The cut is more of a scrape you would get falling on the sidewalk than a true cut. The signs leading to suicide are certainly there: she is not getting support from her boyfriend, she has no home support, she doesn't feel in control of her situation. But given the lack of a serious wound, Kim seems to be more distressed than determined to hurt herself.

Emma turns her attention to getting Kim ready for Edward's arrival. She and Zara ask Kim to get out of bed, but Kim's eyes are closed and her limbs limp. Kim says that

she doesn't want to go anywhere. In response, Zara is picking Kim up and encouraging her. She is saying things like, "Think about your child. If the baby's father isn't helpful now, how helpful is he going to be in the future? You have a choice. Make different choices to look out for yourself." Essentially, Zara is giving good girlfriend advice, she is being a friend. Emma appreciates Zara's efforts, because she feels that Kim really needs a good friend right now. However, Emma also knows that she, herself, cannot fill that role. It is in conflict with her administrative responsibilities and counseling training. Emma has to keep a clear head. She can help rearticulate the situation, clarify details, and lay out options; but cannot take too biased of a stance. Emma asks Kim to put her shoes on. Emma needs Kim to put her shoes on. She feels that Kim needs to walk out of the residence hall under her own power. It is symbolic, whether or not she understands it now. Eventually, Kim does get her shoes on and musters up the energy to get out of Zara's bed. For the entire walk down the hall, Kim is physically attached to Emma, clenching her hands and snuggling into her body.

Emma and Zara get Kim back to her room at about 11:00 a.m. When she realizes the time, Zara asks what she should do, stay with Kim or go to her scheduled class? That is a tough question for Emma. She recognizes that Zara has been playing a critical role in the emergency response for about 45 minutes now. If Emma were in that position, she wouldn't want to be suddenly removed from the situation. Not only is Zara involved in Kim's well-being, she is *invested* in the situation. Emma stalls a few minutes until Edward arrives on the scene. Her answer is clear once Edward announces that he is taking Kim to the hospital. Residential Life staff will not even be allowed into the hospital once Kim is admitted, so it provides a natural opportunity for Zara to disengage

with the situation. Zara can go to class knowing that Kim is headed to resources bigger than any of them. Zara can return to her own routine with some semblance of closure.

From the minute Emma and Edward enter Kim's room, they can tell that Kim has not been taking care of herself. This signifies that, since her stint in the hospital, Kim has not been adjusting. Her room is filthy. Kim has no clean clothes. There is moldy food on the counter. The RA originally called by Zara, who has been gone for a few minutes, now reconnects with the group back in Kim's room. She finds a bag to help Kim pack some personal belongings.

Week 6, Thursday: Suicidal Student Readmitted to the Hospital

Emma and the RA escort Kim from her room, following J.B. and Edward down the hall. Being in the lead, J.B. serves as a sort of shield from other residents and onlookers who happen to be on the hall at the same time. On an upper floor of the residence hall, the group has to take the elevator down to the first floor. Unfortunately, the elevator seems to stop at just about every floor on its way down, letting people on and off. Emma and J.B. are trying to keep things discreet by not making a big deal out of the situation. But it is obvious to anyone boarding that there is something going on with Kim. It is uncomfortable for Kim and her escorts, and, Emma assumes, for everyone on the elevator as well.

When Edward has an occasion to escort a student to the hospital for a psychological evaluation, he normally walks the students directly there. However, in this case, Edward asks if Emma will accompany him and Kim in the car. Emma guesses that there are a number of reasons that he might drive. For instance, Kim is so limp that Edward may want to ensure a safe and quick arrival. He could want another person in the

car as a witness, in case any unusual situations arise or if he needs back-up. Aware of Kim's inflamed situation involving boyfriend issues, Edward may also want to comfort Kim with a female presence in the car.

The university hospital is not far from Nichols, therefore it is not long before the car arrives. Working often with Student Affairs, the psych department will sometimes reserve a space when they know a university student is coming over. However, at the hospital, Emma and Edward find out that there are no beds immediately open for Kim. That means that she will have to wait in the emergency room rather than a private room. Kim is sad, but alert. In these situations, the hospital will often have a nurse sit with a student in the ER, but they tell Edward and Emma that Kim will be seen in the next hour. Emma and Edward will not abandon Kim. They have a personal commitment to make sure Kim is safely with the doctor and potentially being admitted.

Whereas a few weeks ago, Edward respected Kim's decision not to call her parents; this time he does not hesitate to call them. Edward tells Kim that she has to call her parents and Kim doesn't argue. Edward goes outside to make the call, since he knows that there are family issues and wants to make sure he knows how the parents will react before handing the phone over. Based on Edward's call, Kim's father contacts two other siblings currently enrolled at TUE. The two siblings serve as spokespeople for the family and show up at the hospital, although Kim refuses their visit.

Before Kim is admitted to the hospital, a nurse takes her in for a prenatal check-up. Having developed a relationship with Emma, Kim asks her to be in the room too. Emma reflects on the fact that the situation is difficult for her, especially because she is a mom, herself. Emma can understand Kim's anxiety, especially as it relates to pregnancy

and perceptions of not having family support. Still, Emma struggles with not letting her personal connection cloud her judgment. When the nurses show Kim the sonogram, Emma wants Kim to understand what she is seeing. She asks the nurses to explain what is going on, so that she can make decisions with full information. After the sonogram, Kim starts to ask questions about the baby and her health. Only after that point does Kim also start reaching out for some sort of support from her boyfriend and her boyfriend's mom.

Kim is admitted to the hospital around 5:00 p.m. Emma realizes that the first call came in around 10:00 a.m. She has been at this situation the entire day, literally. Emma is tired, but asks Edward if they could sit down and debrief the situation. Emma wants Edward's take on whether this response worked as he expected. She is interested in understanding whether anything had been done wrong or anything could be done better. It is a learning experience for Emma, part of her hands-on training and development.

The Weeks After: Debriefing the Case and Waiting

At the next Student Concerns meeting, Hank invites Emma to the meeting to help Edward brief the upper administrators on Kim's situation. Emma finds the opportunity interesting, because she realizes Kim's situation was not one where they could turn to a manual. To get a sense of the procedure, the group had to compare notes, talk it through, and get the details hashed out. Ultimately, there is a large discussion about what to do next. Kim doesn't need to be on campus, however, what are her alternatives? The conversations keeps coming back to the fact that TUE needs to do the right thing; they need to do what is in Kim's best interest. The group discusses the fact that this is a procedural dilemma for which they have no procedure. In reality, the upper administrators need to protect TUE and protect the other residents in Kim's building.

However, because the administrators are caring people and student success is their business, the group also has to protect individual students. That makes any decisions about Kim's situation difficult.

Weeks go by without any news of Kim or her status. In fact, it is mid-spring semester before I realize that there had been no further updates. When I ask Emma about the situation, she notes that Kim has not returned to the residence halls. As for her overall fate at the university, that is in the hands of Edward, Kim, her family, and psychological services. In contrast to the regular attention owed Kim throughout the first months of school, her situation seems to fade into the background for the rest of the academic year. Edward notes that TUE really cares and wants to make things work for all of its students, but that is not always an easy situation.

Ostensive and Performative Comparisons

In contrast to the committed suicide case, it is more difficult to compare the ostensive and performative routines for the attempted suicide case (Appendix G and Appendix H). The contextual assumptions between the two differ vastly. For instance, not only does the scenario projected by the ostensive routine take place in a residence hall room, the protocol suggests such an issue might be resolvable in one sitting. Further, the ostensive routine assumes that response will be enacted by two responders, the RA as the primary responder and the RHC as his or her back-up. Such a depiction is helpful in terms of outlining response procedures, but it does not necessarily reflect the realities of the case at hand. In the performative scenario, several administrators find themselves responding to the attempted suicide over the course of weeks, rather than hours. Moreover, the situation seems open-ended, revisited each time new evidence suggests an

increased threat level. Ultimately, the ostensive protocol casts attempted suicides as relatively closed and controlled scenarios that are resolved by a limited number of responders over the course of a few hours. Conversely, the performative routine suggests the attempted suicide as an ambiguous, open-ended scenario that often never seems to reach true resolution despite the efforts of various responders.

The contextual ambiguities reflected in the performative routine create a situation in which responders are constantly interpreting the situation, recalculating related responses, and negotiating these with colleagues. In essence, compared to the more stably-conceived ostensive routine, the performative routine is constantly being revisited and updated. To understand the sensemaking triggers for such updating (ultimately the degree to which the ostensive routine is constantly being adjusted), this discussion will focus on four of the eight subroutines outlined above: Calling up the Line, Providing Support Services, Evaluating Threat Level, and Notifying Parents.

Calling up the Line: Retrospect Allows Administrators to Amend Protocol When the Subroutine is Revisited

As reviewed in the committed suicide case, Residential Life administrators request help among their colleagues and pass information along via a procedure known internally as Calling up the Line. When an emergency situation arises, a phone tree is initiated at the RA level and works its way up through subsequent supervisors (i.e., RHC, AD for Residential Life, Director of Residential Life, etc.). In this attempted suicide case, the Calling up the Line subroutine appears to be enacted as anticipated by the ostensive protocol, at least at the onset. However, as the case evolves over the course of several weeks and the Calling up the Line protocols is invoked several times over, shifts become

apparent in how it is enacted. These shifts, or changes in the Calling up the Line subroutine, can be attributed to the sensemaking dynamic, Retrospect (Figure 13).

Looking over the structure of the attempted suicide case, one can elicit four distinct incidents that cause the Residential Life staff to enact emergency response: the concerns initially raised by the roommate, the first incident involving pills and suspicion of harm, the first hospitalization of the troubled student, and the "suicide attempt." On one hand, each event represents an episode for which distinct responsive actions are taken. On the other hand, these episodes represent a chain of events for which emergency responses are related to one another. More specifically, because the episodes occur in sequence, each provides an opportunity to revisit the Calling up the Line subroutine. Moreover, building on lessons learned from earlier incidents, the episodes provide occasions for enacting the Calling up the Line subroutine in an incrementally amended manner. These incremental amendments serve as evidence of changes in the ostensive-performative relationship.

At the heart of the incremental changes in the Calling up the Line subroutine is the sensemaking trigger, Retrospect. Take episode one, for instance, where the initial emergency response effort is launched. Herein, the Calling up the Line subroutine is enacted according to the ostensive routine: the student informs the RA, the RA informs the RHC, the RHC the AD, and the AD the Director and Dean of Students. Based on this first incident, the student and her issues are filed away in the memories of the Residential Life administrators. In the words of TUE's staff, the student is "on the radar." If no further incidents with this particular student occur, the information remains idle. If
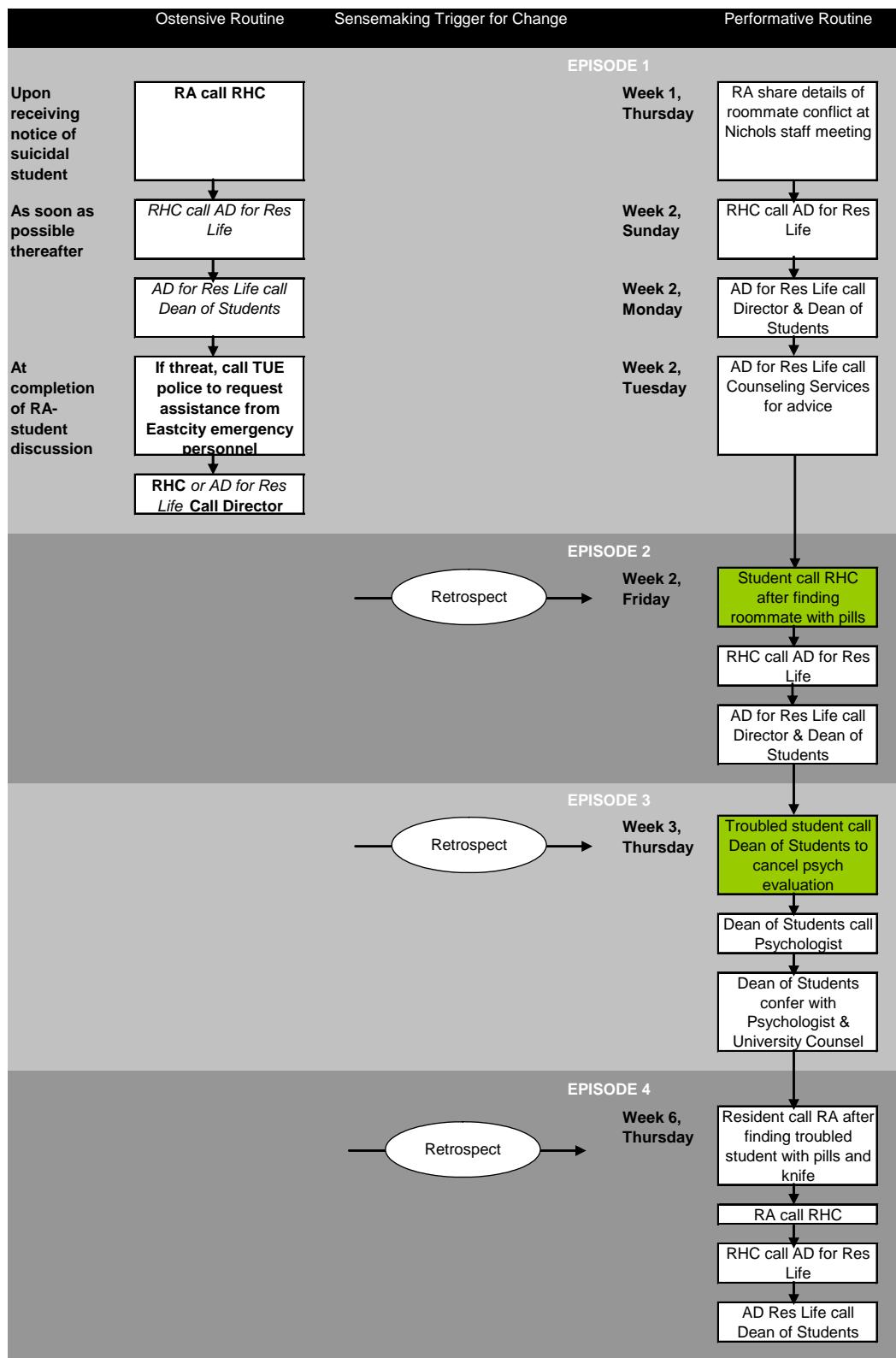
Figure 13. Retrospect as a Trigger for Change in the Calling up the Line Subroutine of the Attempted Suicide Case.

another incident involving this student occurs, the administrators begin connecting past incidents with current.

Later on, when episode two occurs, the Calling up the Line subroutine is again enacted. This time, however, there is a history between the student making the complaint and the RHC. Therefore, rather than the initial call going "up-the-line," the call goes directly to the RHC. By omitting the RA from the chain-of-command, the Calling up the Line subroutine is slightly altered. The reason behind this alteration is because, via the earlier incident, there already exists a relationship between the students involved and the administrators. The intermediary step of calling the RA is no longer necessary. Again, when the Calling up the Line subroutine is revisited in episode 3, several additional steps in the ostensive routine are skipped. The troubled student is instructed to bypass nearly all of the Residential Life staff and call the Dean of Students directly. Each time a new episode occurs, the Calling up the Line subroutine is both reset to the beginning. However, because there is a retrospective imprint left by earlier incidents, there is no need to start the protocol from the beginning each time.

It is instructive to note that, when the final episode takes place, the Calling up the Line subroutine seems to be enacted, once again, in accordance with the ostensive routine. An explanation for this occurrence is that the initial responders are completely new to the situation. In other words, the resident passer-by and the RA she calls are not the same student who originally lodged the complaint about her roommate or the RA who responded at that time. Therefore, the imprinted memory of the troubled student and everything that has happened prior to that point is nonexistent for the initial responders. It is not until the Calling up the Line subroutine reaches the RHC that the imprinted

Retrospect kicks in and begins to take on a slightly amended form again. Even though the incident with the knife does not appear to be serious, the RHC reevaluates the situation in light of the past three episodes involving the student. He calls his supervisor, the AD for Residential Life. However, because of this cumulative knowledge, the call to the AD and her subsequent call to the Dean of Students occur almost instantaneously.

In sum, each episode becomes part of the Retrospect that administrators draw upon to shape their actions in subsequent emergency responses. Because this retrospective history provides vital information about the student, her issues, and the emergency context, there is no need to restart the emergency protocol from scratch each time an episode surfaces. Retrospect updates responsive actions and creates a type of workaround for the elementary steps in the Calling up the Line subroutine.

Providing Support Services: Personal Identity and Social Context Allow Administrators to Simultaneously Build Rapport and Maintain Professional Distance

In one sense, providing support services means getting the student to appropriate resources outside of Residential Life (e.g., Counseling Services, psychiatrist). In another sense, providing support services refers to the strategies Residential Life staff use to aid in this process. A key skill in doing so, and part of the ostensive Providing Support Services subroutine, is developing rapport with students while, at the same time, maintaining a professional distance. In this suicide attempt case, the ability to maintain such a routine can be owed to sensemaking triggers, Personal Identity and Social Context (Figure 14).
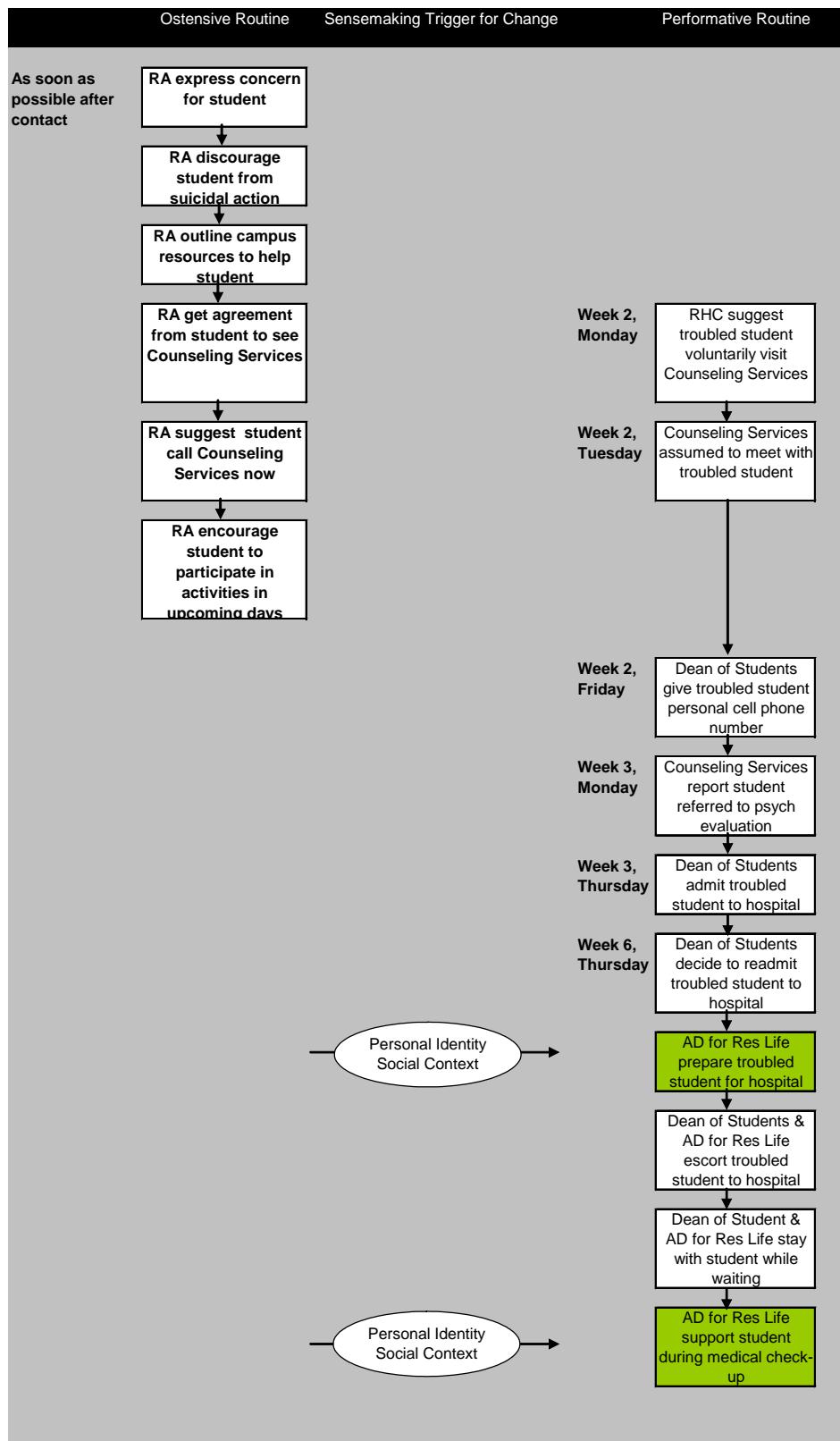
Figure 14. Personal Identity and Social Context as Triggers for Change in the Providing Support Services Subroutine of the Attempted Suicide Case.

Under the RA section of the suicidal student protocol, the first tip for approaching a suicidal student guides RAs to develop a rapport with the student in question. The trust built through rapport helps facilitate the difficult conversations and directives expected to emerge when a student requires counseling or hospitalization. Although there is no equivalent written expectation that professional staff members do the same, observations suggest that rapport is an important tool for Residential Life and Student Affairs professionals alike. In this scenario alone, efforts are made at various levels to establish a relationship with Kim in order to gather information, observe behavior, and assess levels of risk. RHC, J.B., does so early in the scenario by engaging Kim in casual conversation in order to establish the validity of her roommate's concerns. Dean of Students, Edward, establishes a relationship by phone later in the scenario in order to assess Kim's state of mind. At the same time administrators are expected to maintain a rapport with the students they are trying to help, they are also expected to maintain a professional relationship with troubled students. Events involving suicidal students often lead administrators to junctures where difficult decisions must be made about the student's emotional state of mind, intent to cause harm, or the need to involve hospitalization against his or her will. Given such scenarios, maintaining a professional relationship with the student is vital for keeping a clear head while assessing issues and making difficult decisions.

This dual expectation that staff members both develop rapport and maintain a professional distance challenges Emma throughout the attempted suicide scenario. On the one hand, Emma identifies strongly with the fact that Kim is pregnant. Given Kim's situation of being pregnant and not having parental support, Emma admits that it is a

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struggle not to tap into her own parental and/or girlfriend instincts. Emma is a mother

with a small child. Emma's reflections and actions suggest that it is difficult not to enact

the nurturing qualities associated with close friends or parenthood. Emma cares for Kim

with a combination of compassion and tough love, encouraging her to get out of Zara's

bed and walk down the hall so that she can feel empowered. On their way down the hall,

Emma allows Kim to cling to her in the way a troubled child might to her parents. While

exiting the residence hall, Emma tries to protect Kim from the scrutiny of onlookers. She

accompanies Kim to the hospital and will not leave her until she knows Kim is safe.

Further, Emma understands Kim being scared, anxious, and worried about being

supported in a way perhaps her younger or male colleagues may not be able to share. It

was not long ago that Emma experienced similar deliberations about her own pregnancy.

She is concerned that Kim has potentially not received proper education about her unborn

baby. Although what Kim decides to do in terms of her baby is not Emma's concern,

Emma does want Kim to have full information before making any related decisions. Just

as she did in Zara's room, in the hallway, and exiting the building, Emma tries to support

Kim to the point where Kim can support herself.

On the other hand, Emma knows that too close a relationship with Kim could

compromise her ability to offer Kim the help that she needs. Emma knows that she will

have to support administrative decisions that Kim will potentially not like. For instance,

if Edward calls Kim's parents, Emma may have to answer as to why. Likewise, there is

always a chance that a student admitted to the hospital will not return to Residential Life

or even to school for the rest of the year. Again, in order to support these higher-up

decisions or clarify the decisions to Kim, Emma will be in a position where it appears she is trading her intimate, parental relationship for a distanced, administrative relationship.

The trigger causing Emma to maintain separate roles as nurturer and administrator comes at the hands of two other people involved in the suicide attempt response, or the social context in which she finds herself. First, when Emma responds to the call indicating Kim has harmed herself with a knife, she is met by the student who found her in the hall, Zara. Not a trained staff member, Zara nevertheless plays an important part in responding to Kim's emergency. Namely, she is able to offer advice and support, unfettered by responsibilities to professional counseling or Residential Life values. As Emma recognizes, Zara can be that girlfriend who tells Kim everything she wants to hear. Unlike J.B., Emma, or Edward, Zara can be biased without any concern for doing so. Likewise, when Emma accompanies Kim into a prenatal check at the hospital, the nurses take over the role of asking questions, providing answers, and outlining the very personal options related to the pregnancy. In both cases, other people are on-scene to take over Emma's role of being an intimate friend or parental figure. Therefore, while Personal Identity allows Emma to build rapport with Kim, the social context of having alternative resources allows Emma to maintain professional distance. Thus, in this attempted suicide case, the Providing Support Services subroutine remains unchanged.

Providing Support Services: Updating Salient Cues, Retrospect, and Plausibility Prompts Incremental Changes in Mandating Hospitalization

As noted above, an overarching goal of the Providing Support Services subroutine is to help students attain professional help when necessary. If there are concerns about a student, but no real evidence of harm, Residential Life will direct students to the

Counseling Center. The Counseling Center is a university service governed by institutional regulations and professional standards. Typically, Residential Life offices can require counseling as a condition of remaining in the residence hall. But, ultimately, Residential Life cannot force a student to comply; they can only dismiss the student from housing. Yet, if a student exhibits real evidence or admission of harm to himself or herself, Residential Life (via the Dean of Students) can forcibly require hospitalization and a psychiatric evaluation at the University Hospital. While enacting the Providing Support Services subroutine, Residential Life staff monitors a student's activities to determine whether the need for hospitalization has escalated from one instance to the next. In doing so, they reference three sensemaking dynamics to trigger the shift from suggesting counseling to requiring a psychiatric evaluation. These three triggers are Salient Cues, Retrospect, and Plausibility (Figure 15).

Throughout the scenario, there is an ongoing negotiation amongst an emergent group of people to get Kim the help she needs. This negotiation is based on distinct efforts to pick up cues, reflect on information previously collected, imagine what Kim's actions might be as a result, and weigh these three against each other. For instance, in his original conversation with the roommate, RHC, J.B., picks up that Kim may be dealing with some complex personal issues, including mood swings and boyfriend difficulties. From his three years on the job, J.B. knows that roommates often fabricate stories when they want to force untimely room change requests. As a result, he considers whether Anne's claims are valid. At the same time, J.B. recognizes that relationship problems and erratic behavior are plausible precursors for depression and maybe suicide. Yet, a lot of students deal with similar issues and never contemplate hurting themselves. Therefore, at
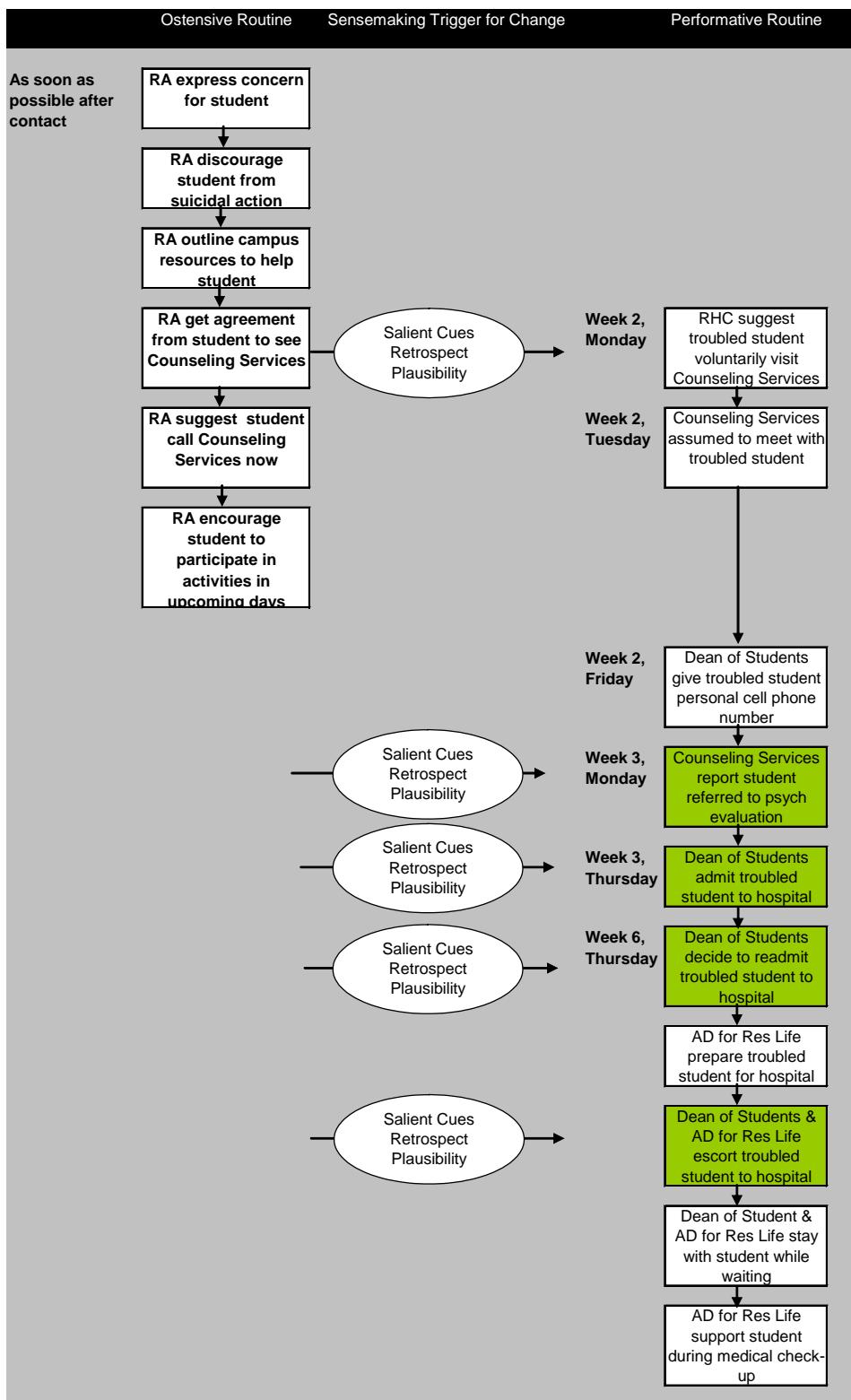
Figure 15. Salient Cues, Retrospect, and Plausibility as Triggers for Change in the Providing Support Services Subroutine of the Attempted Suicide Case.

the onset, Plausibility and Retrospect outweigh the Salient Cues raised by Kim's roommate. Rather than requiring Kim to undergo a counseling evaluation, J.B. confers with AD for Residential Life, Emma, and continues to seek information.

J.B. has another opportunity to pick up on cues when he actually meets with Kim's roommate. That discussion yields a host of additional clues that strengthen the Plausibility of Kim being suicidal. Namely, Kim has had past issues with depression, she has trouble at home, her parents do not like her boyfriend, and she is pregnant. J.B.'s confidence in the Plausibility that Kim might hurt herself is strengthened further by the fact that the roommate has a past relationship with Kim. Additionally, Kim's RA corroborates some of these details. Again, however, there is one salient cue that does not fit with the rest: Kim seems to be happy and responsive when J.B. observes her in the residence hall. According to their training sessions with the Counseling Center, individuals who are depressed or suicidal are often reclusive and non-communicative. In this instance, the behavioral cue that Kim is happy and responsive outweighs the Plausibility that she is intent on harming herself. After conferencing with Emma a second time, J.B. does alter his response more in line with the ostensive protocol by sending Kim for a counseling evaluation. The heightened concern for Kim's well-being is further punctuated by bringing Edward into the situation and a strong suggestion that Kim visit the hospital. But, as of this point, she is not required to do so.

Kim goes to the hospital and returns, which is often a cue to Residential Life that she has been deemed well enough to resume normal activities. Not privy to the confidential information shared within the psychiatric evaluation, Residential Life and Edward must take that action on faith. However, as Edward notes, all the rules change

when Kim takes a specific action against herself with a knife. Although J.B. and Emma recognize that the knife's scratch has not immediately endangered Kim's life, they have experienced a sequence of increasingly serious incidents involving Kim's efforts to harm herself. Further, Edward needs no other cue than a knife wound, however small. In his eyes, Kim has admitted to suicidal intent via her actions. Plausibility is no longer relevant, because Kim's actions have proven her suicidal intent a fact. In the end, the evidence provided by an archived history of harm and a cue indicating intent for harm outweighs the hospital's evaluation that Kim was ready to resume normal activities. The culmination of these factors creates the trigger that causes Edward to require Kim's psychiatric hospitalization and, therefore, enact the full scope of the Providing Support Services subroutine.

Notifying the Parents: Identity and Plausibility Progressively Alter Decision to Involve Parents

Embedded in the above-outlined subroutine for Providing Support Services is a quandary about whether to notify Kim's parents. Although there exists a shared understanding around engaging parents to aid in a student's recovery after a suicide attempt has been made, there is no explicit directive for notifying parents outlined in the inscribed protocol. Residential Life staff members either elicit the Notifying the Parents subroutine from other related emergency response routines (e.g., committed suicide, medical emergency) or from shared understandings that parents should be involved when their children face serious danger. With regard to students with suicidal tendencies, whether the Notifying the Parents subroutine is enacted is often left to the discretion of the Director of Residential Life and/or the Dean of Students. As for the Dean of Students,

Edward has developed an unwritten set of rules for himself in this regard. Basically, if suicidal intent or hospitalization is involved, he calls a student's parents. In this attempted suicide case, Edward's unwritten rules are tested by a series of contextual issues surrounding Kim's situation. Whether deciding not to call Kim's parents or deciding to call Kim's parents is considered a change a protocol may be up to one's discretion. Either way, the triggers causing Edward to move between these two decisions involve the sensemaking dynamics, Personal Identity and Plausibility (Figure 16).
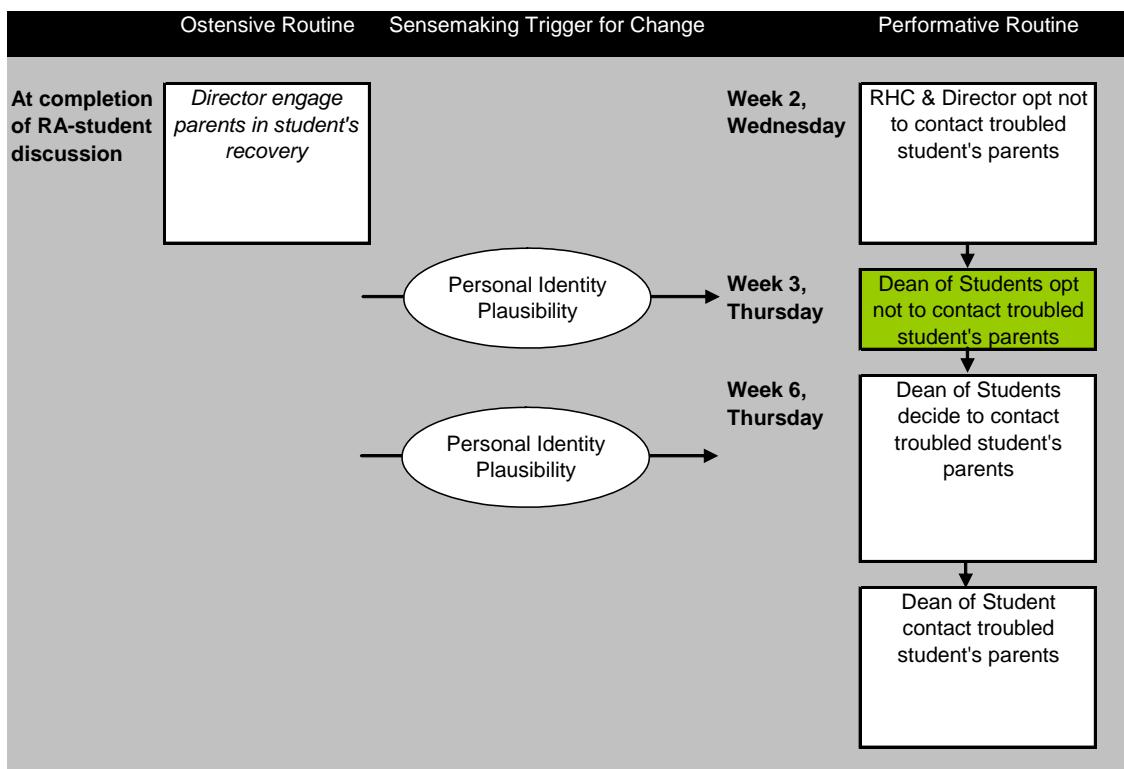
Figure 16. Personal Identity and Plausibility as Triggers for Change in the Notifying the Parents Subroutine of the Attempted Suicide Case.

Upon the first visit to the hospital, Dean of Students, Edward, is conflicted about whether to call Kim's parents. The conflict stems from Edward's self-appointed responsibility to the parents of TUE's students. Although he does not expressly liken

himself to a parent for his students, Edward does embrace a strong in-loco-parentis value. Because parents have entrusted their sons and daughters to him, he feels obligated to both look out for students in their parents' stead and make sure parents are aware when their child is in danger. His ultimate goal is to help students, not hurt them. Because parents are often part of the support structure that helps students avoid emotional, psychological, or medical emergencies, Edward errs on the side of involving parents in serious situations. Additionally, within the Student Affairs organizational structure, Edward is the "go-to-guy" for caring about the students in this way. His identity as a parental liaison and a caregiver consistently drives his impetus to call parents during emergencies such as Kim faces in this attempted suicide case.

Yet, the same caregiver identity that drives Edward's instinct to notify parents also gives him a reason to hesitate. Several administrators raise the concern about the relationship Kim has with her parents. Although no definitive proof is available to substantiate claims, the information available depicts family dynamics that include values shaped by ethnic background, strict enforcement of family rules, and abusive interactions. The administrators develop a plausible scenario wherein Kim's interracial relationship and out-of-wedlock pregnancy only fuel an already delicate situation between Kim and her parents. This places Edward in a difficult position.

In addition, University Counsel and the psychiatrist entreat Edward not to call Kim's parents because they suspect she will walk away from the hospital. After all, without a specific action to forcibly admit her to the hospital, Kim is there voluntarily. Given his general obligations to student welfare, his caregiver identity obligates Edward to involve parents in their student's healing processes. However, given concerns that the

notifying Kim's parents might cause more harm than good, Edward's caregiver identity simultaneously obligates him not to make contact. At first, Edward goes against his better judgment, opting to change is self-designated procedure for Notifying the Parents. Evidence of plausible harm does not outweigh the Plausibility of family conflict that could be brought about by making contact. Eventually, though, the reverse becomes true as evidence suggests a strong Plausibility that Kim will cause serious harm to herself. Triggered by the caregiver identity and the Plausibility of serious harm, Edward ultimately turns back to his typical course of action, enacting the Notifying the Parents subroutine in full.

CHAPTER 8

Guest and Staffing Policies Case Study

Summary Overview of Case

Cases one and two demonstrate how the Residential Life staff enacts changes to routines when faced with an actively evolving set of circumstances. The third case analyzes sensemaking processes that occur around a comparatively benign event, once considered an occasion for emergency response but now an event that passes without traces of urgency. Specifically, case three follows the Residential Life staff as it enacts special guest and staffing protocols designed for Showdown Weekend 2008, an annual football game that takes place in Eastcity between two universities other than TUE. Historically, the event has drawn large numbers of visitors into the residence halls. Consequently, the Residential Life staff has been overwhelmed responding to issues of overcrowding, safety, damage, noise, and liability. The last year in which Showdown Weekend reached a peak emergency status was 2005. Since then, guest and staffing protocols for Showdown Weekend have been progressively altered in an attempt to preempt past problems. The 2005 inspired guest and staffing protocols remain in effect today, even though the context of the event has shifted dramatically.

The guest and staffing protocols in question are part of the shared understandings held by the Residential Life staff. They are only enacted during this one time of the academic year and not reflected in the staff manual. Specifically, the protocols address the number of staff members on-duty throughout the weekend, the location of those staff members, and the parameters of residence hall guest policies. The increased presence of staff and tighter restrictions on guest policies signal Residential Life's continued concern that Showdown Weekend can, at any time, return to the emergency status it earned back in 2005. In 2008, the concerns about Showdown Weekend do not appear to mirror the concerns on 2005. On the contrary, absolutely no signs of emergency are evident throughout the weekend. This causes deliberations over why the event is treated as an emergency in the first place, why past protocols remain in effect, and whether protocols should again be shifted to reflect the contemporary context of the event.

This case considers the impact of sensemaking on guest and staffing practices, as a whole. In doing so, it departs from assumption that sensemaking-triggered change goes in one direction. Rather, this case shows how performative experiences become triggers for change in the next cycle of ostensive routines. Based on the memories of only a few long-time staff members, retrospect over Showdown Weekend 2005 (and prior) initially cause Residential Life administrators to alter guest and staffing policies for subsequent years. That same retrospect continues to affect changes in the 2008 Showdown Weekend protocol despite evidence that 2005's problems no longer exist. Most of the 2008 Residential Life staff has no retrospect upon which to draw with regards to 2005. Therefore, not only do they begin to question the altered procedures, but they also develop alternative stories about why Showdown Weekend is treated differently than

other events on campus. These plausible stories trigger a new conversation amongst the staff as to whether procedural changes should once again be considered. However, most procedural changes related to the Showdown 2008 experience are declined. This leads to reflections as to why Retrospect regarding Showdown 2005's emergency context continues to drive routine-related change despite contrary retrospective experiences from Showdown 2008.

Ostensive Routine

The Southern Showdown is a tradition wherein the same two in-state rival colleges travel to Eastcity for a football game. The game takes place on a Saturday in October, and festivities are held throughout the weekend. It is held in the Eastcity Sports Complex, a venue often used for both local and touring large-scale athletic events. Even though neither of the challenging schools is located in Eastcity, the football stadium is large enough to accommodate the droves of students, alumni, and community members who travel in for the game. Showdown fans come to Eastcity to see the game and enjoy elaborate marching band displays. But they also come to town for what has become an enormous "family" reunion, where relatives, sorority sisters, fraternity brothers, and friends get together, socialize, and party all weekend long. On the surface, Showdown Weekend seems neither to have much to do with TUE nor to exhibit the classic characteristics of an emergency response scenario. To further understand both aspects of this case, it is important to trace its relevance to TUE's Residential Life department and the history of shifting related residence hall guest and front desk protocols over the past years.

Showdown 2005: Increased Challenges to Guest and Staffing Protocols

With over 10 years experience, Residential Life's current AD for Operations, Tina, is one of the longest serving members on TUE's Residential Life staff. Reflecting on when she was first employed as an RHC in the beginning of her tenure, Tina recounts why Showdown Weekend is branded an emergency situation by the staff and how response protocols come into play. It is not so much that the event takes place in Eastcity that makes Showdown Weekend relevant to TUE, but that TUE students are intimately connected to the fans that Showdown Weekend attracts. Namely, Showdown attendees are often relations of TUE students, through family ties, hometown connections, Greek affiliations, and high school friendships. The crux of the problem lies in the fact that neither of the Showdown schools are geographically near Eastcity. Therefore, Showdown visitors need a place to stay during the festivities. Eastcity hotels are expensive and often fully booked for the three days of the event. Conversely, staying with friends or family members in their residence hall room at TUE is free and can be arranged at a moment's notice. Hank jokes, 'Showdown brings about 60,000 extra people to Eastcity, and 12,000 want to get in the [TUE] residence halls." Various staff members elaborate that the problem is not related to TUE students having guests, per se. The problem is related to the sheer number of people involved along with their impact on the Residential Life community.

Back when she was an RHC, Tina recalls as many as 10 or 12 people crashing in one suite, sleeping on almost every inch of a resident's floor. From an operational point of view, such crowding was a safety hazard. From a community point of view, an overabundance of guests meant that there were simply a lot of strangers walking around the building, often unaccompanied by their hosts. It was difficult to monitor who

belonged in the hall and who may have snuck in. Furthermore, in Eastcity to celebrate, Showdown visitors often carried on with late-night partying in and around the residence halls.

Outside, drivers used to "cruise" through a parking lot adjacent to the residence halls, blasting music and yelling out the windows at passersby. Inside the residence halls, TUE students and their guests threw large parties, often with an abundant supply of alcohol. Issues around noise, safety, damage, altercations, and underage drinking abounded. As a result, roommate conflicts and interpersonal disputes erupted on a dime. The desk attendants responsible for signing in visitors and monitoring foot traffic, found themselves overwhelmed year after year. It is easy for people to sneak past the front desk when it was mobbed by large groups of people. Likewise, the RAs on-call were frustrated having to chase down people they didn't know and dealing with the constant barrage of noise complaints and drunk people. Tina remembers the staff being exhausted at the end of Showdown Weekend each year. That is why, three years ago, senior Residential Life administrators began taking preemptive measures to remedy the situation.

Showdown 2008: Progressive Changes in Protocols Lead to Current Ostensive Routine

Essentially, Showdown weekend became regarded not only as an event with the potential for yielding emergencies, it was deemed an event likely to yield emergencies. Therefore, rather than waiting for Showdown weekend to determine when and if emergency response protocols for handling disturbances would be engaged, the Residential Life office took preemptive emergency response measures to ensure that the disturbances would not occur in the first place. Specifically, Residential Life

incrementally changed its guest and staff policies to reflect such a stance. The idea was not to change the policies for everyday operations, but to enact a set of policies tailored just for Showdown weekend.

Back in 2005, the guest and staffing protocols for Showdown Weekend followed the same guest and staffing protocols written into staff manual for every other time during the academic year. Related Residential Life staff procedures were guided by the policy reflected in the Residential Life Handbook, a publication distributed to all residents of the residence halls each year. Although the policy has changed in the intervening years, the core of the policy remains relatively intact from 2005. That core policy reads:

> Visitors are permitted in the residence halls 24 hours a day. Residents who entertain visitors are expected to maintain standards of appropriate group living behavior, and their roommate's right to privacy will take priority over the privilege to entertain a guest. Residents are responsible for the conduct of their visitors. Residents must inform visitors of pertinent residence hall policies and procedures, and they must accompany visitors at all times. All residence halls have 24-hour desk coverage. Residents must register visitors at the main desk of each residence hall. Visitors and Residents must present a valid Photo I.D. to the staff person on duty at the main desk when signing in. Each visitor must be registered every time he/she enters the hall. Residents must accompany their visitors at all times. All visitors must obey all Student Housing and University rules and regulations.

In 2005, students were required to sign guests in and were responsible for their actions while visiting the residence hall. But there were no limits as to the number of overnight guests a student could have. Since the crowding issue was a particular concern during Showdown Weekend, the Central Staff decided to limit each resident to only two guests on that weekend. Tina points out that a suite with four occupants could still have eight guests in residence, which is still quite a crowd. Another guest-related issue revolved around children in the residence hall. In the past, there was no policy on-the-

books barring children from visiting, but it was highly discouraged by the Central Staff. Still, the family and friends visiting TUE students often brought children along during their Showdown stays. The topic of underage guests is still debated amongst the Residential Life staff, but Hank takes a hard line on the subject. Because of the issues children are likely to encounter in a residence hall (e.g., alcohol, drugs, and residents doing stupid things), Hank feels that it is no place for children under a certain age. There are too many things that could harm a child and the liability is too high. Based on this rationale and the higher potential for underage guests during Showdown Weekend, the Central Staff started a tradition of taking extra measures to ensure children were not visiting during the event.

Similarly, past policy for staff coverage in the residence hall called for one desk attendant and one RA on-call to be on the premises 24 hours a day, throughout the weekend. The desk attendant was stationed at a permanent reception desk in the lobby, equipped with a campus phone and an emergency button used for contacting the TUE police in a critical situation. The RA could be anywhere in the building, but had to be available at all times by cell phone or landline. In response to the increased number of guests signing in and related incidents, the Central Staff raised the number of Desk Attendants and On-Call RAs for Showdown Weekend from one, to two each. To remedy concerns about people sneaking into the residence hall while desk attendants were distracted by large crowds of visitors signing-in and asking questions, the Central Staff took measures to make entry more difficult. For past Showdown Weekends (mirroring normal operating procedures), the front desks in most of the halls were pushed back from the front door. When a host and a group of guests approached the front desk, they were

already well inside the building. If the desk attendant was busy with the people at the desk, it was easy for several guests to quietly break off from the group and enter the residence, unnoticed. Consequently, the RHCs erected a makeshift desk either outside of or directly inside the front door. As a result, nobody was allowed to even get in the building until confronted and identified by the Desk Attendants.

In summary, the ostensive routine for Showdown Weekend 2008 is the culmination of several years' experiences encountered by senior staff. In response to these experiences, Showdown Weekend 2008 is treated preemptively as an emergency wherein the staff is trained to engage six subroutines related to coverage personnel, location of on-call personnel, and enforcement of guest policies (Table 11). The progressive changes to these ostensive

Table 11. Response Subroutines for Showdown Weekend

Subroutines
Staff Coverage: RA On-Call Personnel
Staff Coverage: RA On-Call Location
Staff Coverage: Desk Attendent Personnel
Staff Coverage: Desk Attendent Location
Guest Policy: Number of Guests
Guest Policy: Age of Guests

subroutines along with the performative issues driving such change between 2005 and 2008 are summarized in Appendix I. During normal operating times, outside of Showdown Weekend, only the guest policy related to age of guests remain consistent. The remaining Showdown Weekend staff coverage and guest policy protocols are uniquely designed to, and enforced for, that particular event. Shared understandings,

therefore, are more significant than the staff manual in transmitting protocols from senior staff members to junior.

Performative Routine

It is October and the semester is already half over. Residential life operations have been in full swing since freshman opening back in August and RA training seems to be a distant memory. Owing to the barrage of activity that has been taking place in the central office and throughout the residence halls, Central Staff meetings have been cancelled for two weeks in a row. The RHCs are busy helping their RAs prepare for upcoming events like homecoming, Halloween, and the 2008 presidential elections. When the Central Staff meetings resume, it is just about time to prepare for Showdown Weekend.

By Showdown 2008, the altered polices have been in place for a couple of years. Having been subject to the policies as students, many of the now-RAs are accustomed to the change. In the weeks leading up to Showdown Weekend, these special protocols are discussed and reinforced in every Central Staff meeting, RA staff meeting, and all-staff meeting that I attend. That week, I happen to sit in on an RA staff meeting led by RHC, Andre. Andre warns that the primary focus of the meeting will be scheduling extra desk and on-call shifts for Showdown Weekend, a relatively mundane task. However, since I will be staying on campus to observe residence hall activities, guest policies, and staff coverage related to Showdown Weekend, I am interested in that particular discussion.

Thursday prior to Showdown 2008: Staff Meetings and Shared Understandings

Andre's RA staff meeting takes place directly after the All-Staff meeting scheduled every other Thursday during the academic year. Andre decides it is more efficient to meet in a corner of the large meeting room rather than returning to their own

residence hall. The RAs gather around Andre as he outlines the on-duty schedule for Showdown Weekend and asks for volunteers to fill uncovered shifts. He explains that, with the requirement of having two on-call RAs as well as two Desk Attendants scheduled for 24 hours throughout the weekend, the RAs will have to wok quite a bit more than on regular weekends.

While a core group of RAs are deliberating whether to take the extra Showdown shifts, two RAs engage in a side conversation about working the desk during Showdown Weekend. Specifically, RA, Cheryl, raises a concern about the security button that Residential Life had installed underneath the regular front desks in the lobbies of the residence halls. When pushed, the buttons immediately dispatch TUE Police to the appropriate sites, a safeguard for the Desk Attendants and RAs who can find themselves in dangerous or confrontational situations while monitoring visitors to the hall. The problem with Showdown Weekend, however, is that the regular front desks are not used throughout the weekend. Makeshift desks are erected blocking the front door so that guests cannot even enter the lobby before being scrutinized by the staff. Therefore, the safety buttons are not immediately at the disposal of the Desk Attendants on-duty, despite the heightened concern about abundant guests and their actions. Such an oversight regarding Desk Attendant safety seems ironic to the RAs. RA, Mary, says that if there is any indication of a gun, she is leaping from that table, hitting that emergency button, and calling the police without hesitation. Other nearby RAs agree with the sentiment. If trouble starts brewing, large or small, they are going to call the police right away. The TUE police are great at having the RAs' backs, especially in situations such as Showdown Weekend.

Subsequently, another side conversation gains momentum. RA, Di Di, raises a question about why TUE does so much for Showdown Weekend and not for other events. It is no secret that the Showdown is an event primarily attended by African Americans. Certainly, Showdown brings a lot of non-TUE visitors onto campus, but they are just family and friends of the residents. She wonders whether there are some racial undertones for enacting so many security measures and tightening up policies. In contrast, TUE does nothing special for the city's Clam Bake fundraiser that takes place in the spring. That event brings just as many people to Eastcity, but there are no complementary measures taken to secure down the campus. Di Di surmises that the additional measures are not taken because Calm Bake attendees are largely White. She feels like TUE administrators are bracing themselves for a particularly large deluge of Black and African American visitors. Di Di's questions get other RAs to wonder why the university takes such drastic measures to prevent Showdown visitors from coming onto campus. They express concern that TUE is making an assumption about African Americans being inherently dangerous. Seeing her point, the RAs in the conversation urge Di Di to raise these questions with Andre. After the meeting she does so. Andre understands her point and will bring her concerns up in the next Central Staff meeting.

Showdown 2008 Friday: No Emergencies Evident and No Emergency Response Enacted

On the Friday of Showdown Weekend around 5 p.m., I park in a student lot and walk over to Cooper, my home for the weekend. Before entering the building, it is apparent that The Circle has been blocked off by a group of orange construction cones and a police car parked sideways across the entrance. Upon entering Cooper, two RAs are

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staffed at the front desk. Although a makeshift desk is apparent, it is sitting directly beside the regular desk, back from the front door in Cooper's lobby. Two Desk Attendants are staffed at the adjacent desks and report that everything is relatively quiet so far. They are actually bored. That is OK, though, because they would rather not deal with the alternative.

The guest apartment is on the top floor of Cooper and has a balcony overlooking the Circle. It provides the perfect vantage point to observe activity in The Circle. Facing back toward Nichols, any activity on the floors would be obvious to an observer at this vantage point by scanning the windows on the side of the building. Every hour or so, I take a look outside to see how things are going. There are only a few people, now and then, walking out of Nichols. Other than that, the foot traffic is minimal.

Andre is the RHC on-call for the weekend and calls around 8:00 p.m. to get a cup of coffee. We walk to the Starbucks a few blocks off campus and chat for about an hour. There is not much student activity noticeable along our walk. Andre comments that the phone is eerily quiet, not one phone call yet. He is surprised because, even on a regular weekend, Andre always receives calls: while in meetings, in between events, at events, it doesn't matter. The on-call phone is always ringing. We see a small group of Andre's residents at the Starbucks, but still there is no evidence of the promised Showdown festivities. Upon returning to Cooper, there are two new RAs staffing the front desk. They report that a big group just came through the lobby to check guests in, but otherwise the building was pretty quiet.

I continue my hourly observations through 4 a.m. that morning, each time observing a lack of foot traffic and activity on the floors of Nichols. If there was a party

in Nichols, telltale signs should be obvious from outside of the building, a strobe light or people crowded into the room. There is nothing. A number of cars drive up to the side of the police car to drop residents off, but they leave without much ado. It doesn't appear that the cars are there to cruise The Circle.

The next morning, Cooper's RHC, Liz, invites me to breakfast. I report to her that my night was very quiet, and she reinforced that nothing big had happened, as far as she knew. According to her RAs and from her experience last year, Showdown Weekend has not been that big of a problem. She wonders whether having so many people on-call and at the desk for Showdown Weekend is a bit of overkill. These sentiments mirror comments Andre made on our way to coffee the night before. Both see the need for some kind of heightened security during Showdown Weekend, but perhaps there is no need for two on-call RAs.

Showdown 2008 Saturday: No Emergencies Evident and No Emergency Response Enacted

After breakfast, I head off campus to run errands. The Residential Life staff doesn't expect much to happen during the day, since the Showdown game will be taking place. When walking to my car, I notice two large tour buses idling on the street side of Nichols. It is likely that the buses are transporting fans to and from the sports arena and just needed somewhere to park in the meantime. When I return that night, I pass the highway exit I usually take to TUE, taking side roads instead. I do that because there is an unusually long line of cars stopping up the exit. "Aha," I think. "Showdown Weekend is really happening." Seeing these cars, I expect to see a lot of activity at the residence hall when I get there. However, Saturday night is much like Friday. The buses are gone

from outside Nichols. There are some people unloading grocery bags from a car that pulls up next to the barricaded entrance. I assume the bags hold supplies for a party, but they could also just hold weekly groceries. The Desk Attendants are alert, but still a little bored. They report an increase in guests signing in, but note that nothing really unusual, scary, or overwhelming has happened. The quiet extends through 3 a.m., when I cease my hourly observations and go to bed.

Wednesday after Showdown 2008: Deliberations over Protocols for Showdown 2009

In the days between Showdown Weekend and the Central Staff meeting, the word about RA discontent with how Showdown Weekend protocols are handled has spread from the RHCs to the ADs and up to the Director. There seems to be a major disconnect between what the protocols assume is happening during Showdown Weekend and what really happens during that time. Hank is most concerned about the allegations that the protocols signal some type of racially-motivated agenda. Therefore, it is the first item on his agenda at Wednesday's Central Staff meeting. Hank strongly states that race has nothing to do with why these protocols were put into place. It has everything to do with the event bringing in thousands of extra people into Eastcity for the event, and about a thousand extra people into the residence halls.

Tina backs Hank up, as the only current staff member who also worked in Residential Life back in 2005, when the Showdown Weekends were at their worst. Tina reassures the staff that it was horrible back then. The fire codes were being broken. RAs told stories about having 15 people staying in a suite. One person at the desk was being rolled over by the number of guests. It was unbelievable. That is why changes to the Showdown Weekend protocols started, because the situation was bad, really bad. The

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problem is that the RAs now have always been under stricter policies and have

experienced the benefits of securing the residence halls from too much activity. Even the

RHCs, by and large, were not around for the bad days. So they never saw it like it was.

She notes that, if RAs and RHCs could see how difficult and scary it was back then, they

wouldn't complain. But they have to trust those staff members who were there. As for the

Clam Bake, Tina acknowledges that, like Showdown Weekend, the activity also brings in

a lot of people. But TUE has traditionally not had an influx of guests come onto campus

for the event. They have also not had any issues or problems historically arising from that

event.

Emma trusts the logic underlying the novel Showdown Weekend staffing and

guest practices, but also wants to acknowledge the newer staff members' experiences

with the event. Like many of the RAs and RHCs, Emma is new to the staff and has only

been exposed to the event in its recent, more benign, context. Having conversed with the

RHCs earlier that week, Emma raises the possibility of not doing away with the

protocols, but perhaps bringing the number of on-call RAs down to one. The lack of

problems evident in recent Showdowns suggests that there is no longer a need for two

RAs on-call.

Despite the fact that Showdown Weekends have become relatively peaceful

events since the original changes in protocol have been enacted, Hank makes it clear that

the Residential Life staff will continue to take a strong approach to Showdown Weekend.

He agrees with Tina that TUE does not want to allow the possibility of allowing past

trends related to on-campus guests, overcrowding, safety concerns, and damage, to

resurface. However, he is willing to entertain Emma's request to require only one RA

On-Call for Showdown Weekend 2009. His only caveat is that each hall set up a schedule so the RHCs know there are always four people in the building at any one time. Andre reminds the staff that they already tell RAs that they have to be in the building during Showdown Weekend, even if they are not on-call. So there are usually more RAs in the vicinity than would be required.

<div align="center">

Ostensive and Performative Comparisons

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In contrast to the first two cases where the ostensive-performative comparisons are outcomes of their stories, the ostensive-performative comparison for the Showdown Weekend case *is* the story (Appendix I). Therefore, the specific changes in guest and staffing subroutines are not as important as recognizing a) whether changes in the routines occur, on the whole; and b) how such changes are triggered by sensemaking dynamics. Moreover, Showdown Weekend departs from the preceding cases by illustrating how sensemaking can impel change in a different direction. Namely, whereas the first two cases explain how sensemaking-related change to the ostensive routine manifests in the performative routine, Showdown explains how sensemaking-related change to the performative routine manifests in subsequent ostensive routines (Figure 17). The resulting discussion focuses on the roles that Retrospect and Plausibility play in causing such change.

Guest and Staffing: Retrospective Experiences from 2005, not 2008, Perpetuate Changes in Routines

In the Showdown Weekend case, the events taking place in 2005 and prior play an important role in setting the standard for years to come. The challenges encountered by the staff in that year develop a retrospective baseline that triggers changes in protocols

from 2006 to 2008. Interesting, however, is the fact that almost none of the staff members

originally involved in the past experiences are still part of the staff in 2008. Only AD for

Ostensive Routine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Performative Routine
Showdown 2005 — **1 RA, 1 Desk Attendant, No limit on guests, no minimum age for guests**		Adhere to pre-2005 coverage and guest policies, but encounter difficulties
	Retrospect	
Showdown 2006 & Showdown 2007 — *2 RAs, 2 Desk Attendants, 2 Guest Limit, No Underage Guests*		Adhere to post-2005 coverage and guest policies, difficulties abate
	Retrospect	
Showdown 2008 — *2 RAs, 2 Desk Attendants, 2 Guest Limit, No Underage Guests*		Adhere to post-2005 coverage and guest policies, difficulties nonexistent
	Retrospect Plausibility	
Showdown 2009 — *Will consider 1RA, but continue 2 Desk Attendants, 2 Guest Limit, No Underage Guests*		

Figure 17. Retrospect and Plausibility as Triggers for Change in the Guest and Staffing Subroutines of the Showdown Weekend Case.

Operations, Tina, identifies having been present both for the worst instances of

Showdown Weekend and for the protocol decisions that came thereafter. One may draw a

conclusion that Tina's opinion strongly influences the current practices of the Residential

Life office. Yet, that conclusion seems oversimplified. Her historical knowledge is

certainly respected and overall professionalism responsible for shaping many of the

Residential Life protocols. But she is careful to provide new staff members a great deal of

allowance to make decisions as they see fit. Another conclusion may be that the TUE

Residential Life staff has an innate capacity to internalize the past experiences of former

colleagues, substantiating their protocol decisions with the morals of these tales. Given that Residential Life personnel at TUE is often in constant flux, the capacity for drawing on inherited experiences may be important to enabling seamless year-to-year functioning.

Yet, if past retrospect is the sole sensemaking trigger for change in this scenario, then one would expect 2008's relatively calm Showdown to affect change in the protocols once again. According to the case, however, that does not happen. Certainly, Director, Hank, is considering the request to decrease the number of RAs on call back down to one. But his concession to have at least four staff members in the building demonstrates the continued intensity with which he wishes to continue confronting the Showdown as a problem. The retooled routines evolving from Tina's time as an RHC remain the standard, regardless of context. In other words, even though the retrospective experiences of 2005 triggered subsequent changes in the ostensive guest and staffing subroutines, the retrospective experiences of 2008 do not play the same role.

Guest and Staffing: Plausibility Triggers Renewed Discussion about Changing Routines

An explanation for anchoring the Showdown 2008 protocol decisions in an incongruous past context involves Plausibility. The institutionalized stories of Showdowns past so vividly emphasize its negative consequences that the current staff can imagine scenarios where guests get out of control, students get hurt, and on-site staff can no longer control the hall. The Central Staff can imagine the old Showdown norms resurrecting should they relent in their precautionary efforts. Upper administrators can easily make the jump between these images and the potential for liability. Throughout my year with the staff, a great deal of discussion around emergency response precautions and

protocols hinges on whether one action or the other might open the university, student life, or Residential Life up to scrutiny around liability. Even RAs who were not even in college for Showdown 2005 buy into its lessons. For instance, recalling the side conversation between two of the RAs at a staff meeting, one RA imagined a complete story about encountering a gun at the front desk. Yet there are no incidents, accounts, or suspicions of guns being shared in relation to past Showdown Weekends. Still, the possibility of having to respond to such a scenario seems very real to the RA based on her understanding of past Showdowns.

For those who ascribe to the lessons of past Showdown Weekends, Plausibility reinforces the protocols that evolved in their wake. For others who see a gap between images of previous and recent Showdown Weekends, Plausibility fuels a growing call to revisit changing the protocols. For instance, as outlined above, an RA who has noticed discrepancies between the shared understandings of Showdown and her personal experiences with it considers the possibility that there is another explanation underlying Residential Life's directive for stricter policies. Namely, Showdown brings a lot of African Americans into the residence halls; as a society, society has been taught to fear large groups of African Americans, especially when they are celebrating and loud; African-American celebrations are often accompanied with violence and belligerence; to temper such violence, it is necessary to restrict large groups of African-American visitors from campus and/or keep them under control; therefore, under the guise of Showdown Weekend, TUE Residential Life has instituted protocols that target African Americans and not other groups.

Just like the gun story, there is no factual evidence to support the RAs challenge, but the story is believable enough to seem plausible to her colleagues. The challenge raised by Plausibility is obvious, however the problem may not be to those unfamiliar with how stories on a college campus can take on a life of their own. However "non-factual" certain interpretations are, their believability amongst the student population (and sometimes even faculty members) allows the stories to grow and gain momentum. The more the administration denies the premise, the more the students are convinced that a cover-up is involved. The RAs at the staff meeting convince their RHC that such an explanation may be plausible, causing him to raise the issue at the next Central Staff meeting. True or not, but nonetheless plausible to a group of RAs, the explanation causes the Central Staff to revisit the issue of changed Showdown Weekend routines at the next staff meeting. In that Director, Hank, opts not to alter most of the protocol, one can surmise that Plausibility does not trigger actual change in the end. However, in that Hank considers a change in the RA protocol for 2009, one might also conclude that Plausibility could ultimately trigger change.

CHAPTER 9

Noise and Disruptive Activities Case Study

Summary Overview of Case

The final case follows the deliberations of two staff members over how protocols for handling disruptive and noisy behavior should have been enacted when student celebrations ensued after Barack Obama was elected to the United States presidency. Upon hearing the announcement, student supporters rushed out into the Circle outside of Nichols and Cooper to raise cheers in honor of the momentous occasion. As the crowd increased and the noise level grew, residents inside the building began to yell back at the supporters and complain about the disruption of quiet hours. Meanwhile police were called and reported on the scene to break up the crowd. In so doing, allegations of racism were raised by a handful of the celebrants, escalating the situation to a potentially dangerous level.

With regards to emergency response routines, such a celebration falls under the guise of a larger category of noise and disruptive activities. RAs list such issues among the most predominant they respond to when on-call. This category, however, covers a wide swath of events from an individual student playing music too loud to large gatherings of students partying or causing mischief. The ostensive protocol for such noise

and disruptive activities provide somewhat confusing guidelines for staff members. On the one hand, the staff manual addresses noise and disruption through a quiet-hours policy, but provides no guidance as to how one might respond to an elevating situation. On the other hand, teaching-directed simulation exercises enacted during staff training fill in these gaps and create shared understandings about appropriate procedures. Namely, the procedures break down into six subroutines: Reporting on the Scene to Help, Assessing the Threat Level, Confronting the Situation, Calling 911, Crowd Control, and Dissipating the Noise or Disturbance.

With regards to the performative routine enacted on the night of Obama's election, the RHC on the front lines of responding to the event struggles with whether to allow celebration of such an historical moment or to treat the celebration as a typical issue of disruptive activity and noise. Given his own belief in Obama's principles of unity, the RHC is somewhat taken by surprise that related celebrations grow and begin to show signs of racial tensions. Ultimately, concerned about the danger that could ensue and the noise complaints potentially raised, the RHC supports police efforts to disband activities quickly and without incident. On the other hand, the Director questions whether the RHC should have foreseen the potential problem and perhaps even have let it play out on its own. While both draw upon a combination of Retrospect and Identity to judge whether emergency response should have been enacted according to noise and disruptive activity protocols, the two administrators come to different conclusions therein.

Ostensive Routine

The crux of this case rests on emergency response protocols related to addressing disruptive activities, crowds, and noise. Although RAs report noise and disruptive

activities among the most common to which they have to respond in the stead of their

positions, the guidelines for handling related events are either overly broad or even

confusing. For instance, with regard to the staff manual, no written protocol specifically

outlines what staff members should do when faced with disruptive activities, crowds, or

noise. Rather, the manual reiterates the "quiet hours" policy found in the book distributed

to all residence hall residents at the beginning of the year, the Residential Life Handbook.

That policy reads:

> In order to promote the academic goals of TUE students, the Department of Student Housing and Residential Life and its staff promote and uphold a quiet environment. We strongly believe that, above all else, a resident has the right to study and sleep in their suite/apartment without disruption. We do, however, realize that community living also involves socializing and that at times there will be noise. It is the dual responsibility of staff and residents to monitor the level of noise, keeping it at an appropriate level at all times. A staff member or resident has the right at any time to request that the noise level be decreased;

and

> Quiet hours are in effect from 8 p.m. until 9 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and midnight to 9 a.m. Friday and Saturday. During this time no noise should be heard outside student rooms and minimal sound through the walls between rooms, in hallways, common areas, and outside areas surrounding the building.

Therefore, with regards to the inscribed aspect of the ostensive routine, Residential Life

staff members are aware of community expectations for handling noise, but have no

written direction as to how incidents should be addressed. These guidelines are left to the

shared understandings developed during staff training at the beginning of the academic

year.

During staff training, several different sessions help to develop a shared

understanding around how staff should respond to incidents involving noise and

disruptive activities. Often, however, staff members find it difficult to articulate proper

protocol without providing some type of real-life context around their guidelines. This context is provided by simulations acted out during the Behind Closed Doors role-play exercise described in Chapter 4 of this dissertation. In short, returning staff members separate into groups and select 10 of the most common types of incidents new staff members are likely to encounter, and be challenged by, in the course of a year (See Appendix D). Each group creates an interactive simulation of each incident which is ultimately played out on-site in residence hall settings. Meanwhile, small groups of new staff members rotate through the 10 scenarios, expected to participate as emergency responders. Given little direction, they enact emergency response protocols to the best of their ability. However, often, RA responders find themselves relying on improvisation, instinct, and common sense. At the conclusion of each simulation, the staff simulators and responders engage in a debriefing dialogue to share/learn Residential Life's expectations for enacting corresponding response protocols. Ultimately, the exercise relies on the premises of practical wisdom shared by experienced staff members and hands-on learning for new trainees.

The ostensive routine for responding to noise and disruptive activities can be elicited from observations of returning staff and trainees as they engage in related Behind Closed Doors simulations. These break down into six larger subroutines (Table 12) detailed in Appendix J.

Table 12. Ostensive Response Subroutines for Noise and Disruptive Activities Scenarios

Subroutines
Report on the Scene to Help
Assess Threat Level
Confront Situation
Call 911
Crowd Control
Dissipate Noise or Disturbance

First, when a resident raises a complaint or there is evidence of an incident related to noise or disruption, staff members should Report on the Scene to Help. However, Behind Closed Doors teaches new RAs that noise and disruption scenarios are often conflated with other types of issues (e.g., intoxication, medical emergencies, belligerence), can involve a lot of people, and evolve quickly. Therefore, staff members are instructed to call another staff member for back-up before addressing the situation. In this way, there are always more than one set of senses to assess the situation, an extra pair of hands for dealing with the situation, or a second opinion as to whether the situation presents danger for the staff members.

Behind Closed Doors exercises often assume that incidents will take place in just that context, behind the closed doors of a residence hall room. Therefore the second subroutine in the protocol involves Assessing the Threat Level with whatever cues are at hand. Loud music, yelling, bickering, and numerous voices are often the obvious cues available to responders before even knocking on the door. Strobe lights, smoke coming from under the door, or people racing in and out of the room can also provide a quick assessment of what might be going on, how many people might be involved, and the level of danger. Through the Behind Closed Doors simulations, staff members are introduced to a number of common cues related to noise and disruptive activities. The

two partners are also encouraged to confer with one another before knocking on the door to determine whether they, themselves, might be placed in danger by addressing the situation. The most important rule, of Residential Life emergency response at TUE, though, is that the RA's safety should come first.

If a situation ever appears out of control, a threat to the safety of the responders, or a threat to the safety of the hall's residents, staff members are instructed to Call 911 immediately. The assumption in calling 911 is that the initial call will be received by TUE police, who have special training in handling such scenarios and who can report quickly onto the scene. Yet, if the partners decide that a situation does not present a significant threat to their safety (or if there is no way to avoid addressing the situation), the RAs are instructed to confront the scenario. Knowing that noise and disruptive activities often involve a lot of people, the main goal of the Confrontation subroutine is to isolate the individuals actually assigned to the room. On the one hand, they are held responsible for the activities taking place in their rooms. On the other hand, the assigned residents are often the only ones who can control the friends or guests they have invited into the room.

According to the Behind Closed Doors simulations, confronting a situation often next involves undertaking Crowd Control. To do so, RAs are instructed to keep one staff member at the door and the other just inside the room. This allows one staff member to control people entering or exiting the room while the other staff member assesses activities occurring within the room. The arrangement also ensures that one staff member is disengaged enough from the in-room activities to call 911, if necessary. Since the person in charge (or the resident assigned to the room) has theoretically been established,

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the RA can ask that person to dissipate their guests. If the assigned resident does not comply, the RA may directly ask guests to leave the premises. As they do so, the RA at the door is instructed to take note of those leaving the room in case any follow-up disciplinary action is necessary.

Finally, if dissipating a crowd does not eliminate a noise or disruption, the RAs can request that the assigned resident minimize the disturbance that brought staff on-site in the first place. Because, however, disruptions are often accompanied by intoxication, altercations, or mischief, the final step often involves managing other issues evident in the room (which may require the engagement of additional response protocols).

Performative Routine

Just on the heels of homecoming, Halloween, and Showdown Weekend, the Nichols Hall staff is excited for a set of programs linked to the biggest event of the fall semester: the 2008 Presidential Elections. J.B., a staunch advocate for getting students involved in the political process, has rallied the RAs to do the same. In the weeks leading up to the elections, the RAs have planned a host of programs to collectively watch the debates, help register voters, educate residents about the issues, and deliberate the candidates' positions. Residence hall bulletin boards, newsletters, and weekly activities all feature election topics. One of the larger events is an outdoor Rock the Vote Concert. J.B. is excited for the concert not only because it will feature local bands, but because it will be the first student activity to be held on the new stage in The Square. J.B. and his RAs have put a lot of effort into getting the program off the ground, fundraising through campus and local sponsors and advertising on the local radio station.

Needless to say, by Election Day, students on campus are pumped up. Given the fact that the university is in the south, it can be expected that a good portion of the students will vote Republican. Given that both urban and college populations generally lean more liberal, another significant proportion of students can be expected to vote Democratic. Some realists express opinions that race will have some impact on southern votes as well, both for or against either candidate. No matter what the predictions or political leanings, though, the students are aware that this election will have historic results. There is not much activity during the day, aside from university vans shuttling students back and forth to the voting sites. However everything changes that night, when the election winner is announced (See Appendix K for map of performative routine).

Election Night 10:00 p.m.: Obama is Declared Election Winner

In keeping with recent programming, Nichols is celebrating the elections by throwing a poll-watching party. J.B. is in attendance along with a large group of students. Nothing unusual is happening in the room, although it is clear that everyone is anxious to know the winner. That announcement comes around 10:00 p.m. that Barack Obama has won. Now that Obama has been declared the winner, some students stay to see the acceptance speech and others leave the room. J.B. realizes that the speech will not take place right away, and ducks into his apartment to call some friends.

Election Night 10:30 p.m.: Students Rally in The Circle

After a few minutes, J.B. hears a loud noise from the Circle which is just outside of his living room and bedroom windows. When he takes a look outside, J.B. sees a big group of people gathering and yelling, "Obama! Obama!" J.B. doesn't think too much of this at first. He knows a lot of students are invested in this historic moment. In the

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following minutes, more and more students come down into the The Circle and join the chant. J.B. notes that the pro-Obama crowd includes both African-American and White students. At the same time, students from Cooper are coming out onto their balconies overlooking The Circle, adding to the yelling. It is not clear whether everyone is yelling in support of the results or whether there is a growing faction yelling in opposition. It is close to 11:00 p.m. now and there is a lot of noise outside, well past the 9:00 p.m. quiet hours limit.

J.B. goes out to the lobby and notices a large group of people have gathered there as well. As a result, the lobby is getting loud and there are more people than the desk attendants can handle. Nichols is particularly strict in terms of letting people into the building. Residents have to show their room keys each time they pass the front desk. There is normally one desk attendant on-duty at all times, but when situations like this arise, it is hard to notice who belongs in the hall and who doesn't. Therefore, J.B. calls the RA on-call and asks them to help with traffic control. At the same time, phone calls start coming in to Nichols's front desk with noise complaints. The RAs on-call are also getting noise complaints from residents on the floor.

In the middle of this, J.B. sees one of his students walk through the crowd. His name is Billy. Billy is a good student, very eager, and J.B. has been working with him to get involved in campus government. Unfortunately, J.B. thinks Billy is not altogether there. He is very socially awkward and is now walking through a rowdy crowd wearing a "NO-BAMA" t-shirt displaying Obama's face with a big x over it. Billy is White. In his effort to diffuse the potentially dangerous situation, J.B. tells Billy, "Please go inside. Take the shirt off. It's over, just go." J.B. feels like it could have gotten bad, particularly

for this student. Even if someone points out that he is being inappropriate, Billy will not

get it. Moreover, Billy could say something wrong. He did so earlier in the night. J.B.

was at the front desk with one of his RAs, who is Black. Billy came up to them and said

to her, "You're not mad at me because I voted for McCain, are you?" Even though J.B.

didn't believe Billy meant it as a racist thing, it was clear that Billy asked the RA the

question because she was Black. Some of the things that come out of Billy's mouth just

don't sound right. Knowing these shortcomings, J.B. wants to make sure nothing

happened to this student, in particular.

Election Night 11:00 p.m.: The Eastcity Police Arrive

While J.B. makes efforts to diffuse some of the noise and activity, the Eastcity

Police arrive outside Nichols. Due to the fact that there is more than one car, J.B. suspects

the police have been called by more than one person. When the officers get out of their

car, they give a directive for the crowd to dissipate. It is clear to some of the students that

the first officers on the scene are mostly White. Although the crowd is made up of

students representing various racial backgrounds, some start making comments about the

officers' actions being racially motivated. A few individuals accuse the White police of

trying to shut down the celebration because it involved a bunch of Black people. That is

when J.B. gets nervous about where the situation might go. In a few short minutes, the

context of the gathering shifts from a celebration to a racially-fueled argument.

As the police continue clearing out the areas outside of Nichols, J.B. starts hearing

additional racially charged comments, like "Black power." While all of this is going on,

Ed, another RA, comes down to the lobby to see what is going on. He notices a Nichols

student, who happens to be White, walking through the Circle. Ed hears the crowd begin

taunting the student, making comments like, "Oh, who did you vote for? You voted for McCain, didn't you?" The student just keeps walking, not responding to the comments. Two students spray silly-string all over one of the cop cars.

As far as he can remember, there has not been an issue on campus involving the Eastcity police and accusations of racial profiling. That's why this situation surprises J.B. and makes him nervous. J.B. is disappointed because he feels the comments are ignorant. Just because you are White doesn't mean that you didn't vote for Obama. Further, the comments bother J.B. because the people saying stuff like this don't care about the politics of the election. Those people are still in the movie room, waiting for Obama's speech. It also bothers J.B. because, in his view, Barack Obama is not about racial divisions at all.

Election Night 11:15 p.m.: The Crowd Dissipates

Seeing that the crowd has gotten more unruly, the police officers call for back-up. A second group of officers quickly arrives, this time seemingly more representative of different racial backgrounds. J.B. is relieved, because he doesn't want the students to think this is a White cop vs. Black student thing. Whether because of the officer demographics or because the celebration has run its course, the crowd is more responsive. Just as the students begin thinning out, Barack Obama's acceptance speech starts airing on the TV. J.B. uses this to pull people back into the residence hall. He figures that most pro-Obama residents should be interested in the speech and will evacuate The Circle on their own volition. J.B. announces, "hey y'all, Barack Obama's about to give his first speech. Y'all want to come back in and watch it." With that announcement, he gets nearly everyone back in the movie room, which is packed. It isn't too loud in the room

because people are just really watching the speech. J.B. is relieved. Everyone seems happy and it is a good moment.

As soon as the speech is over, J.B. stops everyone, turns down the volume, and says, "hey everyone! I know we are all excited tonight, but it is pretty late and we don't want to disturb anyone that's already trying to sleep. So please just go back to your room or go study, relax, whatever. Try not to be too loud." The students are all pretty receptive. They leave and there aren't any more issues for the rest of the night. The next day, J.B. notices a lot of comments flying back and forth on Facebook. There is a Nichols Hall Facebook account, so J.B. can see the comments. In J.B.'s view, some of statements were questionable, from both sides. Ultimately, though, everything has calmed down.

Wednesday after Election Night: Debriefing the Situation at the next Central Staff Meeting

At the next Central Staff Meeting, J.B. reports that Nichols had a bad night. There was a crowd of about 80 people making a lot of noise after the election results were announced. Liz chimed in that her RAs also had problems with elections. Some residents were videotaping one of her RAs while trying to quiet them down. They were making comments like, "I can do anything I want! Our president is Black!" J.B. admits that he was excited, too, but he tried to regain control for the courtesy of others. Police enforcements were brought in to help out. Upon querying the other RHCs, it seemed that things only got out of control between Nichols and Cooper. Otherwise, noise only lasted for about 10 minutes and died down on its own.

Hank's first response is to ask whether the RHCs didn't expect there to be issues. J.B. admits he didn't expect the event to evolve like it did. J.B. was hoping people would

be respectful and that any celebrations would pass quickly. Hank confirms that the whole thing lasted less than an hour, nobody got hurt, and "NO-BAMA" didn't get hurt. J.B. answers in the affirmative. From that information, Hank sees the response as a success. J.B. is still concerned over the Facebook comments going back and forth, wondering whether they should plan some programs on unity. Emma doesn't think programming is necessary, but that J.B. should continue to monitor the comments to keep his thumb on the pulse of the community. He may also want to watch out for racial slurs or inappropriate messages written on residence hall doors. Although Hank sees the value of keeping an eye out for residual trouble, he cautions the staff not to perpetuate Black-White divisions. It is not always productive, but feeling comfortable enough to voice frustrations can be good and healthy in a community of students. If the staff can figure out ways to facilitate conversations in a healthy way, go for it.

　　　　After the meeting J.B. and I have an opportunity to sit down and talk. He reflects that, although there were no serious problems, the situation could have easily gotten bad. Alongside good students, there are always bad students looking to stir up trouble. Some of the people stirring up trouble are not even TUE students. TUE used to be a really bad hang-out for some of the troubled students from other local colleges. The old parking lot is a good example. Even though the parking lot is no longer there, people are often driving through the circle. J.B. thinks that if some of those kinds of people still would have been here, it really could have turned into a big racial issue. And it didn't, luckily. The college students out there were acting dumb, but they're smarter than that and it didn't turn into anything big. But the biggest surprise to J.B. is that it happened at all. He thought that people were past all of that racial banter. TUE has a diverse student body

and Nichols has a lot of diversity programming. He confesses that it hurt his feelings that people would be like that because Barack Obama doesn't stand for any of that. He stands for change. J.B. was really happy with the election results because he saw that Obama could bring people together. That is why the ignorance bothered him so much.

Hank and I also have an opportunity to talk about the election night events. Although the tension of Obama's win surprised J.B. and the other RHCs, it did not surprise him. He has lived in the south for a long time. Given this history, it didn't take a whole lot of thinking to know something might happen when a Black man was elected president. Further, it didn't surprise Hank to hear that some clueless student would walk out in to the middle of a celebration, inciting problems by saying stupid things. Hank guesses that, had he been in J.B.'s position, he would have opened up the blinds in his apartment, kicked back with a beer, and watched the whole thing unfold. He is careful to note that he doesn't mean this in a flippant way. Rather, he knows that sometimes students learn lessons the hard way. Given his career-long experience in Residential Life, Hank is also confident that the situation would have blown over on its own accord. Overall, he was very happy with how J.B. and the other RHCs handled the situation. He was particularly happy that the situation did not get out of control and nobody was harmed. However, owing to a higher tolerance for allowing students to learn their own lessons, he might have handled the situation differently.

Ostensive and Performative Comparisons

There is no doubt that election night 2008 stands alone as a novel event. Yet, in this case, the celebration that ensues afterward begins to resemble a disruptive activity for which emergency response often intervenes. Similar to the attempted suicide case, the

ostensive protocols for handling such activities are designed under the assumptions of a different context: a loud party in a residence hall room. Yet, J.B.'s response to the celebration is consistent with that same ostensive routine. When J.B. treats the case as a disruptive or noisy activity, rather than a unique moment in history or a passing celebration, he opts not to alter the corresponding emergency response. The triggers for this decision rest in Retrospect and Plausibility. Interestingly, however, J.B. later draws criticism for his actions from the Director of Residential Life whom has an alternate interpretation of the event based on these same two sensemaking dynamics.

Noise and Disruptive Activities: Retrospect and Plausibility Trigger Emergency Response

The ostensive routine for handling a noise and disruptive activity scenario is relatively straightforward. And although it can be examined in terms of its component subroutines, it is easier for the purposes of the ostensive-performative comparison to view the routine as a whole (Figure 18). When viewed accordingly, it appears that J.B.'s response to the election celebration is relatively consistent with procedures related to noise and disruptive activities. A relevant question, then, is why J.B. decides to treat such a novel event accordingly.

The first trigger for J.B. enacting the Noise and Disruptive Activities protocol involves Retrospect. From the events leading up to the election, it is clear that J.B. is invested in the momentous nature of this particular election. J.B. encourages his residents to become educated about the candidates, encourages RAs to program related activities, and pulls together a large-scale concert to enlist new voters. On the night of the elections, J.B. is as excited as any resident about the proceedings, and especially about the outcome.

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Ostensive Routine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Performative Routine

When a staff member becomes aware of a potential incident

Call another staff member for back-up

↓

Go to the site of the reported or observed disturbance

Once on-site

Use sensory cues to assess situation and determine threat level

↓

Confer with partner to agree upon a course of action

↓

If threat level high, call 911 to involve TUE police immediately

↓

If threat level low or confrontation unavoidable, address the residents assigned to the room

↓

Keep one staff member at the door and the other just inside the room.

↓

Ask room residents to minimize noise or disturbance

↓

Ask residents to clear guests from the room

↓

Identify guests leaving room

↓

Manage any other issues in the room (e.g., intoxication, medical emergency)

Retrospect Plausibility →

Election Night 10:30 p.m.
RHC report to lobby after observing crowds in The Circle

↓

RHC call RA On-Call to assist with response

Election Night 10:40 p.m.
RHC rely on cues (noise complaints, racial sparring) to assess danger

Unknown sources call Eastcity Police

↓

RHC and Eastcity Police confront situation

↓

Election Night 11:15 p.m.
Eastcity Police call for back-ups

↓

RHC manage crowds in the residence hall lobby

↓

RHC encourage supporters to avoid further disturbances

Figure 18. Retrospect and Plausibility as Triggers for Change in the Response Protocol of the Noise and Disruptive Activities Case

For months he has believed in Obama's platform and supported his candidacy. J.B. later

admits that, owing to his own excitement about the elections, he was surprised about the

ensuing disruptive celebration.

As the celebration starts to grow, J.B. is faced with a decision that will determine

whether he enacts an emergency response or lets the situation pass. Namely, before

enacting a response, J.B. has to decide whether to label this situation a noise and/or

disruptive activity. Since these elections are historic, the crowds and the noise do not

necessarily sway J.B.'s decision at the onset. He admits wanting to celebrate as well. The

impetus to label the celebration an emergency, rather, comes from the noise complaints

being phoned into Nichol's front desk. J.B. admits that, once he realizes the complaints

are multiplying, he knows the situation is turning bad. He immediately turns to a

retrospective account of his efforts to work with the noise policy over the past three

years.

At the end of each of year, J.B. has asked residents to fill out evaluations rating

their residence hall experiences. At the end of every single evaluation, the biggest

complaint students had was noise in The Circle and outside of Campus Dining. It is the

number one reason residents want to move out or not live on campus. One of TUE's

charges to J.B. when he started his job was to improve retention in his residence hall, so

J.B. always takes issues of noise seriously. Over the three years, J.B. has worked with the

Nichols staff to control noise and respond expediently when it gets out of control. Even

though it is a special night, J.B. doesn't want to undo all of their hard work.

A second trigger for enacting the Noise and Disruptive Activities protocol

involves Plausibility. Throughout the case, race becomes a particular concern expressed

by J.B. In the first moments of the celebration, he takes note that celebrants are both African American and White. There is no doubt that J.B. believes racial tensions could arise owing to the racially significant aspects of Obama being elected president. This is especially true at an institution like TUE where the student body is a mix of southern conservatives, rural White republicans, urban Black democrats, and university liberals. J.B.'s sense of plausible danger only heightens when he sees Billy in his "NO-BAMA" shirt, hears of taunts to White students about voting McCain, and witnesses accusations that police actions might be racially motivated.

Retrospect and Plausibility come together for J.B. when asked to reflect on why the racial issues piqued his sense of urgency around the post-election celebration. This time, his explanation for enacting the emergency response in accordance with Noise and Disruptive Activities protocols was attributed to past events in The Circle. Namely, The Circle has a historic reputation as a setting for disturbances, which J.B. attributes to the actions of "bad people." However, many of the stories associated with past problems in The Circle have racial links. For instance, The Circle was the site of disturbances during past Showdown Weekends, wherein African American visitors to the campus would "cruise" the area and proposition women. Given The Circle's history, J.B. feels even more strongly that danger may have been an outcome to the post-election celebration, thus substantiating his actions.

Interestingly, the roles of Retrospect and Plausibility not only drive J.B.'s enacted response, but also trigger passing criticism from his supervisor. At the Central Staff meeting after the election, J.B. details the celebration and the emergency response for his colleagues as outlined above. Immediately, the Director of Residential Life, Hank,

challenges J.B. for taking such aggressive action. Later, Hank shares that his response to J.B.'s decisions had a lot to do with his own sense of Retrospect and Plausibility on the matter. Based on past experiences with explosive campus issues such as momentary celebrations, he knows many of them blow over. Even issues of racial tension and accusations of racial profiling on the part of local police have come and gone in the past. Given such perspectives, Hank would not have seen the post-election events as signaling plausible danger. Whereas Retrospect and Plausibility initiate quick (and possibly over-) reactions on the part of the less experienced staff member, the same sensemaking dynamics trigger tempered (and possibly under-) reactions on the part of the more veteran staff member.

CHAPTER 10

Discussion

According to Feldman and Pentland's (2003) conceptualization, work routines are flexible. In other words, they simultaneously exhibit attributes of stability and change. Focusing on emergency response routines in the university setting, this study has elicited 12 examples wherein sensemaking dynamics trigger deliberations about altering routines (Table 13). Provided such an overview, Chapter 10 brings together the contextual and case study findings to discuss some broader insights related to emergency response routines, change, and sensemaking in TUE's Residential Life department. Specifically, the chapter identifies three sensemaking triggers prominent in promoting change and addresses two different manners in which these triggers might manifest change.

Three Triggers for Change in Residential Life Emergency Response Routines

At the onset, this study set out to understand why actions depart from protocols when university administrators engage in emergency response. Based on the evidence drawn from the case study findings, three sensemaking dynamics emerged as particularly relevant for the Residential Life setting: Retrospect, Plausibility, and Personal Identity.

Individually, these three dynamics occurred with the most frequency across the 12 case

narratives (Retrospect = 7, Plausibility = 5, Personal Identity = 4). Moreover, at least one

Table 13. Summary of Sensemaking Triggers for Change across Case

Case	Routine/Subroutine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Change
Committed Suicide	Calling 911	Plausibility	Alters police response
Committed Suicide	Calling up the Line	Retrospect	Alters respondent network
Committed Suicide	Gossip and Crowd Control	Retrospect	Maintains staff debriefing efforts
Committed Suicide	Notifying Parents	Retrospect, Plausibility, Personal Identity	Alters who notifies parents
Committed Suicide	Reporting on the Scene to Help	Personal Identity	Capacity to alter responsive actions
Attempted Suicide	Calling up the Line	Retrospect	Alters phone tree, incrementally
Attempted Suicide	Providing Support Services	Personal Identity, Social Context	Maintains ability to develop rapport and distance
Attempted Suicide	Providing Support Services	Salient Cues, Retrospect, Plausibility	Alters decision to hospitalize, incrementally
Attempted Suicide	Notifying Parents	Personal Identity, Plausibility	Alters decision to notify parents, incrementally
Guest and Staffing	Guest and Staffing	Retrospect	Alters guest and staffing protocols
Guest and Staffing	Guest and Staffing	Plausibility	Alters decision to revisit guest and staffing protocols
Noise and Disruptive Activities	Noise and Disruptive Activities	Retrospect, Plausibility	Alters responsive actions

of these three dynamics was represented as a trigger for change in each of the 12

examples of emergency response routines. When combined with contextual evidence

from the ethnographic portion of the study, the study further elaborates the ways in which

Residential Life structure and culture enable these triggers to affect change in emergency

response routines.

Retrospect

The most prevalent sensemaking dynamic to emerge as a trigger for change throughout the study was Retrospect, or understanding the present through the past (Weick, 1995, 1999). In a practical sense, one might frame Retrospect as a means of drawing on past experience, or tacit knowledge, to make decisions about the present. According to the TUE staff, Residential Life work is largely based on concepts of Retrospect, such as hands-on learning and common sense. For example, many of the subroutine protocols mapped out in the case studies rely heavily on shared understandings rather than written protocols. These shared understandings, in turn, are often lessons passed down from the experiences of senior administrators. Therefore, even before administrators have the opportunity to employ retrospect in deliberating their actions, they have already drawn upon Retrospect to deliberate the protocol. Retrospect is the building block upon which changes in emergency response routines are considered.

To some degree, the finding that Retrospect is central to shifting emergency response routines is consistent with Buck's (2009) recent study identifying past experience as the primary tool used by Residential Life Directors in emergency response decision-making. To another degree, the finding related to Retrospect in this study provides more depth to Buck's conclusion. Namely, it suggests that Retrospect is a tool employed by all Residential Life staff members. Further, Retrospect involves a different set of parameters for entry level administrators and veteran.

For instance, the ethnographic data suggest that veteran staff members have both life experience and professional experience to draw upon when undertaking emergency response. Most have worked at different levels of Residential Life administration at

different institutions. Several have worked for TUE's Residential Life department for a number of years. The case study data also illustrates this point. In the Committed Suicide case, senior staff members recount experiences with past emergency responses to dictate whom they should include in the phone tree. Meanwhile, Edward's past experiences informing parents of their child's death convince him to break from the norm and notify this set of parents in-person. With regards to Showdown Weekend, the original change in coverage protocols and the decision not to make further changes are based on a particular retrospective experiences with the event. While in the post-election celebration, we see how the Director would have handled it differently based on both life and professional experiences in the south. When administrators have rich sources of experience upon which to draw, Retrospect becomes a quick and efficient tool for questioning, altering, or even disregarding existing emergency response routines.

In contrast, entry level staff members (i.e., RAs and RHCs) have a shallower foundation of personal and professional experiences to use when faced with emergency response scenarios. This does not mean, however, that Retrospect is irrelevant for this segment of administrators. Rather, the study shows that entry level administrators draw upon sources other than their own lived experiences to inform actions taken in emergency response scenarios.

First, they are more likely to reference lessons they have learned from others' experiences. For instance, in the Showdown Weekend case, none of the current RHCs or RAs had ever experienced the worst version of the event requiring emergency response. None of them were around in 2005. Instead, all of the lived experiences reside with veteran administrator, Tina. However, that does not keep the entry level administrators

from referencing bad emergencies from back in Tina's time. One RA even expresses concern about being confronted with a gun, even though there is no evidence of weapons being a problem at Showdown Weekend in the recent past. Ultimately, stories of Showdown Weekend have been handed down and reinforced by veteran administrators to such a degree that entry level administrators feel like they are lived experiences. In a more hands-on sense, Behind Closed Doors serves a similar role. Simulations help RAs to experience the evolving ambiguities and clues inherent to common Residential Life emergencies. In lieu of lived experiences, these simulated lessons become part of the RAs' performative encyclopedia. Even though most have not responded to real versions of the emergencies presented in Behind Closed Doors, the retrospective imprints the scenarios make on the RAs are just as real to them. Such sensitizing events, stories, and simulated experiences populate a virtual archive of Retrospect in the absence of true retrospective experiences.

Plausibility

The second most prevalent sensemaking dynamic to emerge as a trigger for change throughout the study was Plausibility, or a socially agreed upon idea of what is possible or how to interpret the story (Weick, 1995, 1999). Unlike Retrospect, the fact that Plausibility plays an important role in shaping emergency response routines may be more of a novel finding. The concept of Plausibility, itself, contrasts the retrospective perspective Residential Life administrators ascribe as a core value. Residential Life administrators are accustomed to thinking of themselves as responders who learn from fixed experiences in the past. The lessons learned from past events can be debated as useful or not, right or wrong, insightful or unhelpful. Meanwhile, Plausibility entails

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imagining events that have not yet occurred. There is a great deal of variation involved in how administrators might envision scenarios evolving. It is difficult to gauge the utility or accuracy of an insight drawn from Plausibility. Moreover, Plausibility is more likely than Retrospect to fail an administrator. Whereas it is difficult to argue an administrator's hands-on experience, a challenge can always be mounted about whether an administrator should have foreseen a particular emergency coming.

Still, despite the esoteric qualities of Plausibility, there is evidence in the contextual findings of this study to suggest that Residential Life divisions do rely on such a tool to exercise flexibility in their emergency response routines. For example, employing RAs and RHCs who are either the same age as the residents, or not far removed, allows Residential Life to draw upon their perspectives of the community. Further, these entry level administrators live on-site with students providing unique insight on-site culture and activities of the student population. That deep understanding permits entry level staff to imagine plausible scenarios that would otherwise be missed by veteran administrators. At the same time, entry level professionals do not have extensive experience to help develop imagined notions of how an event might evolve. Therefore, they sometimes draw upon obscure and potentially unrelated references in order to create plausible images. Thus, there is a fine line between entry level administrators' plausible images being creative or over the top. Likewise, there is a fine line between whether related decisions to change emergency response protocols can be considered insightful or extreme.

Take the noise and disruptive activities case, for instance. Even though the RHC does not want to believe that the post-election celebration could go bad, he begins to see

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the potential when the White student with the "NO-BAMA" t-shirt walks through the crowd of Obama supporters. This concern is drawn from the RHC's frontline observations of the student with his peers and in the context of his residential community. The RHC's concern grows stronger when he imagines the tension between African American students and White police escalating. These images are drawn from general images of racial tension, but gain more importance in light of the election politics around race. Where the first concern leads the RHC to protect one student, the second concern leads him to take swift action. Plausibility becomes the RHC's trigger for supporting the shut-down of event.

In contrast, responding to the RHC's account of the night's activities, the Director suggests that the RHC may have overreacted. According to the Director, it was more plausible than not that the event would have passed with very little consequence or occasion for concern. He has seen similar issues resolve themselves here and at other institutions. Again, such a departure points to the possibility that entry level and veteran administrators potentially tap into Plausibility in slightly different ways. The more experienced the administrator, the more likely s/he is to use Plausibility and Retrospect in combination, drawing on past experiences to suggest whether an incident might turn in one direction or the other, escalate or not.

Personal Identity

The third most prevalent sensemaking dynamic to emerge as a trigger for change throughout the study was Personal Identity, or the sense of self given an unfolding situation (Weick, 1995, 1999). The contextual findings support this observation in that there are few boundaries between personal and professional life. There are also few

boundaries between how Residential Life administrators see themselves and what Residential Life administrators do. With regards to the cases, Personal Identity plays the strongest role in shifting routines for veteran professionals who are faced with enacting emergency responses. For instance, with reference to the committed suicide, The Dean of Students and Director grapple with identities such as parent, hands-on person, and purveyor of a caring university. Similarly, in the attempted suicide case, the AD for Residential Life grapples with identities such as girlfriend and mother. Given observations of the TUE staff over the year, one might conclude that the more tangible experience administrators have to draw upon, the more expanded their senses of personal and professional identities. Further, the more mature sense of identity administrators hold, the greater their capacity for mediating competing identities. In the case of veteran administrators, then, Personal Identity provides a wide spectrum of resources with which to interpret emergency scenarios and base related responses.

Conversely, Personal Identity seems to be less of an asset to entry level professionals whom neither have extensive life experience nor professional experience. For instance, in lieu of a more entrenched identity to guide responses for the committed suicide case, entry level professionals turn to notions of heroism. Not only is this the first image staff members are indoctrinated with in training, it is reinforced by the manual and even other staff members. Yet, the hero is only an idealized representation of what Residential Life staff do. It is a projection of who entry level staff members think they ought to be. Where it triggers bravery in the face of danger, it provides no deep insight into more subtle responses administrators may be called upon to make. In fact, in the Committed Suicide case, the hero identity even appears to be a potential liability.

Therefore, as much as Identity can trigger positive changes in emergency response routines, it can also have negative or paralyzing effects. A less comprehensive set of resources related to Identity can limit the range of flexibility entry level professionals can enact in emergency response routines.

Contrasting Sensemaking Triggers across Levels of Tenure

One observation raised by the initial findings is that while each trigger for change can be applied broadly to Residential Life administrators, there are differences in how they manifest across different levels of tenure. In the case of Residential Life, tenure refers to entry level versus veteran staff members (Table 14).

Table 14. Comparison of Motivations behind Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility across Tenure

Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Motivations for Change	
	Entry-Level Administrator	Veteran Administrator
Retrospect	Sensitizing Events Stories from Colleagues Simulated Experiences	Personal Experiences Professional Experiences Emergency Response Experiences History with the Institution Experience at Other Institutions
Identity	Hero Hands-On Person	Parent Hands-On Person University Representative
Plausibility	Closeness to Student Context Obscurely Related External References	Past Experiences

Entry level Residential Life administrators do not have much experience in life or in practice. Therefore, to interpret incidents and emergency situations, they must rely upon what they do know: lessons learned from sensitizing events, the scenarios they have used in training simulations, and the stories shared by more senior staff members. Without an identity rooted in experience, they assume identities based on who they think

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they should be. In the case of emergency response, they often see themselves fulfilling a hero role. The hero identity is further reinforced through the cultural messages sent at training and amongst their colleagues. Armed with only a tenuous sense of how emergencies evolve or how they should enact emergency response, entry level staff members may seem ill equipped to fill such an important role. Yet, owing to their limited experiences, entry level professionals are likely to question prevailing norms and challenge outdated protocols. Their idealized identities impel them to address emergencies others may not confront. Entry level administrators also bring to the table a tool veteran administrators have long relinquished: a closeness to the work context. While inexperience might limit sensemaking in other ways, such closeness in age and proximity helps entry level administrators develop plausible accounts of how emergencies might uniquely emerge and evolve amongst a college aged population.

At the same time, Residential Life professionals who have been promoted up the line operate largely on experience lived both personally and professionally. That experience provides a basis for interpreting evolving emergencies and enacting response. Veterans have long relinquished the unrealistic persona of the hero identity, sobered by realizations that they cannot handle all incidents and that sometimes their students are hurt or die under their care. Their sense of identity is not only refined, it is more multifaceted. In essence, veteran professionals have a larger personal encyclopedia to reference in odd, unconventional, and unpredictable situations. Even though the scenarios they imagine may not be as grounded in the specific culture or activities of current students, the plausible scenarios they use to inform action are more constructed in reality.

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Incorporating the efforts of both entry level and veteran administrators is a

signature structural element of Residential Life offices. Although hierarchical reporting

lines and power dynamics do exist amongst the staff, there is a cultural recognition that

each level of staff contributes expertise. Because almost all emergency response in

Residential Life takes place in a social context, there is a constant negotiation of

interpretation and action that takes place between entry level and more senior

professionals. From the findings in this study, it seems that the negotiation of

sensemaking dynamics across entry level and veteran administrators creates a system of

checks and balances with regards to flexibly enacting emergency response routines. The

question that remains, however, is how? Do checks and balances come about by the mere

fact that diverse staffs allow more perspectives to be considered among collective

negotiations? Or do checks and balances come about as the result of a more structured

process where changes are made by one group and questioned, amended, or again altered

by the other?

Either way, the interplay of differential levels of experience, notions of identity,

and ability to imagine plausible consequences likely strengthens Residential Life's

capacity for triggering change in emergency response routines. Therein, Retrospect,

Identity, and Plausibility allow Residential Life to maintain the flexibility needed to

accommodate its emergency landscape.

Direct, Combined, and Cumulative Triggers for Change

Another observation evident in the above discussion is that although any one

sensemaking dynamic appears to operate separate of the others with regards to triggering

change in Residential Life emergency response, they can also be seen as operating in

concert with one another. This raises questions about the extent to which change is the direct, combined, or cumulative consequence of Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility.

Evidence from the cases and comparative findings illustrate that the sensemaking triggers prominent in this study operate at three different levels of interaction with regards to Residential Life emergency response. At the first level, any individual sensemaking dynamic directly triggers deliberations over change on its own (Figure 19). Although the findings suggest that any sensemaking dynamic may be capable of promoting direct change in an emergency response routine, Retrospect is the most
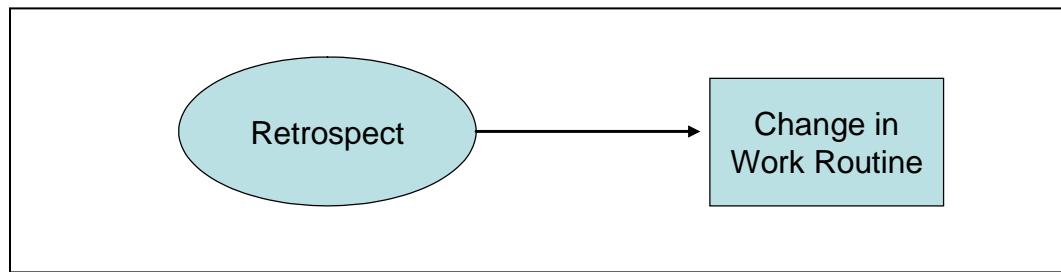
Figure 19. Direct Triggers for Change in Residential Life Emergency Response Routines.

straightforward. We see an example of this type of direct change in the Committed Suicide case where the VPSA draws upon an almost identical incident in the past to deliberate actions in the present.

At a second level, change in the emergency response routine is promoted through the interaction of Retrospect with a secondary sensemaking trigger (Figure 20). For instance, in the Noise and Disruptive Activities case, the RHC develops plausible images of a student getting hurt based on retrospective accounts of his interactions with that student. In particular, the RHC's observations suggest that the student has proven to be socially awkward and unaware of his inappropriateness when addressing racial issues.
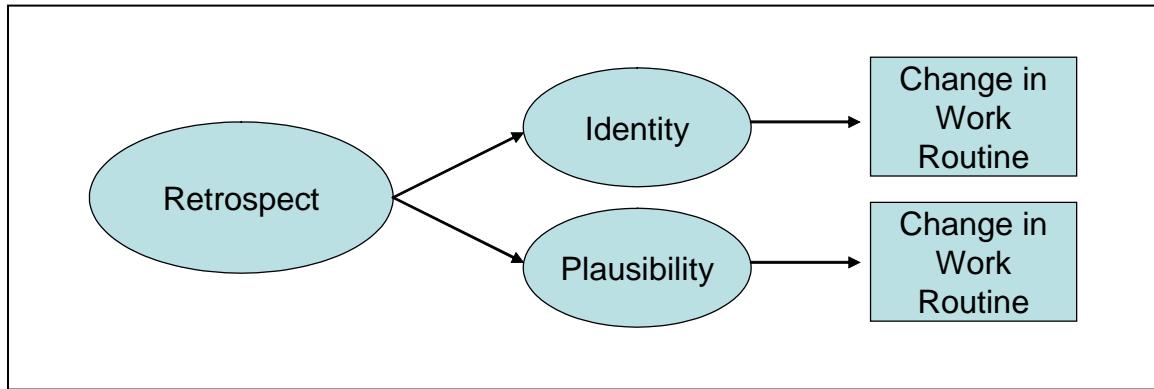
Figure 20. Combined Triggers for Change in Residential Life Emergency Response Routines

Therefore, when the student walks through a crowd of excited Obama supporters with a "NO-BAMA" t-shirt, the RHC considers a plausible scenario where the student unintentionally incites anger or even violence. Although not explicitly addressed in the cases, findings regarding Identity as a sensemaking trigger suggest that it, too, may operate as a trigger for change based on influence from Retrospect. Particularly for veteran administrators, an identity such as "parent" is rooted in some type of past experience. Therefore in cases where the parent identity causes change in an emergency response routine it does so as a reflection of past experience.

At a third level, change in the emergency response routine results from interactions among all three sensemaking triggers. Herein, the three sensemaking triggers build upon one another in a cumulative manner (Figure 21). This type of cumulative trigger for change is evidenced in the Notifying the Parents subroutine of the Committed Suicide case. When deliberating whether to follow or depart from the typical protocol of allowing the police and the VPSA to notify parents of a student's death, the Dean of
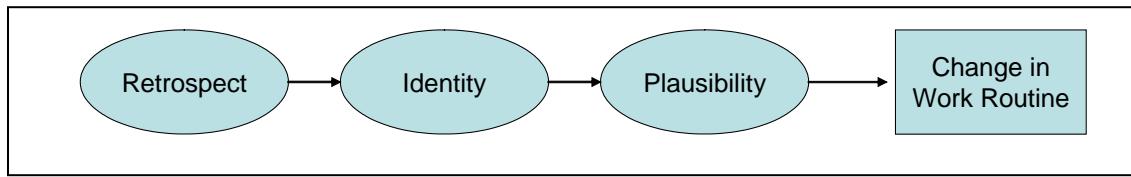
Figure 21. Cumulative Triggers for Change in Residential Emergency Response Routines.

Students recounts another instance where he had to do the same. In so doing, he reflects upon his own identity as a parent, a neighbor, and as an administrator representing the caring side of TUE. These, in turn, cause the Dean of Students to project an alternative future, where the parents are disappointed in receiving the news from an impersonal or untimely source. Combined, Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility create the impetus for deliberating change in the Notifying Parents subroutine.

Potential Trigger Points for Change

In summary, this study illustrates three sensemaking dynamics as particularly relevant to enacting change in Residential Life emergency response routines: Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility. Further, these triggers have the capacity to directly, in combination, or cumulatively shape such changes. Finally, differences in the ways that entry level and veteran administrators manifest sensemaking triggers may also cause deliberations over change. When viewed together, these three observations provide an overview of trigger points relevant to Residential Life work that have the potential to cause change in emergency response routines (Figure 22).

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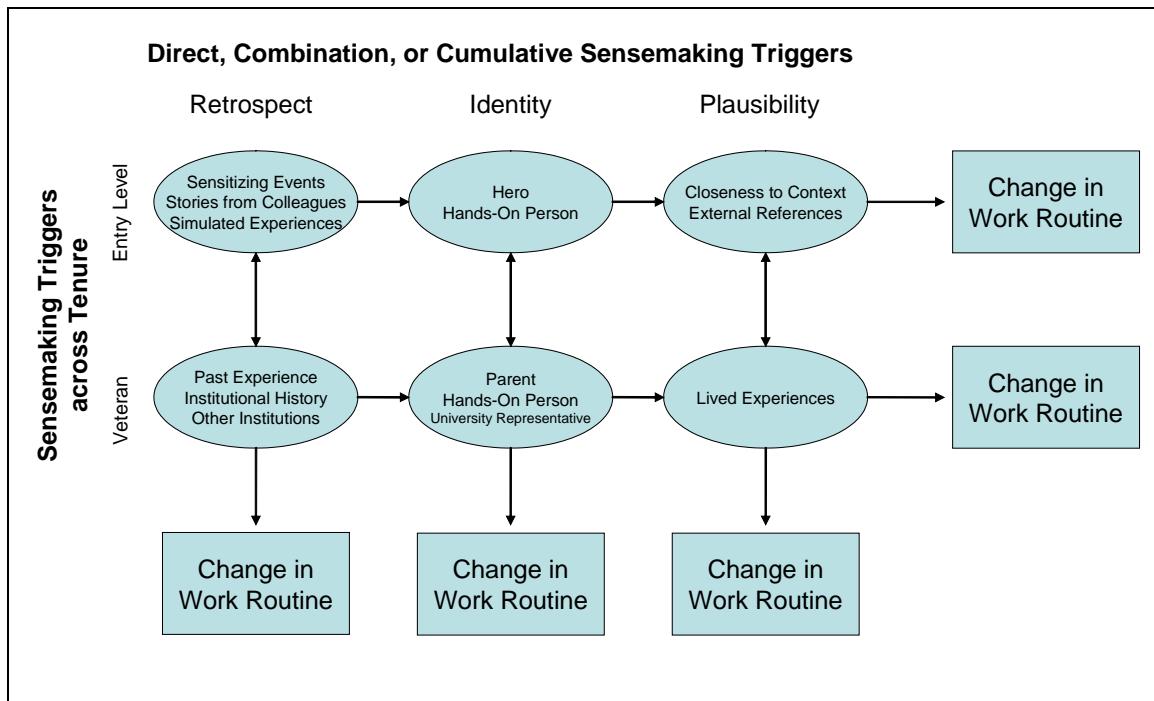
Figure 22. Potential Trigger Points for Change in Residential Life Emergency Response Routines

CHAPTER 11

Conclusion

Inspired by the deliberations taking place in the aftermath of the Eastern Michigan murder of a student and the Virginia Tech shootings in 2006-2007, this dissertation set out to understand why university administrators depart from protocol when enacting emergency response. Employing the conceptual lenses of organizational work routines and collective sensemaking, the study demonstrates a new approach to studying emergency response in higher education settings. Utilizing an ethnographic approach, the study articulates a year in the life of one Residential Life department and the rich organizational, social, and work contexts underlying emergency response therein. Additionally, through the application of case study analyses, the study provides detailed insight into the sensemaking dynamics that trigger changes between espoused and enacted emergency response routines.

In a university's Residential Life setting, the impetus for change in emergency response routines can largely be attributed to three sensemaking dynamics: Retrospect, Plausibility, and Identity. On one hand, each of these dynamics has the capacity to affect change on its own merit. For instance, Retrospect in the way of past experiences and hands-on learning create the tacit knowledge administrators draw upon when making

decisions about whether to enact protocols as written or as understood. Plausibility, or the ability to project how a particular scenario might evolve, leads administrators to consider amending routines or enacting novel responses altogether. Meanwhile, personal and professional identities cause administrators to consider whether espoused protocols align with what is moral, ethical, good, or simply right for the welfare of their constituents. On the other hand, these three sensemaking dynamics also work in concert with one another. Residential life professionals rely heavily on lived experiences in both personal and professional settings to inform the decisions they make in emergency response. These experiences substantiate identities. Retrospect and Identity collectively shape how administrators employ Plausibility to imagine the consequences of enacting responses in accordance with or in departure from protocols.

An interesting observation raised by the study recognizes these three sensemaking dynamics, either independently or together, operate differently across levels of experience. In Residential Life contexts, such differentiation cuts across entry level (i.e., RAs and Residence Hall Directors) and veteran administrators (i.e., Dean of Students, Director, and Assistant Directors). Therein, each brings strengths and weaknesses to a given emergency response, creating a system of checks and balances for one another. The interplay of differential levels of experience, notions of Identity, and ability to imagine plausible consequences strengthen Residential Life's capacity for triggering change in emergency response routines. Thus, Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility allow Residential Life to maintain flexibility in its response regiment necessary for accommodating a diverse and complex emergency landscape.

When viewed through the lenses of practitioner reflections and investigations, the fact that emergency response actions depart from protocols almost always signals a problem. Such discrepancies suggest that protocols are missing, a person has acted out of turn, or some aspect of the organization is broken. When viewed through the lenses of organizational work routines and collective sensemaking, differences between espoused and enacted emergency response can signal something quite different. Focused on the emergent process of meaning-making and action, sensemaking allows scholars and leaders to embrace emergency response routines as inherently flexible guidelines for action. Change in routines should not only be considered normal, but should be expected. The cases presented in the study demonstrate that such departures sometimes yield better response outcomes for the students, staff, and communities involved. Other times, actually adhering to protocols can cause negative or problematic results. Such findings suggest that we have to be careful about attributing problems in emergency response to departures from protocol. The ability to enact routines flexibly is a natural part of emergency response. Moreover, this flexibility is likely a fundamental skill required for achieving successful outcomes in highly unpredictable emergency environments such as Residential Life divisions, specifically, and universities, more generally.

Research Implications

As outlined in the introduction, this dissertation is intended to shift the ways we think about emergency response in the higher education setting. To do so, the research was carefully designed around specifically chosen theoretical lenses (i.e., sensemaking and work routines), approaches to data collection (i.e., ethnography), and analytical strategies (i.e., ethnography and case study). Although the theories, methods, or

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analytical strategies employed in this dissertation are not new to research in other disciplines, their application in this study marks a unique contribution to the field of higher education scholarship. In essence, the combination of these design factors leads to a structured analysis of emergency response that focuses attention on understanding related dynamics and away from issues of breakdowns, blame, and accountability. However, because this study breaks new ground across topical, theoretical, and methodological considerations, its design as well as its findings raise more questions than answers. These questions provide a rich foundation for invigorating future research in the field of higher education.

Ethnography and Theoretical Sampling

In a departure from both practical and research scholarship on university emergency response, this study examined related dynamics through the lens of organizational ethnography. Taking into account the layers of complexity that the Residential Life setting and the topic of emergency response presented, the method proved helpful in elaborating a depth of context difficult to attain using more common methods. However, this study also demonstrated that moving from macro to micro level perspectives required even more iterative processes of theoretical sampling and coding than expected at the outset. Therefore, when working across such vast levels of analysis, future research must anticipate the data necessary to illustrate findings at each level, the methods that will appropriately attain that data, and the time it will for organizing, reorganizing, coding, and recoding the larger ethnographic data in light of that particular level.

In that vein, opportunities missed in this study include observing emergency response directly and following up with participants to elaborate key moments in the case studies. For example, the findings in this study reflect the sensemaking dynamics deemed central to the participants as triggers for change in emergency response routines. However, in these findings there is a notable absence of dynamics one might expect to play a significant role therein (e.g., Salient Cues, Ongoing Projects, Enactment). From the existing data, it is difficult to establish whether certain dynamics are missing because they do not play a significant role as triggers for Residential Life administrators or because the methodology failed to reach far enough in locating these triggers. It is quite possible while some sensemaking triggers operate overtly within the culture of an organization, others operate almost subconsciously. Direct observations could provide confirming or disconfirming evidence as to the claim that Retrospect, Personal Identity, and Plausibility are the key triggers relevant to Residential Life administrators. Likewise, in follow up interviews, focused questions might draw out findings related to the remaining sensemaking dynamics.

Given the practical and ethical considerations that precluded such observations for this study, findings suggest that researchers might use the Behind Closed Doors training activity as a substitute for real observations. In one approach, the researcher may observe several groups responding to the same simulated emergency looking for the extent to which each of the seven sensemaking dynamics act as triggers. In another approach, the researcher may vary the makeup of the groups to further test hypothesis on whether sensemaking across different levels of tenure affect trigger points for change. In either case, the observational data could be strengthened if paired with follow-up

interviews or essays as a means of uncovering sensemaking triggers operating at conscious and subconscious levels.

Work Routines

By utilizing a work routines conceptual frame, this study also takes strides in introducing a new theoretical construct into higher education research on emergency response. The findings evidence that examining the work routines of a particular university subdivision brings to light the type of work that takes place within its boundaries. In a way, research on work routines even substantiates that subdivision's existence within the university's organizational structure. By examining departmental activities through the lens of organizational work routines, higher education researchers can develop more accurate depictions of how university subdivisions operate. Moreover, efforts to understand work routines across a range of departments may impact the ways in which researchers conceptualize university purposes, structure, and functioning in a contemporary context.

In turn, this study's focus on Residential Life emergency response suggests avenues for enhancing the work routines conceptual frame. For instance, the advancement made by Feldman and Pentland (2003) and Pentland and Feldman (2005) in the work routines literature involves the proposition that ostensive-performative disparities might impel greater insight into routine flexibility. Their intent is to move research from previous conceptualizations that are static, bureaucratic, and fixed to frames accounting for elasticity and change. However, in carrying out an analysis using the ostensive-performative comparison technique, this study suggests that the approach may be burdened by the very attributes it attempts to contest. Namely, by creating

ostensive-performative maps, related research reinforces the rigidness of work routines rather than challenging it. Moreover, ostensive-performative mapping similarly forces data into neatly packaged illustrations of espoused and enacted procedures that may not be reflective of how these actually look and feel in the field.

The Calling Up the Line subroutine provides a good example. Protocols, by design, depict the Calling Up the Line process as hierarchical and linear. Therefore, so too does the related map of the ostensive routine. In order to compare actions in the field, the performative routine must follow suit. Owing to the need for framing performative routines in terms of hierarchical maps, how do we know when discrepancies evidence change in a routine versus evidencing a nonlinear type of communication pattern? After all, if nonlinear communication is a shared expectation amongst the Residential Life staff in the first place (even if written protocols depict otherwise), such actions may not be as discrepant as the ostensive-performative map suggests. Their structure may be better examined through theoretical lenses inherently nonhierarchical (e.g., social networks). To this end, future research might explore how findings for a routine such as Calling up the Line differ using the ostensive-performative mapping versus alternative theoretical frames. Further, in that Residential Life settings seem to involve organic and collegial arrangements for accomplishing emergency response routines, future studies to elaborate work routines theory may find the context to yield valuable insights.

Sensemaking Triggers

In this study, sensemaking brings new insight into examinations of how and why Residential Life administrators act the way they do in emergency situations. Wherein this study broadly identifies sensemaking triggers relevant to Residential Life emergency

responders, it only scratches the surface with regards to how any one of these dynamics actually operates in that function. For example, the study discusses Retrospect as if it reflects only one process of meaning making: drawing upon past experiences. Yet, a closer reading of the case studies suggests a more articulated view. With regard to the Attempted Suicide case, for instance, at least three types of Retrospect are evident in the staff's accounts: long term, short term, and future perfect. Long term Retrospect connotes the lived experiences that have taken part in a past distinct from the scenario being encountered, often in a time period removed from the present. Short term Retrospect references events that are related to the event at hand and likely have occurred in the not so distant past. Future perfect refers to events that have not yet happened, but are assumed will happen. The three versions of data evidencing the different types of Retrospect might read, respectively:

> *Last year I remember a situation where a student with boyfriend problems ended up committing suicide. This situation looks similar. Therefore, I will take the following actions . . . ;*
>
> *Earlier this morning, this student didn't come in for an appointment and I know she was distraught about her boyfriend yesterday, which might indicate she could harm herself. Therefore, I will take the following actions . . . ; and*
>
> *Maybe this student with boyfriend problems will be so depressed that she will have committed suicide before I have a chance to intervene. Therefore, I will take the following actions . . .*

Future research could delve further into delineating these different types of Retrospect and examine the differential impact each has on triggering change. Future research may also examine whether different types of Retrospect are more likely to result in changed versus unchanged emergency response routines.

With regards to sensemaking triggers, a second area ripe for research involves Personal Identity. The findings suggest that, among Residential Life administrators, particular identities act as triggers for change in emergency response routines (e.g., parent, hands-on person, university representative, hero). The findings further posit that change can be triggered when identities contrasting across levels of tenure. However, this study does not speak to how sensemaking around internally conflicting identities might affect change in emergency response routine. For example, at one point in the Attempted Suicide case, the AD for Residential Life's supportive actions are in question owing to a conflict of roles as administrator versus fellow mother. Likewise, in the Noise and Disruptive Activities case, it is possible that the RHC's actions are somehow affected by conflicts between being an Obama supporter (where he believes supporters will celebrate in peace) and university administrator (where he is taught to believe that large groups often result in disruptions). Future research may take up this challenge, examining whether key Identity dichotomies aid the sensemaking process by widening administrators' perspectives, thereby offering clearer insight into changing an emergency response routine; or hinder the sensemaking process by complicating those same decisions.

A third line of research in this category revolves around the role legitimacy may play in both the sensemaking process and sensemaking's impact on shifting emergency response routines. In the contextual findings of this study, data suggests that Residential Life administrators are concerned about the presence of media and how the media will depict their efforts publicly. With regards to media, an example of legitimacy as a trigger for change may read, *administrators do not want to report a crime because they do not*

want to tarnish the university's reputation as a safe campus. Another example might read, *we should follow the protocol because we want our supervisors to think we are doing our jobs well.* Likewise, it is not a stretch to believe that Residential Life administrators might be concerned about how their efforts look to their colleagues and superiors. An example of this type of legitimacy might read, *we had better follow the protocol so the President does not think the Residential Life staff is incompetent.* However, inasmuch as we expect issues of legitimacy to be prominent in university emergency response, we see neither of these types of issues in the case study data. Again, it is difficult to discern whether the absence is due to the fact that legitimacy is not a trigger of change in Residential Life emergency response, due to not finding the right set of cases to illuminate such a dynamic, or due to shortcomings in how the data were coded. One question future research may explore is where issues of legitimacy fall within the scope of the sensemaking triggers in emergency response. Another set of questions research might explore is at what level in the administrative hierarchy does legitimacy become a foremost concern; and from whom do administrators at different levels seek legitimacy?

Interorganizational Emergency Response in University Settings

Issues of legitimacy raise additional questions about issues of interorganizational sensemaking around emergency response. This study delimits the examination of emergency response to one university office. However, even in delimiting the study accordingly, it was difficult to find cases where emergency response was not enacted by the collective efforts of administrators from various offices. We know that different university constituents hold unique cultural values, norms, and tasks unique to their

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function and specialization (Becher, 1989; Huber, 1990; Valimaa, 1998) and that these norms often conflict or clash when shared tasks are undertaken (Kezar, 2005; Pearson & Bowman, 2000; Philpott & Strange, 2003; Senge, 1990). Therefore, still another line of future research involves understanding how interorganizational relationships affect sensemaking triggers and change in emergency response routines.

As a foundational step to understanding interorganizational triggers in the university context, researchers may first endeavor to understand the sensemaking triggers relevant to key university subdivisions. By taking up an ethnography such as this or interviewing administrators representing different university subgroups, research might examine whether Retrospect, Personal Identity, and Plausibility play out similarly across different organizational subgroups. For instance, a study might ask university Presidents to trace their responses to specific emergencies. Whereas the parent and hero Identities were raised as significant in the Residential Life context via case study accounts, it is not difficult to imagine coded data from a President's emergency response account to yield alternative Identities, such as trusted leader and potential scapegoat. Conversely, the same types of studies may also seek to identify whether the sensemaking triggers relevant to Residential Life are even the same as those that shape emergency responses in other divisions.

Future research may elaborate findings about individual subdivisions by addressing the role interorganizational relationships play in shaping emergency response routines. Specifically, how do administrators affect one another's sensemaking when an emergency is unfolding? Such a study could be designed to examine an event not from the perspective of the evolving emergency, but from the perspective of the evolving

emergency response. Starting with the first person on the scene, a researcher could retrospectively interview responders in the order they became involved to examine how the decisions of the person before them affected their sensemaking around the emergency/emergency response in question. On one hand, such an approach could illuminate the ways in which Social Context (another sensemaking dynamic absent from this study's findings) operates as a trigger for change in university emergency response routines. On the other hand, such an approach might also provide insight into whether collaborative efforts clarify or complicate emergency responses and under what circumstances.

Timing, Sequence, and Labeling

Underlying many of the questions suggested for future research is the roles that time and sequence play in shaping emergency responses. Whether and how any sensemaking trigger operates with regards to shaping an emergency response routine depends largely on the time the trigger is accorded in the context of an unfolding scenario and the point at which it is called upon within the sequence of the emergency. For example, going back to the discussion in Chapter 10, each trigger for change is identified not only by its sensemaking dynamic(s), but also by the specific change they caused. Aggregated up a level, the changes achieved by sensemaking triggers can be sorted and labeled to reflect the type of change in which they are involved: Initiating, Cascading, Updating, Improvising, and Stabilizing (Table 15).

The type of change a sensemaking trigger affects involves the role it plays in shaping the larger protocol. When a sensemaking trigger causes deliberations over whether responders should take an action at all, that type of change can be referred to as

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Table 15. Types of Change Caused by Sensemaking Triggers

Case	Routine/Subroutine	Sensemaking Trigger for Change	Change	Type of Change
Committed Suicide	Reporting on the Scene to Help	Personal Identity	Capacity to alter responsive actions	initiating
Noise and Disruptive Activities	Noise and Disruptive Activities	Retrospect, Plausibility	Alters responsive actions	initiating
Committed Suicide	Calling 911	Plausibility	Alters police response	cascading
Suicide Attempt	Calling up the Line	Retrospect	Alters phone tree, incrementally	updating
Suicide Attempt	Providing Support Services	Salient Cues, Retrospect, Plausibility	Alters decision to hospitalize, incrementally	updating
Suicide Attempt	Notifying Parents	Personal Identity	Alters decision to notify parents, incrementally	updating
Showdown Weekend	Guest and Staffing	Retrospect	Alters guest and staffing protocols	updating
Showdown Weekend	Guest and Staffing	Plausibility	Alters decision to revisit guest and staffing protocols	updating
Committed Suicide	Calling up the Line	Retrospect	Alters respondent network	improvising
Committed Suicide	Notifying Parents	Retrospect, Plausibility, Personal Identity	Alters who notifies parents	improvising
Committed Suicide	Gossip and Crowd Control	Retrospect	Maintains staff debriefing efforts	stabilizing
Suicide Attempt	Providing Support Services	Personal Identity, Social Context	Maintains ability to develop rapport and distance	stabilizing

Initiating. This type of change either sets a protocol in motion or alters it at the onset of that routine. The time for the trigger to be enacted is nearly irrelevant since such actions take place at a protocol's beginning. When a sensemaking trigger causes progressive changes in subsequent steps of a routine, that type of change can be depicted as Cascading. The timing involved in Cascading types of change can vary as well as its place in the overall sequence of the routine. When a sensemaking dynamic triggers a responder to incrementally alter decisions based on new information, that type of change involves Updating. Although Updating can occur rather quickly, this type of change seems most prevalent in scenarios that stretch out over long stretches of time. Updating types of scenarios often involve episodes wherein sensemaking triggers are revisited at

the beginning of each episode. When a sensemaking trigger causes responders to enact a novel solution to an emerging problem, that type of change can be regarded as Improvising. When a sensemaking trigger cause responders to mediate potentially conflicting aspects of an emergency response, it enacts a Stabilizing type of change. The timing and sequence for both Improvising and Stabilizing types of change both vary.

This reflection on sensemaking triggers and the nature of their impact on emergency response routines is only a preliminary observation and thus becomes an opportunity for refinement in future studies. For instance, deeper reflection is necessary to provide a more useful vocabulary for explaining the model. Further thought must also be put into delineating the extent to which these categories reflect aspects of the sensemaking triggers or characteristics of the emergencies in which they are involved. Further, additional data is required to substantiate or amend the categories suggested.

Yet, even in its basic form, these types of change raise additional questions about the sensemaking triggers involved. For instance, in an Updating situation how and when in the sequence of episodes does an emergency get labeled accordingly? Are there certain Salient Cues that trigger administrators to shift from an information gather or intervention protocol to a full blown emergency protocol? How is an emergency response routine further affected when administrators disagree on an episode's label? A future study might follow out cases like this study's Attempted Suicide or reflect on cases such as the Virginia Tech shootings to examine when an incident gets labeled an emergency and by whom.

The Role and Development of Tacit Knowledge

Although this study sets out to examine emergency response dynamics, the findings also raise implications for studying the role and development of tacit knowledge. With regard to its role, the differentiation of written protocols from shared understandings in the conceptual frame and the ostensive-performative mapping exercise suggests that this distinction is important with regards to affecting change. Herein, it could be instructive to examine the degree to which shared understandings versus written protocols trigger changes in emergency response routines. A way to examine this issue is to compare the ratio of sensemaking that takes place when the ostensive emergency response routine involves a written protocol versus a shared understanding. The results of such research could yield important findings about whether written protocols are as effective a means of guiding emergency response efforts as generally believed. Conversely, the results could provide new insights into the role of unwritten guidelines, and how these become tacit knowledge or common sense amongst university administrators.

With regards to the development of tacit knowledge, the findings on entry-level and veteran administrators' sensemaking triggers suggest that sensemaking is a skill enhanced over the course of a Residential Life career. Therefore, future research might ask whether the development of sensemaking capabilities is a function of getting older, an aggregation of lived experiences, or of repeated exposure to the same training exercises year in and year out. For instance, this study highlights the fact that entry-level administrators negotiate Retrospect, Personal Identity, and Plausibility with different images and orientations than their veteran counterparts. Whereas entry-level administrators make decisions based on a hero identity, veteran administrators draw upon

parent identities to deliberate changes in emergency response routines. If this is indeed the case, future research may endeavor to examine how one moves from a hero to parent identity across a career in Residential Life. Likewise the study's findings indicate that entry-level administrators draw upon less substantial and less personal experiences than do veteran administrators when deliberating changes around emergency response routines. Future research could also examine whether there are certain types of experiences Residential Life administrators must gather over the course of a career in order to more effectively enact emergency response routines. Moreover, that line of inquiry could also examine whether tacit knowledge incorporates the lessons learned from all Retrospective experiences or just the most poignant Retrospective experiences.

Practical Implications

In addition to extending scholarship on higher education emergency response routines, this study was designed to identify improved tools for helping university administrators locate, diagnose, and fix problems with emergency response procedures. The same topical and design innovations that open new avenues for scholarly exploration also suggest new means of enhancing practice.

Articulating University Work Processes

At the same time ethnographic methodology and the application of a work routines conceptual frame present implications for future research, they also raise implications for practice. With regards to Residential Life professionals, administrators often recount that their work is difficult to describe to outsiders. That is not to say that Residential Life administrators cannot speak in generalities about values, goals, roles, and even policies or procedures. However, as was evident with the emergency response

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protocols in TUE's Residential Life staff manuals, numerous details about what actually happens on-site goes unwritten. Work routines in Residential Life divisions are highly multifaceted and deeply textured by context. Therefore, it is easier to rely on word of mouth and institutional memories to convey work processes.

In a very practical sense, this study presents a roadmap for understanding Residential Life work generally, and Residential Life emergency response routines specifically. Undertaking similar efforts to outline work context and work routines can be beneficial for a range of university departments and divisions. Whether addressing emergency response or other types of tasks, being able to articulate and depict work processes for university departments is important for a number of reasons. First, in organizational contexts where staff members are more transient than not, such depictions are the only means of sharing policies and procedures between different generations of administrators. Second, especially in difficult economic times, departments may be called upon to outline their work processes in order to substantiate their importance to university operations. Third, when faced with reviews for accreditation, investigations, or general inquiries, university departments often must justify their processes and procedures or explain their roles accordingly.

Evaluating Emergency Response Protocols and Actions

Beyond suggesting value in the ability to articulate work contexts and routines, this study provides guidelines as to how practitioners might map and evaluate their own protocols. At the same time these tools have the capacity to illuminate theoretical aspects of routines, they also have the capacity to provide practical insights into the routines. Clearly, this study focuses on how universities might map emergency response protocols,

but the assessment can be applied to other types of protocols as well. Such evaluation may be undertaken preemptively, in an effort to amend or enhance a particular protocol (e.g., when doing an internal audit of policies and procedures). Evaluations may also be undertaken responsively, when there is a reason to scrutinize a particular protocol and its enacted outcome (e.g., in the case of an investigation).

Administrators interested in evaluating a particular protocol need turn to the conceptual model and analytical strategy employed in the four case studies. Namely, for a particular protocol, administrators need collect examples of the inscribed, shared understandings, and enacted aspects of that protocol. The list of data sources presented in Table 4 can be used as a guide for identifying ostensive and performative information related to an emergency response protocol. It can also be used to brainstorm where ostensive and performative information might be located for other types of work protocols.

The next task involves mapping out how the inscribed protocol and related shared understandings might play out in a simulated scenario (see Appendix E for an example). Taking special note of how much (or how little) of the protocol is actually in-writing and the extent to which shared understandings match inscribed procedures will identify potential problem areas. If the goal is to preemptively enhance a protocol, administrators will have enough information at this point in the exercise to do so. However, if the goal is to retroactively assess a protocol in light of a real-life situation, one more step is necessary. Repeat the mapping process, this time reflecting how the protocol was enacted in the real scenario. Then compare the ostensive and performative maps, attempting to line up similar steps in the procedure. Where discrepancies between ostensive and

performative maps are evident, deliberate over why such discrepancies exist. If applicable, consider whether the discrepancy can be fixed by amending the protocol or some aspect of the organizational setting.

Improving Staff Training and Development Exercises

Finally, findings around Retrospect, Plausibility, and Identity suggest that truly improving emergency response involves more than revising and reinforcing response protocols. Rather, it requires administrators to create or emphasize opportunities that build staff members' archives of retrospect, exercise their abilities to deliberate pertinent identities, and hone their capacities for imaging evolving emergency scenarios. In the absence of real opportunities to develop such skills, simulations can provide a meaningful substitution. The Behind Closed Doors training activity, for instance, is widely employed in Residential Life staff training. Staffs could design their simulations and related discussion on issues of Retrospect, Identity, and Plausibility in order to develop such skills. Likewise, departments might consider other means of creating an archive of virtual past experiences by finding new ways to share emergency response cases across the profession. For instance, using the resources of its strong professional organizations, Student Affairs leaders may develop a national resource for collecting and sharing experiences and lessons-learned with their constituents. Ultimately, by identifying the sensemaking dynamics that trigger change in a department's work routines, administrators have specific direction as to how training and development activities might be enhanced.

Appendices

Appendix A: Protocol for Introductory Interviews with Individual Staff Members Understanding Staff Roles with Regards to Incident and Emergency Response

What is your position on campus?
- What is your title?
- What falls under the purview of your position?

Where do you (or where does your position) fit into incident and emergency response dynamics for the Residential Life Office?
- In what types of situations would they call upon you to help out?
- How often are you involved in responding to student-related crisis on campus?

Describe for me the types of incidents or emergencies you might expect to encounter at TUE in the Residential Life arena over the course of a typical semester.

What types of activities, guidelines, or protocols are in place to help you and your staff prepare for such events?
- Which do you find the most useful in your work? Why?
- Do you find any to be less helpful? Tell me more about that.

What would you say are the most challenging aspects of student-related emergency response on college campuses?
- What aspects of emergency response might others not understand if they had never been a Student Affairs/university administrator?
- If you had the opportunity to teach a master's level Student Affairs class or train new professionals on the realities of crisis response in colleges and universities, what three lessons would you emphasize?

Appendix B: Individual Interview Protocol
Follow-Up Interview with Individuals Involved in Specific Incidents

What is your role with regards to student-related emergency response on campus?
- In what types of situations would they call upon you to help out?
- How often are you involved in responding to student-related incidents or emergencies on campus?

Walk me through this particular situation and how it evolved for you?
- How did you come to be involved?
- What were you responsible for?
- What actions did you take in response to the situation?
- What went right about this situation? What could have gone better?
- Has the situation come to a close or are you still involved in responding to it? If you are still involved in responding, what is happening now?

How do you determine what you should do in these types of situations? In other words, are there policies procedures that you use to guide your actions in incident or emergency response?
- Are some types of policies or procedures more useful than others? Why?
- When does it become necessary to amend policies or procedures in situations such as these?

What would you say are the most challenging aspects of student-related incident or emergency response on college campuses?
- What aspects of emergency response might others not understand if they had never been a Student Affairs/university administrator?
- If you had the opportunity to teach a master's level Student Affairs class or train new professionals on the realities of emergency response in colleges and universities, what three lessons would you emphasize?

Appendix C: Staff Training Schedule

Day 1: RA Move-In

Day 2: Rookie Welcome
Welcome, Role of a Leader, Icebraker, Leadership Styles, Group Leadership Project, Rookie Round Table, Diversity Activity, Social Time

Day 3: Full Staff Welcome
Welcome by VPSA, Assistant VPSA, and Director, RA Expectations, Returning RA Expectations, Campus Resources Scavenger Hunt, Teambuilding

Day 4: Programming
Programming Basics, Bulletin Boards, Marketing, Overivew of the Student Experience Year by Year, Health Education, Greek Life, and Paperwork

Day 5: Health and Safety
Compus Safety, Health and Safety Inspections, Emergency Response and Procedures, Distressed Students, Eastcity Fire Department, Eastcity Police Department, Building Maintenance

Day 6: In-Hall Preparations
Room Inspections, Key Inventories, Bulletin Boards, Welcome Packets, Doortags

Day 7: In-Hall Preparations
Room Inspections, Key Inventories, Bulletin Boards, Welcome Packets, Doortags

Day 8: Campus Resources
Dean of Students, Campus ID Ofice, Information Services, Technology Services, Residence Hall Association, Campus Dining, Team Building

Day 9: Counseling, Enforcement, Discipline
Counseling Center, Career Services, Disability Support Services, Diversity Advocacy, International Student Office, Freshman Orientation, Red Cross, Policy Enforcement, Judicial Processes, Incident Reports

Day 10: Values, Incident Role Play, Operations
Balancing Residential Life with Academics, Attitude and Motivation, Customer Service, Community Building, Professionalism, Behind Closed Doors, Desk Operations, Roommate Agreements

Day 11: Operations, Incident Role Play
Check-In Procedures, Desk Procedures, Behing Closed Doors, First Floor Meetings, RA Image, RA Social

Day 12: Last minute Residence Hall Preparations

Day 13: Freshman Move-In

Appendix D: Behind Closed Doors Scenarios

- Ashley, Kim, Lauren, and Lisa are roommates. Ashley has called the RA because she and Lisa have been having issues with their other roommates Kim and Lauren. Ashley and Lisa claim that their roommates constantly eat up their food and allow their company to disrespect their property and eat their food. Kim and Lauren always have male guests signed in. At the same time, Kim and Lauren have issues with Ashley and Lisa claiming that they do not clean up after themselves.

- The RA staff is gathered for its weekly staff meeting and you, new RAs on staff, are invited to attend. You know a few of the staff members from campus and you know that 2 of the staff members have recently ended a serious relationship with each other. Figure out what went wrong and at the appropriate time, try to come up with a solution to this staff conflict.

- A resident signed in her 14 year old sister earlier and was informed that the sister must be gone by 10 p.m. However, it is now 11:30 p.m. and she hasn't signed out yet. The parents show up at the front desk and demand to go get their daughter from upstairs to take her home.

- While on-call, you receive several complaints about loud music and loud voices coming from a room. You know the room that the complaint is about is occupied by residents that are all under 21. You suspect that they are having a party.

- Its move in day and you're a first time RA. A mother comes to your room demanding to speak to you, so once you get finished with the things you need to finish you head down to talk to the disgruntled parent. On your way to the door, you remember back to training trying to recall all the information you were taught and going through different scenarios in your head but nothing you learned can prepare you for what you are about to experience. You enter the room to find…

- A resident calls the RA on-call when one of her roommates is passed out drunk. As the RA is trying to deal with the situation, the other roommates show up from a party drunk and somewhat aggressive.

- You have received a call that there is an emergency in this room. The resident asked for the RA because they needed assistance. You must respond to this request by first knocking on the door…

- Jim, a resident in your building, called you, the RA On-Call. He told you he returned from class to find a "gun-cleaning kit" on his common room table. The resident is very concerned. You go to the room to investigate.

- Today is move-in day and you (the RA) are checking-in two make residents in the room. Both of the families have problems with each of the roommates because of race.

- While doing your rounds, you smell a strong odor that smells like marijuana. You think it may be coming from this room.

Appendix E: Overview of Ostensive Subroutines for Committed Suicide Protocol

	Call 911	Call Up the Line	Report on the Scene to Help	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Gossip and Crowd Control	Provide Support Services	Notify Parents
Upon finding a deceased student	**RA call TUEPD at 911** *from a campus phone* → *TUEPD dispatcher notifies Eastcity police & emergency personnel*	*First person on the scene call RA* → *RA call RHC*					
Within 5 minutes	*TUEPD officers arrive on-site & take charge of scene*	*RHC call AD for Res. Life* → **RHC call Director**	**RHC report to site of incident** → *Additional RAs report to site of incident to offer help*		**RHC delegates RAs to monitor personnel & activities at key locations in building**		
Within 10 minutes	*Eastcity police & emergency personnel arrive on site & take charge of scene*		**RA aid emergency personnel**	**Director collect information about deceased student**			
Within 20 minutes		*Director call AVPSA & Dean of Students* → *Director call University Relations*					
As incident evolves		**RHC call additional RAs & RHCs for support** → *Dean of Students calls VPSA*	*Eastcity police & emergency personnel dictate how response will proceed*		**RAs & RHCs aid in crowd control** → **Director & University Relations address media** → **AD for Res. Life & RHC debrief RA staff**	**AD for Res. Life & RHC arrange counseling services**	*Eastcity police contact parents of deceased student* → *VPSA contact parents of deceased student*

	Call 911	Call Up the Line	Report on the Scene to Help	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Gossip and Crowd Control	Provide Support Services	Notify Parents
The week after				*Relevant RAs & RHC* **send follow-up report to the Director**		**Relocate & support roommates of deceased student**	
						Arrange memorial service	
						Facilitate move-out for deceased student	
						Counseling Center offer support	

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

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Appendix F: Overview of Performative Subroutines for Committed Suicide Protocol

	Call 911	Call Up the Line	Report on the Scene to Help	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Gossip and Crowd Control	Provide Support Services	Notify Parents
3:00 p.m.	Roommate calls 911 from cell phone	RA calls RHC	RHC drives back to Nichols				
		RHC calls Director					
3:02 p.m.		Director instructs ADs to join him	Director and ADs depart for Nichols				
		AD Facilities calls TUE Police Chief					
		Director calls AVPSA & Dean of Students					
3:05 p.m.		Dean of Students Calls Univ. Relations					
		Dean of Students calls VPSA					
3:08 p.m.	First Eastcity Police Officers Arrive		Director, ADs, and RHC meet at Nichols	Director questions RA about incident			
				RHC gathers in-house information on deceased student & roommates			
		Director calls AD Operations		AD Operations gathers university information on deceased student			
				Director compiles information from RA, RHC, and AD Operations			
3:25 p.m.		Dean of Students calls Counseling Services	Dean of Students arrives at Nichols			Dean of Students checks in with roommate and RA	
3:30 p.m.	TUE Police Arrive						
	Eastcity EMTs, Detectives, and Coroner Arrive						

	Call 911	Call Up the Line	Report on the Scene to Help	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Gossip and Crowd Control	Provide Support Services	Notify Parents
4:15 p.m.			Nichols RAs report to the scene to help	TUE and Eastcity Police wait for instructions	AD Facilities monitors personnel and activities on-site	Counseling Services sets up on-site resources	
			Counseling Services arrives at Nichols		AD Res. Life monitors personnel and activities in lobby		
4:20 p.m.				RHC contacts additional roommates			
4:30 p.m.							Dean of Students decides to notify parents of deceased student in-person
							Director of Residential Life decides to accompany dean of Students to notify parents
5:15 p.m.		AD Res Life calls additional RHCs	Additional RHCs begin arriving at Nichols				
6:00 p.m.					Dean of Students, Director, & ADs meet to discuss debriefing		
8:00 p.m.					Dean of Students, Director, & ADs debrief Nichols RAs and all RHCs	Nichols staff support first-response RA and RHC	
9:00 P.M.		Additional RHCs call non-Nichols RAs			Additional RHCs debrief their own RAs		
10:00 p.m.						Director & ADs wind down off-campus	

	Call 911	Call Up the Line	Report on the Scene to Help	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Gossip and Crowd Control	Provide Support Services	Notify Parents
Week After						RHCs support first-response RA and RHC	
						Counseling continues on-site resources	
						RHC works with deceased student's family	
						Roommates relocated & room closed	
						Res. Life staff decides against memorial	
						Administrators attend funeral	

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Appendix G: Overview of Ostensive Subroutines for Attempted Suicide Protocol.

	Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
Upon receiving notice of suicidal student	RA call RHC						
		RHC instruct RA to speak with student & review intervention steps					
As soon as possible thereafter	*RHC call AD for Res Life*	RHC wait by phone until RA checks back in		RA talk to student			
	AD for Res Life call Dean of Students		RA express concern for student	RA determine issues causing student concern			
				RA ask whether student contemplating suicide			
					RA determine whether student has a suicide plan		
			RA discourage student from suicidal action				
			RA outline campus resources to help student				
			RA get agreement from student to see Counseling Services				
			RA suggest student call Counseling Services now				

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

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Appendix G: Overview of Ostensive Subroutines for Attempted Suicide Protocol.

	Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
Upon receiving notice of suicidal student	RA call RHC						
		RHC instruct RA to speak with student & review intervention steps					
As soon as possible thereafter	*RHC call AD for Res Life*	RHC wait by phone until RA checks back in		RA talk to student			
	AD for Res Life call Dean of Students		RA express concern for student	RA determine issues causing student concern			
				RA ask whether student contemplating suicide			
					RA determine whether student has a suicide plan		
			RA discourage student from suicidal action				
			RA outline campus resources to help student				
			RA get agreement from student to see Counseling Services				
			RA suggest student call Counseling Services now				

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect and Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
					RA make contract with student to return if s/he feels suicidal again	
			RA determine student's activities in near future			
		RA encourage student to participate in activities in upcoming days				
At completion of RA-student discussion					**RA follow up with RHC**	
				RHC determine whether the student is safe for the night		
If threat, call TUE police to request assistance from Eastcity emergency personnel	**If no threat, RHC make sure there is a plan for student to see Counseling Services in the morning**					
					RHC follow up with AD for Res Life	
					AD for Res Life follow up with Dean of Students	
				Dean of Students determine whether he should intervene		
RHC *or AD for Res Life* **Call Director**						
						Director engage parents in student's recovery

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

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Appendix H: Overview of Performative Subroutines for Attempted Suicide Protocol

	Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
Week 1, Thursday		RHC instruct RA to follow up with roommate complaint		RA share details of roommate conflict at Nichols staff meeting			
Week 2, Sunday	RHC recieve call from student to meet about roommate conflict RHC call AD for Res Life						
Week 2, Monday	AD for Res Life call Director & Dean of Students		RHC suggest troubled student voluntarily visit Counseling Services	RHC meet with student to learn about troubeld roommate RA shares additional concerns about troubled roommate	AD for Res Life determine student is troubled, but not suicidal	RHC follow up with AD for Res Life with new information about troubled student	

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol

Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding

Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents

Week 2, Tuesday

Counseling Services assumed to meet with troubled student

RHC observes troubled student's behavior

RHC call AD for Res Life to report observations that troubled student seems stable

AD for Res Life instruct RHC to continue observations

AD for Res Life call Counseling Services for advice

AD for Res Life call Director to update

Week 2, Wednesday

RHC share concerns about student at Res Life central staff meeting

RHC & Director opt not to contact troubled student's parents

Director & AD for Res Life call Dean of Students to update

Week 2, Friday

Student call RHC after finding roommate with pills

RHC call AD for Res Life

RHC & AD for Res Life determine pills elevate threat level

AD for Res Life call Director & Dean of Students

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
			Dean of Student question student about pill incident			
				Dean of Students determine pills elevate concern but not threat		
		Dean of Students give troubled student personal cell phone number				

Week 3, Monday

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
		Counseling Services report student referred to psych evaluation	Administrators discuss troubled student at Campus Concerns meeting			
				Dean of Students determine increased threat level		
					Dean of Student set up meeting with troubled student	
			Dean of Students keep in touch with student as she avoids appointments			

Week 3, Thursdsay

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
Troubled student call Dean of Students to cancel psych evaluation						
				Dean of Students determine increased threat level		
Dean of Students call Psychologist						

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Swimlane columns (left to right):

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
	Dean of Students report on the scene					
		Dean of Students admit troubled student to hospital				
Dean of Students confer with Psychologist & University Counsel						
						Dean of Students opt not to contact troubled student's parents

Week 5, Thursday

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
			Res Life staff observe troubled student's behavior after return to Nichols			

Week 6, Thursday

Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
Resident call RA after finding troubled student with pills and knife						
	RA report on the scene					
RA call RHC						
	RHC report on the scene					
			RHC observe signs of attempted harm but no evidence of medical threat			
				RHC determine troubled student not in medical danger		
RHC call AD for Res Life						
AD Res Life call Dean of Stufdents	AD for Res Life report on the scene					

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

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Call up the Line	Oversee Response	Provide Support Services	Collect & Share Pertinent Information	Evaluate Threat Level	Follow Up	Notify Parents
				Dean of Students determine attempted harm indicates threat		
		Dean of Students decide to readmit troubled student to hospital				Dean of Students decide to contact troubled student's parents
		AD for Res Life prepare troubled student for hospital				
	Dean of Students report on the scene					
		Dean of Students & AD for Res Life escort troubled student to hospital				
		Dean of Student & AD for Res Life stay with student while waiting				
		AD for Res Life support student during medical check-up				Dean of Student contact troubled student's parents
					AD for Res Life debrief with Dean of Students	

The Weeks After

| | | | | | AD for Res Life debrief case at Campus Concerns meeting | |

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Appendix I: Overview of Ostensive and Performative Staffing and Guest Subroutines for the Showdown Weekend Protocol

	Staff Coverage: RA On-Call Personnel	Staff Coverage: RA On-Call Location	Staff Coverage: Front Desk Personnel	Staff Coverage: Front Desk Location	Guest Policy: Number of Guests	Guest Policy: Age of Guests
Showdown 2005 Ostensive Routine	**One RA on-call scheduled throughout the weekend**	**RA On-Call required to stay in building, but accessible by phone**	**One Desk attendant scheduled throughout the weekend**	**Desk Attendant at regular front desk, pushed back from door**	**No limit on the number of guests**	**No minimum age for guests**
Showdown 2005 Performative Routine	Difficult for one RA to respond to guest-related incidents	RA On-Call required to stay in building, but accessible by phone	Difficult for one Desk Attendant to monitor and enforce guest policies	Desk Attendant at regular front desk, pushed back from door	Number of guests results in overcrowding, safety concerns, and damage	Staff becomes concerned that underage guests may be exposed to greater risk and inappropriate behavior during Showdown Weekend
Showdown 2008 Ostensive Routine	*Two RAs on-call scheduled throughout the weekend*	*RAs On-Call required to stay in building, but accessible by phone*	*Two Desk Attendants scheduled throughout the weekend*	*Desk Attendants stationed at temporary desk near or outside the front door*	*Two-guest limit enforced for each resident*	*Underage guest policy enforced*
Showdown 2008 Performative Routine	RAs On-Call encounter few problems	RAs On-Call required to stay in building, but accessible by phone	Desk Attendants report few problems monitoring or enforcing guest policies	Some residence halls erect temporary desks at front doors, others station staff at regular lobby desks	No overcrowding, safety concerns, or damage reported	No problems related to underage guests reported
Pending Changes for Showdown 2009 Ostensive Routine	*Staff considers bringing RA On-Call number back down to one*	*No change to 2008 ostensive routine*	*No change o 2008 ostensive routine*	*No change o 2008 ostensive routine*	*No change o 2008 ostensive routine*	*No change o 2008 ostensive routine*

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Appendix J: Overview of Ostensive Subroutines for Noise or Disruptive Activities Protocol

|	Report on the Scene to Help	Assess Threat Level	Call 911	Confront Situation	Crowd Control	Dissipate Noise or Disturbance
When a staff member becomes aware of a potential incident	*Call another staff member for back-up* → *Go to the site of the reported or observed disturbance*					
Once on-site		*Use sensory cues to assess situation and determine threat level* → *Confer with partner to agree upon a course of action*	*If threat level high, call 911 to involve TUE police immediately*	*If threat level low or confrontation unavoidable, address the residents assigned to the room*	*Keep one staff member at the door and the other just inside the room* → *Ask residents to clear guests from the room* → *Identify guests leaving room*	*Ask room residents to minimize noise or disturbance* → *Manage any other issues in the room (e.g., intoxication, medical emergency)*

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

Appendix K : Overview of Performative Subroutines for Noise or Disruptive Activities Protocol

	Report on the Scene to Help	Assess Threat Level	Call 911	Confront Situation	Crowd Control	Dissipate Noise or Disturbance
Election Night 10:30 p.m.	RHC report to lobby after observing crowds in The Circle → RHC call RA On Call to assist with response					
Election Night 10:40 p.m.		RHC rely on cues (noise complaints, racial sparring) to assess danger	Unknown sources call Eastcity Police	RHC and Eastcity Police confront situation		
Election Night 11:15 p.m.				Eastcity Police call for back-ups	RHC manage crowds in the residence hall lobby	RHC encourage supporters to avoid further disturbances

Ostensive Routine: Written Protocol
Ostensive Routine: Shared Understanding
Performative Routine: Lived Experience

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