

Situational Awareness on Campus

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Situational awareness is a Mindset. It is being aware of your surroundings and identifying potential threats and dangerous situations at all times and in all areas of campus.

To establish a mindset of situational awareness you must first recognize that threats do exist. If someone is in denial of the potential for a threat that person's chances of recognizing an emerging threat quickly enough – and avoiding it – will be highly unlikely. Bad things do happen. The problem: Most people are unaware of what is happening around them. In short, they are not “in the know”. Instead, they are in the “no”: they deny anything bad will happen to them.

You must be of the mindset to take responsibility for your own security. ULPD cannot be everywhere and cannot stop every potential criminal action. We all need to look out for ourselves and use the Public Safety slogan “See something, Say something”. Trust your instincts. Often a person's subconscious can notice subtle signs of danger that the conscious mind has difficulty understanding. Have you ever had that feeling of danger without being able to put your finger on it? Ignoring such feelings can lead to serious trouble. This requires discipline, especially when you are busy or distracted. When you are distracted even eminent danger or hostility can go unnoticed. Learn to be observant even while doing other things. Here are a few things you can do to improve your situational awareness skills:

1. Identify all the exits when you enter a building.
2. Count the number of people in the area.
3. Note which cars take the same turns in traffic, or travel the same roads.
4. Look at the people around you and attempt to figure out their stories. (Imagine what line of work they are in, their mood, what their focus is on and what it appears they are preparing to do, based merely on observation.)
5. Next time you are in a parking lot, look for (and count) the number of cars with people sitting in them.

You can do this while walking to class, going back to your car, or even driving through campus. Engaging in such simple drills will train your mind to be aware of these things almost subconsciously.

Knowledge about Crime does encourage community buy-in. Pay attention to what is happening around you and communicate suspicious activity to the police. We invite you to view UL Lafayette daily crime logs and the Jeanne Clery annual security report for our campus, which is located on the ULPD website, <https://police.louisiana.edu> . This will give you an idea of what is happening on our campus and hope it will encourage you to begin an active mindset of Situational Awareness today.