

STUDENTS' OPINIONS TOWARD CARRYING
CONCEALED HANDGUNS ON CAMPUS

by

MELISSA VAN WINKLE

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ABSTRACT

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Melissa Van Winkle, M.A.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2010

Supervising Professor: Rhonda Dobbs

Since the massacre at Virginia Tech, there has been much attention regarding the idea of students carrying guns on campus. The purpose of this paper is to determine the opinions of graduate and undergraduate students who attend the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) regarding policies for carrying guns on campus while differentiating between criminal justice and non-criminal justice majors. The researcher conducted a survey with the target population being students who attend classes on the UTA campus. Students were asked to specify their level of studies (graduate or undergraduate), and their major of studies and provide their opinion as to whether or not students should be allowed to carry guns on campus with the proper license. The major conclusion to be drawn from this research is that college students' attitudes towards carrying handguns did not indicate a feeling of strong agreement or disagreement. The results reveal that both undergraduate and graduate; CRCJ majors and other majors did not indicate any significant difference in perceptions and attitudes of carrying handguns on campus. Both CRCJ majors and non-CRCJ majors leaned towards disagreeing with the idea of carrying handguns on campus, however they were not statistically significant.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There is one question that seems to be capturing the attention of students, professors, and spectators around the United States. This is whether or not guns should be allowed on college campuses. There have been many incidences over the past decade involving shootings and guns on college and school campuses. Lipka (2008), Falco (2010), and Bane (2010) have written about the incidents at Virginia Tech, Columbine, and the University of Alabama.

In the wake of the shootings at Virginia Tech and other school shootings, the idea of college students carrying handguns on campus with the proper license has received much attention from legislatures and media (Lipka, 2008). It is important for students to have the opportunity to voice their opinions. It is important specifically to find out the opinions of university students because it directly affects them as it can spark their curiosity and possibly encourage them to get involved whether they support or oppose the topic. In many states, weapons are prohibited from public and private campuses, not by law, but by institutional policy (Lipka, 2008). The purpose of this study is to determine the opinions of the University of Texas at Arlington graduate and undergraduate students, and criminal justice major students and non-criminal justice major students on the subject of carrying guns on campus.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Carrying concealed handguns on campus is a very controversial topic, and there are plenty of arguments for both sides that should be addressed. Above and beyond the controversy of legislation and bills, it is important to ask students how they feel about carrying guns on campus and whether or not they will carry a gun on campus with the proper license. Many people are affected by the decision of carrying handguns on campus because it is possible that many lives and situations can be changed pending the decision of allowing college

students to carry concealed handguns on campus (Lipka, 2008). Many students walk from building to building along the street and through various parking lots during the day and night. Non-supporters of the idea of carrying handguns on campus are threatened by the idea and do not feel that students should be able to carry their guns on campus with or without proper training (Lipka, 2008).

The current study relates to previous work in the area because it sets up and develops a clear picture of how important it is for supporters to prove their point of view as to why guns should be allowed on campus. The purpose of this study is to learn the opinions of carrying handguns on campus at the University of Texas at Arlington by studying criminal justice majors and non-criminal justice majors at the graduate and undergraduate level.

1.2 Overview of Study

Much of the reaction to guns on campus is due to the Virginia Tech shootings that took place in April, 2007 (Davies, 2008). Thirty-three people died, and seventeen were wounded when Seung Hui Cho, a senior at Virginia Tech opened fire on campus (Davies, 2008). Davies' (2008) believes states should comply with the Federal Gun Control Act. He advises gun acquisition laws have loopholes, and there are inconsistencies between federal and state laws. For example, "The Federal Gun Control Act of 1968 prohibits gun purchases by anyone who 'has been adjudicated as a mental defective or who has been committed to a mental institution,'" (Davies, 2008, p. 10). Davies (2008) also states that Virginia's public colleges and universities are not clear about their right to set policy about guns on campus. The author continues to write that Virginia Tech, a few years ago, set tough constraints on the possession of guns on campus, with the approval of the state's Attorney General (Davies, 2008). In addition, the other institutions were not aware that they could ban guns if they chose to do so (Davies, 2008). It is important that it be made clear as to the laws on the topic, and what policies institutions can and cannot enforce referring to guns. The Virginia Tech incident raised many questions, and many surveys have taken place to obtain an enhanced understanding of how people feel about

certain topics since the Virginia Tech incident (Davies, 2008). Not only is it important to measure how students feel since the Virginia Tech incident, but they should also be asked if they feel guns should be allowed on campus in an attempt to get their view of whether or not they feel guns in the hands of fellow students could have helped or made the situation worse (Davies, 2008).

In the wake of the Virginia Tech “massacre,” there were plenty of discussion-questions, accusations, and suggestions for future policy (TeSelle, 2007). The comments from radio and television reporters showed the reporters’ own instant analysis or instant commentary by affected persons or by experts in various fields (TeSelle, 2007). Then, almost immediately the print media followed in their wake (TeSelle, 2007). Some of the comments were based on Seung-Hui’s background and how his school, teachers, classmates, and roommates reacted to him. TeSelle’s (2007) article focused on sorting through the questions.

The first reactions were the curiosity of the shooters life and death (TeSelle, 2007). To many people he seemed to be a loner, and there were many comments from his English teachers analyzing the content of his “creative writing” (TeSelle, 2007, p. 18). Second, questions were raised whether his acquaintances made the situation worse when they avoided him or treated him as if he were a “weirdo,” and made hostile remarks (TeSelle, 2007). Third, attention was brought to how he got two pistols, and it soon emerged that both pistols had been bought legally in Virginia (TeSelle, 2007). Finally, gun control was not the only remedy discussed; others wished the gunman would have been gunned down before he killed the 32 victims that lost their lives (TeSelle, 2007). “They called for broader rights to bear arms wherever one might be assaulted by others bearing arms-on college campuses, in this case, perhaps even in churches as some political jurisdictions have decreed” (TeSelle, 2007, p. 19).

Rasmussen and Johnson (2008) conducted surveys following the Virginia Tech incident. They wrote about the tragedy at Virginia Tech and how it raised many questions and renewed debates about gun violence and weapons regulation (Rasmussen & Johnson, 2008).

The Virginia Tech event brought increased attention to groups such as Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (Rasmussen & Johnson, 2008). Rasmussen and Johnson (2008) stated this group argues that the impact of incidents such as the Virginia Tech Massacre could have been prevented or minimized if students and faculty were allowed to carry guns on campus. On the other hand, there is the idea that Virginia Tech tragedy has encouraged groups and individuals who oppose extending concealed carry rights to college campus (Rasmussen & Johnson, 2008). There are also those who focus on improving efforts to track and screen potential weapons buyers to prevent individuals with mental illness or a history of violent or threatening behavior from accessing guns (Rasmussen & Johnson, 2008). It will never be known if students would have prevented or minimized the Virginia Tech incident if they had guns to protect themselves, or if they would have made the catastrophic event worse than it already was.

1.3 Significance of Study

Although the idea of carrying guns on campus is very controversial throughout the United States, and many people have strong opinions as to whether or not it should be allowed, it is important to ask students what they think and how they would address the situation. It is important for states to know whose job it is to pass laws or enforce policies on carrying guns on campus. As written in the literature review, in addition to the controversial topic and supporters and non-supporters having strong opinions as to whether or not students should be allowed to carry guns on campus, it is important to ask the students how they feel about the idea because it is the students that have been directly affected by the Virginia Tech massacre and have the potential of another incident happening on their campus.

The methodology behind this operation allowed the researcher to achieve several significant goals. To start, the findings were based on the most recent survey and the second survey conducted to date other than Dr. Gary Brinker's Missouri State University study which was conducted in April 2008. In addition, Brinker (2008) did not differentiate between criminal

justice and non criminal justice majors and graduate and undergraduate students in his study. Also, the changes in events and conducting research in a University located in the South may play a role in the opinions.

A second reason the data collection method of direct observation is important to the current proposed research concept is due to the specific focus of the groups to be studied. To directly observe particular groups of college students who will be responsible for suggesting bills to legislation in the future concerning students carrying guns on campus, this observation allowed the researcher to gather important information concerning the impact of education and difference in majors and level of studies to be compared.

Because the current body of knowledge based on the measurement of students' opinions is incomplete in several ways, the use of directly gathered data as the method of collection will add to the current body of knowledge. The results will allow other researchers and supporters and non-supporters of carrying guns on campus to take into account the results of how the students feel when compared by their level of study and their major of study. Students will be eligible to participate in the survey as long as they are enrolled as a graduate or non-graduate student at the University of Texas at Arlington in the semester of fall 2010.

Since the Virginia Tech shooting that occurred on campus, and with all the attention from the media and people trying to pass bills through legislation, it is clear that it is going to remain a controversial issue until everyone is happy, which is not possible. There is going to continue to be supporters and non-supporters of the idea of students carrying guns on campus, but it is important for students to have the opportunity to voice their opinions to allow researchers to find out how they feel about carrying guns on campus, and whether or not they would carry a gun on campus if they were allowed to. The current research proposal would add to the limited body of knowledge as to how students are concerned with the topic.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Major Issues Covered in Previous Research

According to the Departments of Justice and Education (2010), school shootings are exceedingly rare; however they are a tragic event when they do occur. Not only are students at risk of a shooting on campus, but so are the professors and staff. The University of Alabama, Virginia Tech, the University of Austin, and many other junior colleges and universities have encountered shootings over recent years bringing the hot topic of carrying handguns on campus into debate.

Falco (2010) depicts the incident that occurred in April, 2007 at Virginia Tech where a previous student of his walked into a building on campus armed with a 9mm Glock 19 and hundreds of rounds of ammunition. The student chained the doors closed behind him, and “proceeded to murder everyone who came into his line of vision” (Falco, 2010, p. 171). Before the student ended the shooting spree by shooting himself in the head, thirty-three people were dead and seventeen were wounded. Within hours of the event, editors and news people, friends and colleagues were wondering what happened (Falco, 2010).

Rubin (2007) also discusses who was to blame for Seung-Hui’s shooting spree that occurred on the Virginia Tech campus. Other than the family, the school officials and professors could be to blame. The author asks what many people wonder, “How is it possible to protect against this kind of mass violence in a society where such a vast number of guns circulate so freely” (Rubin, 2007, p. 5). The professors also get their share of the blame when they do not take the rage and violence Seung-Hui expressed in written assignments seriously (Rubin, 2007).

It is most debated whether or not guns would help keep campuses safer and deter violence on college campuses, or magnify the issue and add havoc to the situation. Rasmussen and Johnson (2008) conducted a nationwide survey in 2008 of student life officers and campus safety directors to assess the impact of the April 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech on campus safety and security policy and practice. The authors write that the tragedy at Virginia Tech raised many questions and renewed debates about gun violence and weapons regulation (Rasmussen & Johnson, 2008). "The event brought increased exposure to groups such as Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, which argue that the impact of such incidents could be prevented or minimized if students and faculty were allowed to carry guns on campus" (Rasmussen & Johnson, 2008, p. 21).

Bane (2010) shares the story of a teacher who was standing outside after classes to report for crosswalk duty. When he heard what sounded like firecrackers, the math teacher David Benke was ready to reprimand the "errant" student (Bane, 2010). However, when he turned around he saw a man in a dark fedora and trench coat reloading the chamber of a bolt-action rifle after shooting and injuring two students (Bane, 2010). The teacher wrestled the gun man to the ground and forced him to drop the gun. The county sheriff said it was Benke's quick action and bravery that put a stop to something that could have been catastrophic (Bane, 2010).

USA Today (n.d.) published an article depicting terror in the classroom in DeKalb, Illinois when students crawled, hid and ran in terror from a man dressed in black who appeared from behind a screen at a lecture hall one Thursday and blasted students with gunfire before shooting himself in an encounter that was over in less than two minutes, according to school officials (Judy, n.d.). Before it was over five people died from gunshot wounds and sixteen others were injured in the Northern Illinois University shooting, according to the University Police Chief Donald Grady (Judy, n.d.).

In 2007, police officers at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville arrested a student who "might have been plotting" a shooting spree on the campus (Farrell, 2007). The author

explains that campus police found a note presumably written by Olutosin Oduwole while they were searching an abandoned car. In the note, Oduwole threatened to go on a “murderous rampage” on a “highly populated university campus” if \$50,000 was not deposited into his electronic PayPal account (Farrell, 2007). Later, a search of Oduwole’s on campus apartment turned up a loaded .25 caliber gun. Officials from the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives contacted campus police after a local gun dealer told them about Oduwole acting suspiciously because he appeared to be anxious and very impatient (Farrell, 2007). According to the Associated Press, Oduwole had ordered four semiautomatic guns online. In court, Oduwole was charged by prosecutors with one felony count of attempting to make a terrorist threat, and a misdemeanor for illegally possessing a weapon in a state building (Farrell, 2007). Oduwole was suspended for the 2006-2007 academic year after earning poor grades, but was taking courses during the summer when this occurred. He was a 22-years-old freshman from Maplewood, New Jersey at the time, and was believed to be a United States citizen because he was not registered with the university’s international student department (Farrell, 2007).

In Huntsville, Alabama, biology teacher Amy Bishop was accused of killing three colleagues by gunning them down during a faculty meeting in an apparent tenure dispute (NBC News, 2010). This is an example of a rare instance of a woman being accused in a mass shooting according to the author. It was February, 2010, when Bishop held class as usual before going to a biology faculty meeting where one University of Alabama faculty member told NBC News (2010) that Bishop sat quietly for about 30 or 40 minutes. It is then reported that she pulled out a gun and began shooting. One faculty member said she fired several rounds before her gun either jammed or ran out of bullets (NBC News, 2010). After Bishop left the room, the remaining people “barred” the door, fearing she would return. Bishop was arrested outside the building without incident (NBC News, 2010).

At the University of Texas at Austin, in September 2010, Hicks (2010) wrote about the campus being on lockdown for about four hours after a shooting incident occurred. The incident ended when the gunman, armed with an AK-47 assault rifle, took his own life after unleashing a barrage of bullets and being cornered by police in the library on campus (Hicks, 2010). In this incident, there were no other students injured, but a few students were hurt during the evacuation process.

Thompson, Price, Mrdjenovich, and Khubchandani (2009) assessed university police chiefs' perceptions and practices concerning selected issues of firearm violence and its reduction on college campuses. Because firearms are used in the majority of college aged suicides and homicides, there is a potential for more firearm related morbidity and mortality with recent efforts by various gun lobbying groups to have firearms more accessible to college students on campus (Thompson et al., 2009). In fall 2008, the results show a total of 417 (70%) questionnaires were returned showing the results that a firearm incident had occurred in the past year on 25% of campuses and on 35% of campuses within the past 5 years. The majority of campuses (57%) had a plan in place for longer than a year to deal with an "active shooter" on campus (Thompson et al., 2009). "Virtually all (97%) of the campuses had a policy in place that prohibited firearms on campus" with the primary barrier (46%) to a highly visible campus plan for preventing firearms violence was the perception that firearms on campus (Thompson et al., 2009). In conclusion, the authors feel that a greater awareness of the importance of a highly visible campus firearm policy and its potential for reducing firearm trauma on college campuses is needed (Thompson et al., 2009).

Furthermore, it is important to mention the results of surveys conducted over the years to find out just how many students already own guns. Miller, Hemenway, and Wechsler (1999) found that 3.5 percent of college student respondents reported they had a working firearm at the college. The authors also found that gun ownership was most prevalent among Native Americans of which 12 percent had a gun, while 4 percent of Whites had a gun (Miller,

Hemenway, & Wechsler, 1999). It was more common for students aged 21 years or older to have a gun. In addition, the student gun owners were more likely to attend a public rather than private college, and attend a college in the South or West (Miller, Hemenway, & Weschsler, 1999).

In addition to how many students own guns, it is important to focus on the children that are currently bringing guns to school illegally. Butterfield and Turner (1989), the authors of "Weapons in Schools," state that more than ever public school systems must confront weapons in schools and become aware of steadily rising statistics on youth homicide and suicide. They report why children carry weapons to school, and they outline strategies for keeping weapons out of schools and for improving school safety (Butterfield & Turner, 1989). Some reasons children carry weapons to school include their desire to "show off and "many regard the display and use of guns as a way of life" (Butterfield & Turner, 1989, p. 37). There are some 120 million guns in private hands in the United States, and some of these weapons are bound to show up at school (Butterfield & Turner, 1989).

In Fennell's (2009) study of 199 four-year colleges, he found that 4% of college students reported having a firearm at college, which are approximately 700,000 firearms based on the size of the current college population. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRGBSS) of students 9th grade through 12th grade indicated that nationwide, 18% of students had carried a weapon on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey (Fennell, 2009).

Another study attempted to learn why college students carry weapons. Results showed that armed students, both men and women, reported that they felt less safe than students who did not carry weapons (Presley, Meilman, & Cashin, 1997, as cited in Miller, Hemenway, and Weschler, 1999). The authors found that because many guns are owned for protection, it is possible that similar fears play a role in the gun ownership. Butterfield and

Turner (1989) believe that underlying the rationale for gun carrying is society's tolerance for violence as a way to resolve problems.

According to an FBI study of crime at schools, colleges, and universities, the study shows that students are about three times as likely to use a knife as a gun (Graves, 2007). Over the course of the five year study, from 2000-2004, there were 10,970 incidents involving a blade, compared with 3,461 involving a gun (Graves, 2007). "While much of the national attention and policy all centers on tragedies like those at Virginia Tech and columbine High School, the numbers presented in the study suggested that smaller scale crimes are the most important demographic" (Graves, 2007). Many officials warn against drawing hard conclusions from the numbers. In addition, the reports of violent incidents were voluntary, and the number of law enforcement agencies participating from year to year fluctuated (Graves, 2007).

Another group of authors state the country is filled with 200 million guns, half the world's privately owned total (*Global Agenda*, 2007). "Residents of other countries may fret that criminals, gang members, and insane individuals are increasingly likely to use guns and knives" (*Global Agenda*, 2007, p. 8). In comparison with America, few other countries that are developed have much to worry about because the gun murder rate in America is more than 30 times that of England and Wales. The example they give is Canada, like America is a "frontier" country with high rates of gun ownership (*Global Agenda*, 2007). However, Canada sees far fewer victims shot. The authors advise that America may not lead the world in gun murders, but is has a "dismally prominent position" (*Global Agenda*, 2007, p. 8).

2.2 Current Policies and Previous Implications

Gun rights advocates have won victories in several states in recent months allowing gun owners to carry concealed weapons in public parks, taverns and their work places (Roth & Haman, 2009). However, in June, 2009 a bill died in the Texas legislature in the face of criticism from college administrators and student groups, who invoked the image of students bringing weapons to campus parties where alcohol is present (Roth & Haman, 2009). There is

a substantial amount of arguments against having guns on college campuses, however there is not much attention paid to the supporters of the idea. There are many bills attempting to be passed that are dying off, and people lobbying against guns, while others believe the “good guys” should have the right to be armed (Lipka, 2008). Mary Robinson, director of Morris University Center, Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Illinois feels that local, state, and federal governments should do more to control the selling of guns. She says that people that want the United States to permanently stay in a “wild, wild West” state of mind are endangering everyone with that philosophy (American City and County, 2007).

It is important that when guns do show up a school that they do not go undetected. Butterfield and Turner (1989) write that weapons may be detected through tips from students, use of security sweeps and searches, and deterrents such as immediate suspension or expulsion, school security forces, crisis intervention teams, and metal detectors. Butterfield and Turner (1989) write about prevention strategies and how they are important to help students feel safe without carrying guns to school. “Some techniques are student/parent nonviolent contracts, community education programs, violence prevention curricula, peer assistance programs, and firearm instruction classes” (Butterfield & Turner, 1989 p. 42). To increase school safety, the authors state that educators must be trained in weapons identification and detection, provide adequate supervision, and promote a positive campus climate by teaching social skills within the curriculum (Butterfield & Turner, 1989).

Fratt (2006) wrote an article on getting tough on school shootings. She advises metal detectors and cameras do not prevent school shootings (Fratt, 2006). For example, the Columbine students who entered school in April 1999 with loaded guns did so on the same day the school installed \$1 million in security equipment. “Schools need systems for identifying violent children and proactively intervening in their lives. Trained educators can prevent future school shootings” (Fratt, 2006, p. 32).

According to Kopel (2009) most states issue permits to carry a concealed handgun for lawful protection to an applicant who is over twenty-one years of age as long as they can pass a fingerprint based background check and safety class. The permit allows the person to carry a concealed defensive handgun almost everywhere in the state (Kopel, 2009). In recent years the hot topic of debate with legislatures has been to answer one question. The boiling question is whether or not professors, school teachers, or adult college and graduate students who have permits should be allowed to carry firearms on campus. School boards, regents, and administrators are likewise faced with decisions about whether to change campus firearms policies. Kopel (2009) analyzed the issue and the empirical evidence and policy arguments regarding licensed campus carry. Also, during most of America's history, there were no particular restrictions on the possession of firearms on school property because it was not uncommon for students to bring guns to school (Kopel, 2009). The guns were stored in their lockers or automobiles, to use for hunting or target shooting after school. This has changed in the past decades with many legislatures and school administrators banning the possession of firearms on school property (Kopel, 2009).

Many legislative bills have been defeated in addition to the consequences of allowing students and professors to carry guns on campus. However, some of them are reintroduced, or other states may introduce similar measures (Villahermosa, 2008). A few of the questions Villahermosa (2008) believes colleges that are contemplating the possibility of having armed faculty and staff members on their campuses should ask themselves are: "Is our institution prepared to assume the liability that accompanies the lethal threat of carrying or using weapons? Are we financially able and willing to drastically increase our liability-insurance premium to cover all legal ramifications involved with allowing faculty and staff members to carry firearms?" (Villahermosa, 2008, Pg. 2). The author also asks the question of who is going to pay for range time to practice shooting skills for the faculty and staff member. In addition, he wants to know the extent of the level of stress during the training. "Will their training include

exposing them to a great amount of stress in order to stimulate a real-life shooting situation, like the training that police officers go through?” (Villahermosa, 2008, Pg. 2). He also includes questions of whether or not faculty and staff members will be prepared to kill another person, someone who may be as young as a teenager, and even if not criminally charged, will the faculty and staff members be prepared to be the focus of a civil lawsuit exposing their personal assets as a professional working for the institution and as an individual (Villahermosa, 2008).

Lipka (2008) wrote the article, “Campaigns to Overrule Campus Gun Bans Have Failed in Many States,” and states people can bring guns most places in Arizona except for public college campuses because the state’s Board of Regents has long banned all weapons from public college campuses (Lipka, 2008). “Debate over guns on campuses has rumbled on for a decade, but it erupted around the country after the mass shooting at Virginia Tech” (Lipka, 2008, p. 1). In addition, more than a dozen state legislatures reacted to the tragedy with bills to allow students and faculty members to carry weapons, which caused higher education officials to panic (Lipka, 2008). There were many bills being debated, and many failed as in Alabama, Indiana, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and other states that are known for strong gun rights (Lipka, 2008).

USA Today (2009) published an article describing that then President Clinton and Congressional Democrats responded to a crime wave with a mix of gun control and additional funding for police officers, jails, and crime. This caused crime to drop and Democrats to feel they were punished at the polls for enacting gun control measures, which included a ban on assault weapons, and the “Brady Bill,” which ordered background checks on gun buyers (USA Today, 2009). This caused the party to lose control of both chambers of Congress in the 1994 elections, “thanks in part to a gun rights backlash and then lost much of its appetite for firearms control” (USA Today, 2009, p. 8). “Gun laws in this country will never be perfect or settled” (USA Today, 2009, pg. 8).

Many times the laws negatively impact law abiding citizens and aid criminals. The laws in this specific case are typically problematic because the possession of a firearm where an altercation took place, on the street in front of a private home, is illegal because it's a gun free zone (Scholl, 2009). Nevertheless, the gun would be legal if it were in the private home. Scholl (2009) suggests to the government and law enforcement at all levels to obey and enforce the U.S. Constitution and make sure federal, state, and local laws conform to that document.

In June 2009, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a House committee voted to allow concealed firearms on college campuses in Louisiana, continuing a contentious dispute that pits the National Rifle Association against university administrators and law enforcement (*Community College Week*, 2009). The bill would force public and private colleges and universities to repeal current rules that make their campuses so called "gun free zones" (*Community College Week*, 2009, p. 9). An LSU student who is the director of a national group called Students for Concealed Carry on Campus said, "It is a fallacy to believe that a sign reading 'No Guns Allowed' will deter any criminal who has already decided he's going to commit murder, or aggravated assault or any violent crime" (*Community College Week*, 2009, p. 9). The bill passed and has moved to the House floor for further debate. The opponents argue that allowing guns on campus would make colleges and universities more vulnerable to gun violence. Several opponents noted college students' fondness for drugs and alcohol, which they said make accidental gunshots more likely (*Community College Week*, 2009).

In Bismarck, North Dakota students debated a proposal on easing campus gun restrictions. In another article in *Community College Week* (2009), the authors discuss how the president of North Dakota State University has a police captain assigned to protect him. The president's security makes some students wonder why they are not allowed to carry a concealed weapon on campus, even if they hold the license to carry one (*Community College Week*, 2009). "When a college president in North Dakota feels the need for a bodyguard, I'm beginning to wonder if I should be more concerned myself," Thomas Nicolai told the North

Dakota House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee in Community College Week (2009, p. 9). "After all, I don't get to carry a police officer with me everywhere I go" (*Community College Week*, 2009, p. 8)

The students believe the merits of legislation would increase the number of public places where someone with a permit may legally carry a concealed weapon (*Community College Week*, 2009). The authors state that the bill would allow a person with a permit to legally carry a gun to a church, bar, concert, political rally, football or basketball game, and most other types of public gatherings. Some people are asking why it is necessary, while others say it will not make the students feel safer, it will only add additional stress to the campus. Others said that armed civilians near a volatile situation could result in a shootout. One student said students are allowed to carry guns in other states and no incidents have resulted (*Community College Week*, 2009).

Lewis (2007) explains how the Virginia Tech killings served as a grim reminder not just to those in higher education, but also to lawmakers of what could happen on almost any college campus. Jeffrey D. Duncan, South Carolina Republican state representative, responded by drafting legislation designed to prevent a similar event (Lewis, 2007). The author informs the reader that some politicians have waded straight into the gun control debate, by either proposing bans on guns on campuses or, conversely, drafting measures intended to ensure the presence on campuses of people with the firepower to stop a killer (Lewis, 2007).

In a syllabus from the University of Toledo, published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2007), the author(s) write, "At the start of the semester, each student is required to join a gun policy association of his or her choice as a way to attach them to a community of people active in the debate" (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2007, pg. 1). A reader who owns several hunting and hand guns said, "My impression is that people in general believe more about guns and gun policy than they really know" (Patrick, 2007, in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2007).

In an article published in *American City & County* (2007), the authors discuss how the Washington based United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) President and Trenton, New Jersey, Mayor Douglas Palmer urged the federal government to work with mayors and police chiefs to tighten gun laws. *American City and County* (2007) asked readers if they think city and county governments should do more to control the sale of guns in their jurisdictions, and if so, what should they do? One of the responses was, "Any law written locally and at the state level would need to be thoroughly researched in legal case history and constitutional law," (Neal as cited in *American city and County*, 2007). He believes this is a constitutional issue, not a local or state issue, and any attempts at infringing legal gun owners' rights must be framed in a constitutional light (*American City and County*, 2007). "Any armed citizen could have stopped the mass murders at Virginia Tech" (Neal, as cited in *American City and County*, 2007). Jim Naugle, mayor of Fort Lauderdale, Florida states that crime has gone down since Florida established the "right to carry" law. He states that so-called gun free zones end up being more dangerous as the criminal knows it is an area where they won't encounter an armed, law abiding citizen (*American City and County*, 2007).

Global Agenda (2007) authors ask what could be done to improve matters in America with the prominent position in gun murders. Their answer is to tighten the laws to make it harder to obtain and use such weapons. "Not only might that reduce the frequency of criminal acts, but it may also cut the number of accidental deaths and suicides" (*Global Agenda*, 2007, p. 8). In 2007, there was much debate and discussion in the legislation on students at Utah's public colleges and universities and how they may have been able to request a roommate who does not carry a concealed weapon, but their potential roommates will not be required to reveal whether they have a gun permit or firearm (Fischer, 2007). The measure's passage was not expected to resolve the long running dispute over whether Utah's public college has the authority to ban guns on campuses because it lacks a provision that college leaders had advocated as a precondition for abandoning that struggle (Fischer, 2007).

In 2003, Colorado passed the Concealed Carry Act which allowed permit holders to carry concealed weapons, except in location prohibited by federal law, in elementary and secondary schools, in public buildings with metal detectors, and on private property (McLelland and Frenkil, 2009). “Colleges and universities are noticeably absent from the list of places where the right to carry concealed weapons may be prohibited,” (McLelland and Frenkil, 2009, p. 1). The University of Colorado regents asked the state attorney general whether the university could enforce its policy, in response to the legislation. This led to the attorney general issuing an opinion that stated because of Colorado’s constitution and statutes authorize regents to govern the university’s internal affairs, a mandate not pre-empted by the Concealed Carry Act, the weapons policy was permissible (McLelland and Frenkil, 2009).

According to Bradley (2007), the legislation is the resolution to a long time running dispute between the university and the legislature over whether the university can restrict guns. A Utah law passed in 2004 prohibits government agencies from restricting the possession of concealed weapons for people who have permits to carry them (Bradley, 2007). In response, the University of Utah, who had a gun ban in place, sued and argued that the law violated academic freedom and the university’s autonomy under the state constitution (Bradley, 2007). In 2006, Utah Supreme Court ruled the law did not apply to the university and that the university had no authority to maintain a gun ban. “Higher-education officials then proposed a compromise, which was rejected, that would have allowed a full ban on concealed weapons from sports arenas, faculty offices, dormitories, and classrooms (Bradley, 2007).

The University of Utah argued that the law interfered with academic freedom and that its institutional autonomy under the state constitution allowed it to impose on the ban while citing concern for student safety and pointing out that the practice of prohibiting guns on campus is widespread (Bradley, 2007). Utah Supreme Court ruled in 2004 that the University of Utah cannot ban guns on its campus in defiance of a state gun-rights law (Shuppy, 2006). Utah legislators ruled to prohibit government agencies, like the university, from adopting policies that

would restrict the possession of a firearm on public or private property. In a 4-to-1 decision, the court sided with the state attorney general, who defended the law and argued that the university had no autonomy under the Utah Constitution to ignore the law (Shuppy, 2006).

In September 2007, the Utah Supreme Court, in a 4-to-1 decision, decided with the state attorney general defended the law and argued that the University of Utah had to authority to ignore the gun ban (Fischer, 2007). Legislative negotiators rejected the first three exceptions but agreed to allow faculty members to decide whether to permit a visitor to bring a concealed firearm into their offices (Fischer, 2007). Also, students who lived in dormitories could choose to not have roommates who carried concealed weapons. In addition, colleges would have to clearly post instructions explaining where guns could and could not be carried, and would be required to provide safe storage in restricted areas. According to Fischer (2007), under the agreement, the University of Utah would also drop legal action it has taken against the gun law in federal court.

The University of Utah had been challenging the 2004 law in state court until September, 2007, when the Utah Supreme Court ruled that the university had no authority to enforce its own gun ban (Fischer, 2007). The university had pledged to abandon a separate effort to challenge the measure in federal court, and had signaled it would be willing to stop trying to get the law revised if the Legislature passed the bill with language allowing faculty members to keep guns out of their offices (Fischer, 2007). The University of Utah asserted that the law hindered academic freedom and that its institutional autonomy under the Utah Constitution allowed it to enforce the ban (Shuppy, 2006). However, in response to the initial ruling, university officials agreed to temporarily suspend the institution's gun ban. In the case's first full hearing, a Utah district court held that the university's firearms policy did not contradict state law, but the attorney general appealed (Shuppy, 2006). According to the author, around that same time, the Utah Legislature passed a bill that said a local or state entity may not enforce a policy related to firearms unless specifically authorized by a state statute (Shuppy,

2006). The University of Utah argued that the law interfered with academic freedom and that its institutional autonomy under the state constitution allowed it to impose on the ban while citing concern for student safety and pointing out that the practice of prohibiting guns on campus is widespread (Bradley, 2007).

McLelland and Frenkil (2009) also wrote about banning weapons on campus and how the battle is far from won. As of 2009, Utah was the only state that prohibited its state institutions from barring guns on its campuses. The University of Utah fought that statutory requirement vigorously in court, but the interests of pro gun groups prevailed. It was in 2006 that the Supreme Court of Utah held that the university lacked the authority to issue firearms policies, including barring concealed weapons, because such policies were contrary to the state's statute resulting in the university being prohibited from enacting or enforcing any policy that restricts the possession or use of firearms (McLelland & Frenkil, 2009).

Another major issue that needs to be addressed is the idea that even though there have been laws passed allowing gun owners to carry concealed weapons in public parks, taverns, and their workplace in some states, it is surprising for other state representatives when they cannot persuade their colleagues to pass a law allowing students at public colleges to carry concealed firearms on campus (Roth & Haman, 2009). In Tennessee, state representative Stacey Campfield experienced such an incident. The bill died in spring 2009 in the Republican controlled legislature—"One of thirty-four straight defeats nationwide for people who believe a gun would not be out of place in a college student's knapsack" (Roth & Haman, 2009). McCrie (2009) wrote about the last election and how bills that would allow people with concealed weapons permits to bring guns onto college campuses were defeated in 17 states, but a pro-gun group is trying to change this. Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (SCCC) are playing an active role in orchestrating a number of letter writing campaigns and protests that involve wearing an empty holster to classes (Spanier, 2008). "At Penn State, those protests have gone virtually unnoticed by other students, or, if anything, earned nothing but derision"

(Spanier, 2008, p. 1). Spanier (2008) discusses the state of student activism in his article, “Is Campus Activism Dead—or Just Misguided?” He suggests that college students be more politically aware and participate in political issues.

Agron (2007) wrote an article focused on lawmakers in Nevada and their plan to introduce a bill that would allow teachers to carry guns in classrooms. In his article, the author seemed perturbed over the idea and said he believed the idea was to keep guns out of school. “School security is more multifaceted and involved than having gun-toting teachers patrolling the classrooms. The misguided and dangerous proposal, if approved, most likely would not only create an environment that would significantly impede the learning process, but also make security matters worse” (Agron, 2007, p. 6). The author believes there are numerous options on the programmatic side, as well as through technology and systems that are already in existence to create safe schools. Intervention programs, peer groups, cameras, identification and access control systems, and school resource officers have proven to be effective in improving school security, according to Agron (2007).

Kelderman and Lipka (2008) wrote an article on the Supreme Court striking down a gun ban and how it raised questions for college campuses. It was in 2008 that the court declared for the first time that the United States Constitution’s Second Amendment protects an individual’s right to keep a gun, not just the right of states to maintain armed militias (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008). The ruling did, however, preserve restrictions on Second Amendment rights that allow schools, courts, and other government entities to ban weapons on their premises. There were many campus safety experts and higher education lawyers that believed that language protects colleges’ gun bans, which have been debated hotly since the Virginia Tech massacre (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008).

The Supreme Court had a landmark ruling in 2008 that overturned Washington D.C.’s handgun ban which could have implications for colleges that prohibit guns on campuses (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008). Kelderman and Lipka (2008) stated that the court declared that the

United States' Constitution's Second Amendment protects an individual's right to keep a gun, not just the right of states to maintain armed militias, for the first time. "But the ruling preserved restrictions on Second Amendment rights that allow schools, courts, and other government entities to ban weapons on their premises" (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008, p. 1). In 2008, the national group Students for Concealed Carry on Campus pushed for bills in several states to allow students to carry guns, and more than a dozen states considered such legislation. However, none of the measures became law (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008). In July 2008, Fox published "Campus Shootings: A Prevention Primer." In his article he wrote that there was new curriculum at many colleges offered in the fall that instructs students on survival skills. It is focused on demonstrating tips and techniques on how to survive an active shooter such as what occurred at Virginia Tech.

Michigan is another state in which legislation has been debating the issue of allowing legal gun permit holders to carry their concealed weapons on college campuses. Prior to Fall 2009 proposed legislation in Michigan would delete the following language from current legislation; "A dormitory of classroom of a community college, college, or university" thus allowing legal permit holders to carry concealed weapons on campuses (Fennell, 2009, p. 99).

Fennell (2009) explains how crimes on college campuses can "strike fear" into the lives of those in higher education. A campus shooting is one of the crimes that rank at the top of the most feared acts of violence. He believes that possibly "more direct counseling for clients who have weapons with regard to anticipatory guidance on firearms is needed," (Fennell, 2009, p. 99). On the other hand, because the debate continues with proposed legislation in different states regarding Second Amendment rights to legally carry concealed weapons on campus, he wonders what the nation's response should be to this legislation.

2.3 How Current Study Differs from Previous Studies

Brinker (2008) studied Missouri State University students on the Springfield campus to measure their opinions regarding policies for carrying guns on campus. He found that about

one-third of respondents favored allowing faculty, staff and, to a lesser degree, students to carry guns on the Missouri State University campus. The vast majority of respondents favored allowing campus security to carry guns, and female respondents tended to be less in favor of allowing students to carry guns, but more likely to favor campus security to carry guns (Brinker, 2008). In addition, he found that among those favoring guns on campus, most favored requiring a special course designed for college campuses. "Ironically, those favoring allowing guns to be carried by students were least likely to prefer requiring special training" (Brinker, 2008, p. 3). Also, about two-thirds of those favoring guns on campus felt gun carriers should be at least 21, if not older (Brinker, 2008). He continued that although few respondents felt being victimized on the MSU campus during the day was likely, most indicated that victimization was unlikely. "Female respondents were slightly more likely to think victimization during the day was possible, but felt like victimization at night was significantly more likely than male respondents indicated" (Brinker, 2008, p. 3). The majority of the respondents favored the same gun carrying policies for males and females. Last but not least, of the five percent of respondents who favored differential policies, most said males should be given greater access to guns on campus (Brinker, 2008).

The current study differs from previous studies because it is based on the opinions of college students at the graduate school level, while taking into account their major. The only other study targeting the opinions of college students was conducted by Brinker (2008). A questionnaire was developed to measure the opinions on Missouri State Students of the Springfield campus regarding policies for carrying guns on campus. Brinker (2008) did not differentiate between the level of studies of the students or the major being studied.

In addition to Brinker's (2008) study, there have been general studies conducted to find out the percentage of students who own guns (Miller, Hemenway, and Weschler, 1999), and carrying weapons where it is legal. There has yet to be a study based solely on students' opinions comparing how criminal justice and non-criminal justice students feel while taken into

account whether they are graduate or undergraduate students. After the current study is conducted, it will be clear as to how the University of Texas at Arlington students feel about carrying guns on campus while differentiating between criminal justice and non-criminal justice majors, and undergraduate and graduate students.

2.4 Arguments For and Against Carrying Guns on Campus

Kopel (2009) suggests in almost all states school officials could and should allow some on-campus carrying of firearms by properly trained and licensed persons. "In addition, legislatures, regents, and school boards have the authority to set broad policies for public education institutions, and this article advocates that those policies should authorize on-campus carry by at least some people who are already authorized under state law to carry in public" (Kopel, 2009, p. 51).

Villahermosa (2008) published the article, "Guns Don't Belong in the Hands of Administrators, Professors, or Students." He writes about a number of state legislatures considering bills that would allow people to carry concealed weapons on college campuses in the wake of the shootings at Virginia Tech. Villahermosa (2008) believes that allowing guns on campuses would create problems rather than solve them. Therefore, he does not think professors, administrators, or students should carry guns. He believes that some individuals may be capable of learning to be good shots in stressful situations, but most of them probably would not practice their firearms skills enough to be confident and proficient during an actual shooting (Villahermosa, 2008). He states that experienced law enforcement officers typically fire tens of thousands of rounds practicing for the time when they might need those skills to save themselves or someone else during a lethal situation. Villahermosa (2008) believes the commitment and consequences of putting guns in the hands of professors or administrators should be contemplated before college leaders and legislators make a decision.

According to McLelland and Frenkil (2009), Utah is the only state that prohibits its state institutions from barring guns on its campuses. "The University of Utah fought that statutory

requirement vigorously in court, but the interests of pro-gun groups prevailed” (McLelland & Frenkil, (2009, p. 1). The authors believe the task of protecting students, faculty members, and administrators from gun violence is not something that colleges should be barred from accomplishing (McLelland & Frenkil, 2009).

Scholl (2009) illustrates the unintended consequences of having too many gun control laws on the books. “It has gotten to the point that the police don’t even know which laws to enforce because the laws conflict each other” (Scholl, 2009, p. 41). This is due to several state statutes, the Second Amendment to the US Constitution, and positions on the right to carry firearms as explained by State Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen (Scholl, 2009). A Wisconsin man was knocked down by four teens while riding his bike May, 2009. The man was sure the teens intended to rob him and take his bike for their possession. Because he feared for his life, and unaware he was in a gun free school zone, he grabbed his gun, which was carried in plain sight. He had carried his gun in plain sight which was a legal act in Wisconsin and a right confirmed recently by the state attorney general of Wisconsin regarding open carrying of firearms in the state (Scholl, 2009). When he pointed the gun toward the sky, the overwhelmed man yelled that he had a gun and succeeded in repelling the attack. In the process he also violated the laws regarding schools and a 1,000 foot gun free zone around them (Scholl, 2009). The law referring to the gun-free zone, which the man violated trying to save himself, was intended to protect teens, who were the attackers in this case (Scholl, 2009).

“Underscoring the chasm between those who want to ban guns on campuses and those who oppose such bans,” an essay by the president of the Mountain State Legal foundation on the foundation’s Web site asserted that students at University of Colorado campuses believe that “one of the most dangerous settings they will encounter is a gun free zone” (McLelland and Frenkil, 2009, pg. 2). McLelland and Frenkil (2009) inform that it is difficult to imagine how colleges can provide safe environments if most constituents have the right to carry concealed

deadly weapons. "Adding guns to the normal conflicts that arise, or to alcohol, drugs, competitive sports, or depression, is a recipe for disaster," (McLelland and Frenkil, 2009, p. 2).

McLelland and Frenkil (2009) advise that college administrators are acutely aware that policies and legislation cannot prevent all of the dangers associated with weapons-related violence. However, they believe the adoption of safety initiatives and weapons related policies can be a significant part of eliminating the risks of violence.

An article published in 2008 titled, "Up in Arms" discusses whether teachers should carry guns. The school board in Harrold, Texas voted to allow some of the district's 25 employees to carry handguns. Gun control advocates argue that arming teachers is the wrong answer because school shootings are rare, and taking a gun into school makes the students less safe (Current Events, 2008). Superintendent David Thweatt says the safety measures of keyless entries, a camera system, and classroom phones added in recent years are not enough, so they trained the teachers to carry weapons instead. "We had to have something that would eliminate the threat if somebody came in [to attack]. We do not take our kid's safety for granted," (Thweatt as published in Current Events, 2008).

Some believe there is a science of gun control. Because there is nothing simple about gun control, there is a tangle of legal, political and public health issues that are complicated by cultural preferences and regional biases according to Noonan (2008). Much of the debate is fueled by lifelong hunters who grew up with firearms, urban victims of gun violence, Second Amendment scholars, National Rifle Association (NRA) lobbyists, chiefs of police, and many more because they have got cases to make and they make them well and often contentiously (Noonan, 2008).

According to Noonan (2008), for the past 15 years, much of the debate has centered on the effectiveness of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, which is the federal gun control bill that was passed in 1993. Some critics say the focus on law abiding gun buyers does not address the real issue, which are the bad guys who acquire their weapons illegally.

Supports of the bill say the bill stops thousands of illegal gun purchases and deters crime and violence (Noonan, 2008).

Badolato (2008) wrote an article on campus violence and safety, focusing on how campus security is back in the legislative spotlight as lawmakers look at how to improve crisis alerts, the need for more open exchange of student information, and whether faculty and students should be allowed to carry concealed firearms. Badalato (2008) believes the state and national task forces formed after the tragedy at Virginia Tech concluded that college campuses require updated and carefully coordinated emergency response plans. "This bill was written in the wake of the tragedy at Virginia Tech last year, and on the day we passed the bill in the Senate, another horrible shooting occurred at Northern Illinois University," says Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles, sponsor of the Washington bill (Badalato, 2008, p. 18). It was during this time that fifteen states were examining whether people with concealed weapons permits should be allowed to bring their guns onto campuses (Badalato, 2008). The author states that supporters of allowing concealed weapons on campus believe that the ability of staff and fellow students to fire back during an indiscriminate campus shooting spree would cut down on such incidences, while opponents say more guns on campus could increase isolated acts of violence. Another issue is first responders may not be able to identify the attacker, and that more guns on campus might lead to more suicides and firearm incidences (Badalato, 2008).

Another article, "Campus Security Group Calls for Better Training," (2008) has a section reacting to college students in Colorado who want to bring concealed guns to campus. Some students say they are powerless against campus attacks by gunmen; therefore they want to push legislators and school administrators to let them arm themselves (Community College Week, 2008). This too is due to the wake of the shootings at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University. One student said he carries because he is a former Boy Scout and the motto is "be prepared" (Community College Week, 2008). Then, there is a non supporter who states there is a reason that university system officials do not allow guns in the classroom. "There is a strong

belief that having guns in classrooms is not conducive to an open environment or a learning environment,” he said (Community College Week, 2008).

In another article published in Community College Week (2008), the authors discuss how Oklahoma Senate leaders decided to shelve a bill and allow military veterans and others with firearms training to carry concealed weapons on college campuses. Democratic Senator Johnnie Crutchfield and Republican Senator Mike Johnson could not agree to hear the bill. University presidents, faculty members and students had loudly opposed the measure, which sponsors said would improve campus security. The President of the University of Oklahoma argued the bill would hurt recruitment of students and faculty. He said it would also pose a dilemma for police trying to determine whether a person wielding a weapon was a “deranged gunman or someone who thinks he is doing good vigilante work” (Community College Week, 2008).

Lipka (2008) wrote an article on how allowing more guns on campus is a bad idea according to administrators. The solution to shootings at colleges and universities is not more guns, public safety experts and campus officials argued at Clearwater Beach, Florida at a national conference on higher education law (Lipka, 2008). Administrators say the laws introduced in response to tragedies like the massacre at Virginia Tech would not help students and staff members shoot active killers (Lipka (2008). They believe that instead the laws would have a slew of scary consequences creating campus environments like the Wild West.

Lipka (2008) also wrote about fears of escalation and limiting guns. The fears of escalation include the chilling idea of responding to a shootout rather than a shooting. “Imagine one student killing others, and another armed student trying to kill him,” said Regina Lawson, chief of police at Wake Forest University (Lipka, 2008, p. 2). She added that when responding to a situation like that, it is hard to decipher who the bad guy is, leading to the decision of whom to take out to save the lives of the 10,000 other students they are trying to protect (Lipka, 2008). Jonathan Alger, vice president and general counsel at Rutgers University

mentioned the liability issues for colleges. He states that it is very frightening and lawyers have nightmares thinking about the possibility of guns being allowed on campus (Lipka, 2008).

Some administrators called for exempting colleges from laws that allow private citizens to carry concealed weapons and protect such exemptions where they already exist (Lipka, 2008). Regardless of various state laws, guns are already on college campuses. When Mr. Villahermosa proposed the question of how many administrators suspected that students and staff members illegally carried guns on their campus, nearly everyone's hands went up (Lipka, 2008). Many of the administrators were in agreement on the fact that guns are already on college campuses, which led Villahermosa to state, "No faculty or staff member has walked up and shot the shooter" (Lipka, 2008).

One sophomore from the University of Cincinnati believes the only way to stop a person with a gun is another person with a gun (*USA Today*, n.d.). Students have voiced their opinions about campus being the only place they are not allowed to carry their weapon. "I felt defenseless, and it started to bug me, especially with all the school shootings. We're not talking about convincing people to get their licenses; we're talking about people who already have their licenses. And for the most part, they are older students," says another student (*USA Today*, n.d.). An additional student believes that having guns in the classroom only makes things worse as he remembers the Virginia Tech gunman walked into his German class and began shooting so quickly that no one would have had time to shoot back.

Momentum was added to the campaign to allow guns on campus after the tragedy of Virginia Tech (*Community College Week*, 2007). Some United States college students want the right to carry guns on campus, saying they should have the ability to protect themselves in the event of a shooting like the one that left 33 people dead at Virginia Tech (*Community College Week*, 2007). A George Mason University senior, and former Marine, feels in a sense that students do not have the same rights to self defense on campus as the general public. Virginia Governor Timothy M. Kaine believes each individual college and university should be able to

decide whether to allow students to carry guns on schools grounds. In addition, he feels that it would be proper to wait to see whether a panel studying the Virginia Tech shootings makes any recommendations on the issue (*Community College Week*, 2007). Across the United States, 38 states ban weapons at colleges, and 16 of those specifically ban guns on college campuses, according to the national conference of State Legislatures. Other states allow colleges to adopt their own gun policies (*Community College Week*, 2007).

Students for Concealed Carry on Campus have members at more than 60 colleges, and their aim is to change their state laws to allow permit holders to carry on campus. Many colleges generally oppose, for safety reasons, allowing concealed-carry permit holders to bring guns on campus and have resisted efforts to change the law (*Community College Week*, 2007). The authors continue to discuss the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, which represents campus public safety officials, and how they say the presence of students carrying concealed weapons “has the potential to dramatically increase violence on our college and university campuses” (*Community College Week*, 2007). The authors also agree allowing concealed weapons brings the potential for accidental gun discharge or misuse of firearms at parties, including those where alcohol or drugs are used, and the possibility for guns to be used to settle students’ disputes” (*Community College Week*, 2007).

Since the shooting at Virginia Tech, many people have raised the question: “Should we allow responsible people to own guns to protect themselves and others?” (Contreras, 2007). He believes the question of who should be allowed to own a gun is a legitimate one, and it is proper to ban private guns from certain places like courtrooms (Contreras, 2007). However, he believes the argument about gun ownership should be from a coherent moral and factual position, not from the gut reactions of any one moment, however tragic that may be (Contreras, 2007).

A responder to the article “Local Gun Control,” believes if a waiting period and background check had been in place, Cho Seung Hui would not have been able to purchase a

firearm (Clinkscales in *American City and County*, 2007, p.7). Clinkscales does not understand why law abiding Americans would care if they have to wait a few days to buy a gun because he feels as if that would have prevented the shootings (*American City and County*, 2007).

In an article from *USA Today* (n.d.) Joshua Mize believes the fact is if someone such as Cho wants to carry a gun illegally, he will probably ignore the law and do so. In addition, the only people who abide by the law are the professors and students who could protect themselves competently (*USA Today*, n.d.). The authors believe that a campus gun ban would not only give free rein to campus murderers who will never abide by the law, but it announces to every rapist in the county that women on college campuses are defenseless (*USA Today*, n.d.). Finally, the authors believe legislators seeking to change campus gun bans are performing their constitutional duty to protect the innocent (*USA Today*, n.d.).

Potter (2007) says it is impossible for colleges to be like airports when explaining how difficult it is to secure a campus of 70,000 individuals spread out over half the downtown core, but he aims for something more plausible. He explains how a fight broke out between progressive-minded reforms who favored the democratization and “vocalization of the new multiversity,” and those who wanted the university to remain an elitist ivory tower during the grand mid-century expansion of the university system (Potter, 2007). “It is hard, these days, to take seriously any talk of the university as a refuge from modernity, since it can’t even serve as a haven from a crazed gunman bent on murdering as many of his fellow students as possible before taking the coward’s way out” (Potter, 2007, p. 2). The author states that it is these “campus massacre” headlines that are getting a bit tiresome, and it is time to do something about it (Potter, 2007).

Potter (2007) gives the details of when CBC interviewed the assistant vice president of strategic communications at the University of Toronto. Steiner explained the various security procedures that Virginia Tech had in place the morning of the shootings, but he also pointed out how difficult it is to secure a campus of 70,000 individuals spread out over half the downtown

core (Potter, 2007). “We do what we can, but in the end we can’t turn the university into an airport” (Potter, 2007).

It is impossible to ban guns from the continent, get guns off the street, out of basements, purses, and out of glove compartments (Potter, 2007). Even if the constitution did not give every American the legal right to bear arms, it is no more possible to control illegal access to guns than it is to control illegal access to drugs. “So if we can’t wall off our schools, and we can’t ban the weapons that are routinely used to mow down our students, then it would seem that the only remaining way to prevent massacres is to arm the student body” (Potter, 2007, p. 2). The author continues to explain in a field of ridiculous options, the NRA wins by default: “What we must do is give guns to our students, and pray that they can keep the inevitable lunatics in check” (Potter, 2007, p. 2).

In an article published in *Global Agenda* (2007) the authors discuss tighter gun control and how it seems unlikely in America. “It is surely an American oddity that, after the worst mass shooting in the country’s history, some are already saying that such horrors would be less likely if only guns were easier to own and carry. Americans love firearms,” (*Global Agenda*, 2007, p. 1). The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) an activist group, counts 41 schools shootings in America 1996-2007, which claimed 110 lives, including those in Virginia in 2007 (*Global Agenda*, 2007). IANSA also looks at school shootings in 80 other countries. Culling from media reports, they count only 14 school gun killings outside America in the same period (*Global Agenda*, 2007).

On the opposite end of the spectrum, some Americans reach the opposite conclusion. Within hours of the shootings in Virginia on Monday, April 16, 2007, some believe “an armed society is a polite society” (*Global Agenda*, 2007, p. 8). For example, Virginia’s gun laws are generally permissive, where any adult can buy a brief background check (as required by federal law), and anyone who legally owns a handgun and who asks for a permit to carry a concealed weapon must be granted such a permit (*Global Agenda*, 2007). “Yet, Virginia Tech, like many

schools and universities, is a gun free zone. Gun advocates are daring to say that if Virginia Tech allowed concealed weapons, someone might have stopped the rampaging killer (Global Agenda, 2007). “To gun-control advocates, this is self-evident madness,” (Global Agenda, 2007, p. 2).

The authors of the article published in Global Agenda (2007), inform the reader that the issue remains one of America’s many culture wars, dominated by an uncompromising dialogue between two extreme camps. “Western and southern states, libertarians and American exceptionalists believe that guns are part of the national fabric” (Global Agenda, 2007, p.9). They say the second amendment is plain: “the right of the People to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed” (Global Agenda, 2007, p. 9). Finally, the authors suggest that, though gun laws may be “tweaked” after the Virginia Tech massacre, there will be little significant change to come. “The Columbine killings of 1999 failed to provoke any shift in Americans’ attitudes in guns. There is no reason to believe that this massacre, or the next one, will do so either” (Global Agenda, 2007, p. 9).

Michael Guzman is the president of the national group Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, and he believes that the “schools” exemption cited in the opinion does not apply to colleges and universities (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008). He supports restricting guns in some places with limited public access, like courthouses and airports, but believes campuses are open. “Anyone from off the street can walk into any building,” Guzman said, arguing that an outright ban left rule abiding students defenseless (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008). The group pushes for bills in several states to allow the students to carry guns. In 2008 there were more than a dozen states that considered such legislation, but none of the measures became law (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008). “The concealed-carry group says the high court’s ruling has little impact on their campaign because they base their argument on crime statistics, not Second Amendment rights” (Kelderman & Lipka, 2008, p. 44).

Kelderman and Lipka (2008) report on how, according to some legal experts, an urban college might be particularly susceptible to such a challenge to prepare litigation based on the court's opinion, but it could have a harder time than a rural one arguing that it is a sensitive area distinct from its surrounding city.

The laws need to balance the interest of urban and rural areas, but there is no balance as the firearms lobby moved to make concealed weapons the law in places where it is not needed such as national parks, and places where it is opposed, such as states with large cities (USA Today, 2009). The article continues to describe how someone needs to stand up for the nation's urban areas, their elected officials, and their men and women in blue. "Someone needs to stand up against the extreme elements in the gun rights movement" (USA Today, 2009, pg. 9).

According to Fennell (2009), many Americans fear if laws are passed allowing students and faculty to carry guns on campus, "the campuses would have scores if not hundreds of students, faculty, and staff carrying concealed weapons" (p. 99). One theory is that an outburst of anger from one of these individuals with a concealed weapon would use it against innocent persons on campus. "U.S. citizens were already legally carrying concealed weapons and we have not seen an increase in crimes of passion/anger committed by legal citizens with concealed carry permits" (Fennell, 2009, p. 100). Some of the arguments include that students are not yet mature enough to handle the stressors of college and emerging adulthood and may resort to using their weapons to solve their differences. According to Fennell (2009), this is a hypothesis based on fear.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The primary reason for conducting this study was to explore the impact of the variables of level of study, major, age, and gender on one's opinion regarding carrying concealed handguns on campus at the University of Texas at Arlington. The survey instrument measured the opinions of students based on the idea of carrying handguns on campus.

3.1 Design and Sample

This thesis explored college students' attitudes toward carrying concealed handguns on campus. The unit of analysis and the sample elements in the study are individual male and female students at the graduate and undergraduate level registered in criminology and criminal justice courses in the fall 2010 semester. The target population is college students who are taking courses within the Criminology and Criminal Justice program at the University of Texas at Arlington campus. These students were targeted because previous studies have shown that students favor allowing carrying of concealed handguns on campus by faculty and staff and to a lesser degree by other students (Brinker, 2008).

This study was carried out at the University of Texas at Arlington during the fall semester 2010. In this type of research study, a portion of the population is selected, and from these individuals, data are collected to help answer research questions of interest. The data was collected through self-administered surveys. The survey packet contained a cover letter informing the students of the purpose of the research and assured confidentiality of their responses. In addition, the cover letter emphasized the importance of their participation being voluntary.

Before beginning the study, approval was sought from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Texas at Arlington. Through purposive sampling of classes and

convenience sampling of students, the subjects were selected through the use of non-probability sampling. Survey administration to students was carried out between the weeks of October 5, 2010 through October 15, 2010 via visitation to professors' classrooms who had given consent to recruit research participants from their classes. It should be noted that a week or two before the surveys were administered, there was a shooting at the University of Texas at Austin campus on September 28, 2010, which may or may not have affected the students' opinions. The classes were selected based on their status as a graduate or undergraduate student in the criminal justice department at the University of Texas at Arlington. A total of 535 surveys were delivered to instructors with 292 surveys completed and returned giving a response rate of 55%. The subjects of this study were based on their status as undergraduate and graduate college students in an attempt to differentiate between knowledge and perceptions on the continued controversy of carrying concealed guns on college campuses. This group represents the future of policy makers and will oversee or implement policies and legislation regarding the right to carry guns on campus. Students were not offered any incentive for participation.

A purposeful sample was used to select the classes to be surveyed. Purposeful sampling is a non-random method of sampling where the researcher selects "information rich cases for in depth." Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the research. The 11 courses selected within the department of Criminology and Criminal Justice were selected do to the fact that they were criminal justice classes and students may or may not be more opinionated on carrying concealed handguns on campus. Permission was granted from each professor of each class before the students were surveyed. Once the classes were chosen, a convenience sample of students was utilized to collect the data. The eleven Criminology and Criminal Justice classes that were surveyed for this study are found in table 3.1. The final sample consisted of 292 students.

Table 3.1 Selection of Classes

Class
CRCJ 2334- Intro to the Criminal Justice System
CRCJ 2340- Criminal Investigation
CRCJ 3337- Advanced Criminal Procedures
CRCJ 3338- Juvenile Justice Systems
CRCJ 3340- Criminal Justice Statistics
CRCJ 3385- Women and Crime
CRCJ 3390- Victimology
CRCJ 5301- Proseminar in Criminology and Criminal Justice
CRCJ 5318- Criminal Justice Personnel Administration
CRCJ 5350- Theoretical Criminology
CRCJ 5393- Topics in Crime and Criminology

Table 3.2 provides the descriptive statistics for the sample. Of the 292 students who participated in this study, just under half (43.8%) of the respondents were male, with the remaining (54.1%) of respondents being female. The age ranges were 18-56 years old with 8.2% of respondents 18-19 years-old, 27.4% were 20-21 years-old, 18.8% were 22-23 years-old, 24.7% 24-29 years-old, 11.6% were 30-39 years old, and 4.5% were over 40 years old. Among the students, 36.6% were Caucasian, 21.9% were African American, 28.1% were Hispanic, 7.9% were Asian, and 3.8% of respondents identified their race as other than those listed.

Further, 71.9% of the students were criminology and criminal justice majors while 24% had either declared their major as other than criminology and criminal justice or had indicated they were undecided. Undergraduate students comprised most of the sample (84.6%) while graduate students made up the remaining 14% of respondents. Of the 292 students who participated in the study, 91.8% of respondents did not have a concealed handgun license and 7.8% of students answered they did have a concealed handgun license. The most common reason given by the respondents for getting a concealed handgun license was for protection with 10 out of 20 students writing this as their answer. When the students were asked if they had ever been a victim of a violent crime 83.9% of respondents answered they had never been

a victim of a violent crime, with the remaining 15.1% of students answered yes they have been a victim of a violent crime. When asked if the respondents lived on campus, 85.3% answered they did not live on campus and 15.1% of students answered they did live on campus. There will be missing data for descriptives due to the fact that not all students answered all questions on the survey.

Table 3.2 Descriptive Statistics for the Sample

Variable	Frequency	Percent
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	128	43.8%
Female	158	54.1%
<u>Age</u>		
18-19 years old	24	8.2%
20-21 years old	80	27.4%
22-23 years old	55	18.8%
24-29 years old	72	24.7%
30-39 years old	34	11.6%
Over 40 years old	14	4.8%
<u>Race</u>		
Caucasian	107	36.6%
African American	64	21.9%
Hispanic	82	28.1%
Asian	23	7.9%
Other	11	3.8%
<u>Major</u>		
CRCJ	210	71.9%
Other	70	24.0%
<u>Level of Study</u>		
Graduate	41	14.0%
Undergraduate	247	84.6%
<u>Have CHL</u>		
Yes	23	7.8%
No	268	91.8%
<u>Victim of Violent Crime</u>		
Yes	44	15.1%
No	245	83.9%
<u>Live on Campus</u>		
Yes	37	12.7%
No	249	85.3%

3.2 Measures

The self administered questionnaire was divided into four sections (See Appendix A for a complete copy of the survey). The first three sections consisted of attitudinal items for

measuring the student's level of agreement, feeling of safety, and how likely they felt they would be a victim of a crime on campus. Students were also asked to answer what level of training should be allowed if they were allowed to carry handguns on campus with a CHL. Race, sex, age, and various control variables made up the fourth section.

There is not a substantial body of literature examining students' opinions of carrying handguns on campus; however this study was based on one study in particular. The only other study targeting the opinions of college students relating to carrying handguns on campus was conducted by Brinker (2008). A questionnaire was developed to measure the opinions on Missouri State Students on the Springfield campus regarding policies for carrying guns on campus. Brinker (2008) did not differentiate between the level of studies of the students or the major being studied. His study also did not include a literature review or thorough methodology section. The current study attempted to specify the level of study (graduate or undergraduate) while classifying the respondent as a criminology and criminal justice major or other/undecided.

The first research question guiding this study is do students feel that students, faculty, and non-security staff should carry handguns on campus with the proper concealed handgun license. There were three dimensions regarding students' opinions in this study. They are as follows: attitudes on carrying handguns on campus, perceptions of safety regarding concealed handguns on campus, and perceptions of the likelihood of crime at UT Arlington.

The second research question is whether or not level of study (graduate or undergraduate) and major (criminology and criminal justice or other/undecided) would play a role in the students' opinions. Level of study is a nominal level variable, which was measured by simply asking the respondent to indicate graduate or undergraduate student. The respondents were also asked their major, which is also a nominal level variable as they answered criminology and criminal justice or other and specified. The researcher believes that level of study and major are important because it was hypothesized there would be a significant

difference between the graduate and undergraduate students along with the criminology and criminal justice majors and other/undecided.

3.3 Data Analysis

This study attempted to clarify how the respondents feel about students, faculty, and non-security staff carrying handguns on campus at the University of Texas at Arlington if they were allowed to with the proper license and whether or not their age, level of study (undergraduate or graduate), or major (criminology or other) has an overall effect on their opinions. Next, the criminal justice students' responses were compared to non-criminal students' responses. Then the level of study (graduate and undergraduate) was compared to determine if graduate students favored the idea of carrying handguns on campus over undergraduate students.

Table 3.3 Attitudes toward Carrying Concealed Handguns on Campus

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Students should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on UTA campus.	3.75	1.50
Faculty should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on UTA campus.	3.46	1.57
Non-security staff should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on UTA campus.	3.62	1.51
I would carry a concealed handgun on campus if allowed.	3.56	1.60

Table 3.3 provides the items depicting the attitudes toward carrying concealed handguns on campus with mean scores for the individual items. For each of the items, one indicated strongly agree and five indicated strongly disagree. Respondents had a mean of 3.75 when asked to state if they agreed or disagreed that students should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus. This means students were neutral with this statement with a standard deviation of 1.5, however they leaned towards disagree. The respondents indicated they were neutral and disagreed that faculty should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus by having a mean of 3.46 on the Likert Scale with a standard deviation of 1.57. When respondents were asked if non-security staff should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on

campus, the respondents indicated a mean of 3.62 and standard deviation of 1.51. When asked if the students themselves as the respondent would carry a concealed handgun on campus if allowed, they indicated a 3.56 mean stating they once again were neutral, but leaned toward disagreeing with this statement. Although the means of each question did not indicate the respondents strongly agreed or strongly disagreed on the idea of students, faculty, and non-security staff carrying concealed handguns on campus, respondents were generally neutral, leaning towards disagreeing with the statements.

Table 3.4 Perceptions of Safety Regarding Concealed Handguns on Campus

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
How would you feel if students were allowed to carry guns on campus with proper license?	3.64	1.41
How would you feel if faculty were allowed to carry guns on campus with proper the license?	3.18	1.48
How would you feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry guns on campus with proper license?	3.47	1.42

Table 3.4 provides items for perceptions of safety regarding concealed handguns on campus. For each item, 1 indicates much more safe and 5 indicates much more unsafe. Respondents indicated a mean of 3.64 when asked how they would feel if students were allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus with the proper license. They did not indicate a strong feeling of much more safe or much more unsafe, but with a 3.64 it was neutral to unsafe. When asked how the respondents would feel if faculty were allowed to carry guns on campus with the proper license they indicated a mean of 3.18 with a standard deviation of 1.48. This indicates the respondents feel more unsafe if faculty were allowed to carry guns on campus. When respondents were asked how they would feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry guns on campus, the mean was 3.47 indicating they would feel more unsafe with a standard deviation of 1.42.

Table 3.5 indicates the likelihood of a crime occurring at UT Arlington. For each item, 1 indicates not at all likely and 5 means very likely. When asked how likely it is that the respondent will be victimized on UTA campus during the day, respondents indicated a mean of

2.06 with a standard deviation of 1.13 stating students feel it is unlikely they will be victimized on UTA campus during the day. Respondents indicated it is not likely they will be a victim of a violent crime on UTA campus during the day with a mean of 1.95 and standard deviation of 1.14. When asked how likely it is that the respondent will be a victim of a violent crime of UTA campus at night, the mean increased to 2.91 with a standard deviation of 1.22 indicating respondents feel it is still unlikely, but more likely than becoming a victim of a violent crime on campus during the day. Respondents indicated a mean of 2.49 when asked how likely it is that there will be a school shooting in UTA on campus with a standard deviation of 1.12. This shows students feel it is unlikely that there will be a school shooting on campus at UTA. Respondents indicated they feel it is not likely for a school shooting to occur on the UTA campus compared to other campuses in Texas with a mean of 2.42 and a standard deviation of 1.11. Overall, students indicated it was generally unlikely for crime to happen on the UTA campus.

Table 3.5 Likelihood of Crime at UT Arlington

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
In general, how likely it is that you will be victimized on UTA campus during the day?	2.06	1.13
How likely is it that you will be a victim of a violent crime on UTA campus during the day?	1.95	1.14
How likely it is that you will be the victim of a violent crime on the UTA campus at night?	2.91	1.22
How likely do you think it is that there will be a school shooting in UTA campus?	2.49	1.12
Compared to other campuses in Texas, how likely is it that a school shooting would occur on the UTA campus?	2.42	1.11

3.4 Hypotheses

There are 3 primary hypotheses being tested in this study. These hypotheses are as follows:

- H1- Graduate students will be more supportive of the idea of students, faculty and non-security staff carrying handguns on campus with the proper license than undergraduate students.

- H2-Crimonology and Criminal Justice students will be more supportive of the idea of students, faculty and non-security staff carrying handguns on campus with the proper license than other majors and undecided students.
- H3- Males will be more supportive than females of the idea of students, faculty and non-security staff carrying handguns on campus with the proper license.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The results were ascertained using SPSS and running T-Test. The T-Test was used for testing the differences between two means. There will be missing data because not all of the questions were answered.

Table 4.1 Students Who are Knowledgeable on the Current Rules

	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly Agree	101	34.6
2	50	17.1
3	66	22.6
4	35	12.0
5 Strongly Disagree	40	13.7

Table 4.1 indicates the frequencies and percentages of students who are knowledgeable on the current rules of carrying concealed handguns on campus. Respondents were asked to indicate a one meaning strongly agree or five to strongly disagree. Over 100 students (34.6%) indicated they strongly agreed that they are knowledgeable while 40 students (13.7%) indicated they strongly disagreed with the statement. Of the remaining students who indicated a neutral opinion, 66 students (22.6%) indicated a neutral statement that did not indicate the slightest agreement or disagreement.

Table 4.2 Students Should be Allowed to Carry on Campus

	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly Agree	42	14.4
2	26	8.9
3	42	14.4
4	36	12.3
5 Strongly Disagree	146	50

Table 4.2 indicates the frequencies and percentages of students' answers when asked if students should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus with one meaning strongly agree and five meaning strongly disagree. As indicated, 146 students (50%) indicated

they strongly disagreed while 42 students (14.4%) indicated they strongly agreed. The remaining 104 students (35.6%) were more neutral when asked if students should be allowed to carry on campus with 42 students (14.4%) indicated a totally neutral agreement.

Table 4.3 Faculty Should be Allowed to Carry on Campus

	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly Agree	44	15.1
2	34	11.6
3	41	14
4	43	14.7
5 Strongly Disagree	129	44.2
Missing	1	.3

Table 4.3 indicates the frequencies and percentages of respondents' answers when asked about faculty carrying handguns on campus. As indicated, 56 students (19.2%) indicated they strongly agree that faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus while 121 students (41.4%) strongly disagree. The remaining students indicated a neutral opinion with 48 students (16.4%) choosing not to indicate a level of neutral to agreeing or disagreeing.

Table 4.4 Non-Security Staff Should Be Allowed to Carry on Campus

	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly Agree	56	19.2
2	32	11
3	48	16.4
4	25	12
5 Strongly Disagree	121	41.4

Table 4.4 indicates the results of respondents' opinions when asked about non-security staff carrying guns on campus. One mean strongly agree and five means strongly disagree. As indicated, 44 students (15.1%) strongly agreed that non-security staff should be allowed to carry guns on campus, while 129 of students (44.2%) strongly disagreed. The remaining students indicated a more neutral opinion with 41 students (14%) not indicated any level of agreement of disagreement.

Table 4.5 I Would Carry on Campus if Allowed

	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly Agree	63	21.6
2	12	4.1
3	49	16.8
4	34	11.6
5 Strongly Disagree	133	45.5
Missing	1	.3

Table 4.5 indicated students' responses when asked if they would carry a handgun on campus if allowed. As shown in the table, 63 of students (21.6%) indicated they strongly agreed with this statement while 133 students (45.5%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Of the remaining students with a more neutral opinion, 49 students (16.8%) did not indicate any level of agreement or disagreement.

Table 4.6 Feeling of Safety if Students Were Allowed to Carry

	Frequency	Percent
1 Much More Safe	54	18.5
2	51	17.5
3	60	20.5
4	43	14.7
5 Much More Unsafe	84	28.8

Respondents were also asked to indicate how they would feel if students were allowed to carry guns on campus with one meaning much more safe and five meaning much more unsafe. As indicated in table 4.6, 36 of students (12.3%) would feel much more safe with students being allowed to carry on campus and 116 of students (39.7%) indicated they would feel much more unsafe. The remaining students indicated a more neutral opinion with 47 of students (16.1%) indicated a neutral opinion without indicating a level of much more safe or much more unsafe.

Table 4.7 Feeling of Safety if Faculty Were Allowed to Carry

	Frequency	Percent
1 Much More Safe	36	12.3
2	33	11.3
3	47	16.1
4	60	20.5
5 Much More Unsafe	116	39.7

Table 4.7 specifies respondents' feeling of safety if faculty were allowed to carry guns on campus. An indication of one means much more safe and an indication of five means much more unsafe. As shown in the table, 54 students (18.5%) would feel much more safe if faculty were allowed to carry guns on campus while 84 students (28.8%) would feel much more unsafe. The remaining students indicated a neutral opinion with 60 students (20.5%) not indicating an opinion of more safe or unsafe.

Table 4.8 Feeling of Safety if Non-Security Staff Were Allowed to Carry

	Frequency	Percent
1 Much More Safe	41	14.0
2	34	11.6
3	64	21.9
4	54	18.5
5 Much More Unsafe	99	33.9

Table 4.8 indicates the respondents' feeling of safety if non-security staff were allowed to carry on campus. Of the students, 41 (14%) indicated they would feel much more safe if non-security staff were allowed to carry guns on campus, while 99 students (33.9%) indicated they would feel much more unsafe. A total of 64 students (21.9%) indicated they would not feel much more safe or much more unsafe, as they responded with a neutral answer while the remaining students indicated more neutral feeling of safety while leaning towards much more safe and much more unsafe.

Table 4.9 provides the results of the mean attitudes toward carrying concealed handguns on campus by major for the scale measure as well as for each individual item reported in the table. Among the items, a score of one indicates strongly agree and a score of

five indicates strongly disagree. As shown in the table CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors generally disagreed with the statement of students, faculty and non-security staff should be allowed to carry handguns on campus. The CRCJ and the non-CRCJ majors neither strongly agreed nor disagreed with the idea of carrying concealed handguns on campus; they were both very close in comparison. When asked if they agreed or disagreed that students should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus the mean of CRCJ majors was 3.8 with a standard deviation of 1.45 while non-CRCJ majors had a mean of 3.71 with a standard deviation of 1.58 meaning they are not statistically significant.

Table 4.9 Mean Attitudes toward Carrying Concealed Handguns on Campus by Major
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	CRCJ	Non-CRCJ
Students should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on UTA campus.	3.80 (1.45)	3.71 (1.58)
Faculty should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on UTA campus.	3.50 (1.55)	3.51 (1.58)
Non-security staff should be allowed to carry handguns on campus.	3.62 (1.50)	3.67 (1.54)
I would carry a concealed handgun on campus if allowed.	3.53 (1.57)	3.70 (1.65)

When asked if faculty should be allowed to carry handguns on campus, CRCJ majors indicated a 3.5 mean with a standard deviation of 1.55 while non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 3.51 and standard deviation of 1.58. When asked if non-security staff should be allowed to carry handguns on campus, both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors disagreed with the statement with CRCJ majors indicating a mean of 3.62 and standard deviation of 1.50, and non-CRCJ majors indicating a mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 1.54. Overall, CRCJ and non-CRCJ respondents indicated they disagreed that students, faculty, and non-security staff should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus but they are not statistically significant. When respondents were asked if they would carry a handgun on campus, CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 3.53 with a standard deviation of 1.57 and non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 3.70 with a standard deviation of 1.65. This indicated that both CRCJ and

non-CRCJ majors were neutral to disagree that they would carry a handgun on campus, with non-CRCJ majors disagreeing more than CRCJ majors.

Table 4.10 Mean Perceptions of Safety by Major
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	CRCJ	Non-CRCJ
How would you feel if students were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus?	3.68 (1.40)	3.67 (1.44)
How would you feel if faculty were allowed to carry a concealed handgun?	3.21 (1.49)	3.21 (1.48)
How would you feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry a concealed handgun?	3.48 (1.41)	3.44 (1.47)

The mean perceptions of safety by major are indicated in Table 4.10. Among the items, a score of one signified the respondent would feel much more safe and a score of five signified much more unsafe. When asked how the respondent would feel if students were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus, both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 3.68 and 3.67 respectively. Both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated they were neutral to feeling unsafe. When the respondents were asked to indicate how they would feel if faculty were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus, both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 3.21 with a standard deviation of 1.49 and 1.48 respectively. This means both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors were neutral to feeling unsafe if students were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus, than if faculty were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus. When asked how the respondents feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus, once again CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated they would feel more unsafe with a mean of 3.48 and 3.44 respectively and standard deviation of 1.41 and 1.47 respectively. Overall, the CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated they would feel more unsafe if students, faculty, or non-security staff were allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus but they were not statistically significant.

Table 4.11 Mean Likelihood of Crime on UTA Campus by Major
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	CRCJ	Non-CRCJ
How likely is it that you will be victimized on UTA campus during the day?	2.00 (1.10)	2.10 (1.17)
How likely is it that you will be the victim of a violent crime on UTA campus during the day?	1.89 (1.13)	2.09 (1.14)
How likely is it that you will be the victim of a violent crime on UTA campus at night?	2.84 (1.23)	3.13 (1.13)
How likely is it that there would be a school shooting at UTA on campus?	2.43 (1.11)	2.54 (1.11)
Compared to other campuses in Texas, how likely is it that a school shooting would occur at UTA?	2.35 (1.08)	2.53 (1.14)

Table 4.11 reports the mean likelihood of crime on the UT Arlington campus by major. Among the items, a score of one means not at all likely and five means very likely. When asked how likely it is that the respondent will be victimized on the UT Arlington campus during the day, CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 2.00 with a standard deviation of 1.10. Non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 2.10 and standard deviation of 1.17. Both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated they did not feel it was likely they would be victimized on UTA campus during the day. When asked how likely it is that the respondent will be a victim of a violent crime on UT Arlington campus during the day, CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 1.89 with standard deviation of 1.13 while non-CRCJ majors felt it was more likely to be a victim with a mean of 2.09 and standard deviation of 1.14, but not statistically significant. CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated they felt it was less likely to be a victim of a violent crime while on campus during the day than to be a victim of a crime during the day while on campus. CRCJ majors felt it was less likely than non-CRCJ majors to be a victim of a violent or nonviolent crime while on campus during the day, but overall both CRCJ majors and non-CRCJ majors felt it was unlikely and are not statistically significant. When respondents were asked to indicate how likely it is that they will be a victim of a violent crime at night, CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 2.84 with a standard deviation of 1.23 while non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 3.13 with a standard deviation of 1.13. This indicates that overall both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated it was

more likely than being a victim of a violent crime during the day, with CRCJ majors felt it was less likely than non-CRCJ majors, but they are not statistically significant. Respondents were also asked how likely it is that there would be a school shooting at UTA on campus. CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors felt it was less likely than likely with a mean of 2.43 and 2.54 respectively. CRCJ majors felt it was less likely than non-CRCJ majors, but overall they agreed it was less likely but not statistically significant. Compared to other campuses in Texas, respondents were asked how likely it is that a school shooting would occur at UT Arlington. CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 2.35 with a standard deviation of 1.08 while non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 2.53 with a standard deviation of 1.14. This shows both CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors believe it is not likely a school shooting would occur at UT Arlington compared to other campuses in Texas; while CRCJ majors felt it is less likely than non-CRCJ majors indicating they are not statistically significant.

Table 4.12 Mean Attitudes Towards Carrying Concealed Handguns on Campus
by Level of Study
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	Graduate	Undergraduate
Students should be allowed to carry guns on campus.	3.73 (1.52)	3.74 (1.50)
Faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus.	3.34 (1.58)	3.47 (1.57)
Non-security staff should be allowed to carry guns on campus.	3.39 (1.55)	3.64 (1.50)
I would carry a gun on campus if allowed.	3.61 (1.38)	3.54 (1.63)

Table 4.12 reports the mean attitudes toward carrying concealed handguns on campus by level of study. Among the items, a score of one indicates strongly agree and a score of five indicated strongly disagree. When asked if students should be allowed to carry guns on campus, respondents at the graduate level were neutral with a mean of 3.73 and standard deviation of 1.52 while undergraduate students were neutral with a mean of 3.74 and standard deviation of 1.50. Both graduate and undergraduate students were neutral and leaned toward disagreeing with the statement that students should be allowed to carry guns on campus, but

neither graduate students nor undergraduate students strongly agreed or disagreed indicating they are not statistically significant. When respondents were asked if faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus, graduate students indicated a mean of 3.34 with a standard deviation of 1.58 while undergraduate students indicated a mean of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 1.57. Both graduate and undergraduate students agreed more on allowing faculty to carry guns on campus before allowing students to carry guns on campus, but overall both graduate and undergraduate students were neutral and leaned towards disagreeing with the statement that students and faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus. When students at the graduate and undergraduate level were asked to indicate whether they agreed on non-security staff being allowed to carry guns on campus, graduate students were neutral with a mean of 3.39 and standard deviation of 1.55 while undergraduate students were neutral with a mean of 3.64 and standard deviation of 1.50. Although both graduate and undergraduate students disagreed on non-security staff carrying concealed handguns on campus, they are not statistically significant. Respondents were also asked to indicate strongly agree or strongly disagree that students should be allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus. Graduate students were neutral with a mean of 3.61 and standard deviation of 1.38 while undergraduate students also were neutral with a mean of 3.54 and standard deviation of 1.63. For this specific question, the graduate students and undergraduate students were neutral; graduate students disagreed more than undergraduate students but they were not statistically significant.

Table 4.13 Mean Perceptions of Safety by Level of Study
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	Graduate	Undergraduate
How would you feel if students were allowed to carry on campus?	3.83 (1.14)	3.61 (1.46)
How would you feel if faculty were allowed to carry on campus?	3.27 (1.30)	3.16 (1.51)
How would you feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry on campus?	3.41 (1.26)	3.47 (1.45)

The results for mean perceptions of safety by level of study for the each item are reported in Table 4.13. Among the items, a score of one indicates a meaning of much more safe and five meaning much more unsafe. As shown in the table, both graduate and undergraduate students leaned towards feeling unsafe when asked how they would feel if students, faculty, and non-security staff were allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus. When asked specifically how the respondent would feel if students were allowed to carry on campus, graduate students indicated a mean of 3.83 while undergraduate students indicated a mean of 3.61 revealing graduate students would feel more unsafe than undergraduate students, but they are not statistically significant. When asked how the respondents would feel if faculty were allowed to carry on campus, both graduate and undergraduate had a neutral mean indicated they felt safer with faculty carrying guns on campus rather than fellow students, but overall they still indicated a neutral to feeling of unsafe with a mean of 3.24 and 3.16 respectively. When respondents were asked how they would feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry on campus both graduate and undergraduate students indicated they felt safer with non-security staff carrying handguns on campus than students being allowed, but respondents did not feel as safe with non-security staff as they would if faculty were allowed to carry on campus. Graduate students indicated a mean of 3.41 when asked how they would feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry on campus while undergraduate students indicated a mean of 3.47 indicating an overall feeling neutral to more unsafe.

Table 4.14 Mean Likelihood of Crime by Level of Study
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	Graduate	Undergraduate
How likely is it that you will be victimized on campus during the day?	1.95 (0.97)	2.05 (1.15)
How likely is it that you will be the victim of a violent crime on campus during the day?	1.85 (1.04)	1.97 (1.16)
How likely is it that you will be the victim of a violent crime on campus at night?	2.78 (1.08)	2.92 (1.25)
How likely do you think it is that there would be a school shooting on the UTA campus?	2.29 (0.96)	2.51 (1.14)
Compared to other campuses in Texas, how likely is it that a school shooting would occur on the UTA campus?	2.15 (1.01)	2.46 (1.12)

Table 4.14 reports the mean likelihood of crime by level of study for the scale measure as well as for each individual item reported. Among the items, a score of one means not at all likely and a score of 5 means very likely. Overall, graduate and undergraduate students indicated a neutral mean that was closer to agreeing it was unlikely they would be victimized on campus, and indicated it was unlikely a shooting would occur on campus at UT Arlington. When asked how likely it is that the respondent would be victimized on campus during the day graduate students indicated a mean of 1.95 and undergraduate students indicated a mean of 2.05 revealing they both felt it was unlikely with undergraduate students feeling it was more likely than graduate students, but they are not statistically significant. When asked about violent crimes and being a victim on campus during the day both graduate and undergraduate students felt it was highly unlikely with a mean of 1.85 and 1.97 respectively indicating they felt it was more likely to be a victim of a crime during the day before being a victim of a violent crime during the day. When asked how likely it is that the respondent would be a victim of a violent crime on campus at night both graduate and undergraduate students indicated they felt it was more likely than being a victim of a violent crime during the day, but overall both graduate and undergraduate students felt it was still unlikely with a mean of 2.78 and 2.92 respectively. Respondents were also asked to indicate the likelihood of a school shooting occurring on the UT Arlington campus. Graduate students indicated a mean of 2.29 and undergraduate students indicated a mean of 2.51 revealing both graduate and undergraduate students felt it was unlikely; however undergraduate students felt it was more likely than graduate students but they are not statistically significant. Compared to other campuses in Texas, respondents at the graduate and undergraduate level were asked to indicate how likely it is that a school shooting would occur on the UT Arlington campus. Graduate students indicated a mean of 2.15 and undergraduate students indicated a mean of 2.46 revealing that when compared to other campuses in Texas, the respondents felt it was less likely for a school shooting to occur on campus at UT Arlington than when not compared to other campuses in Texas.

Table 4.15 Mean Attitudes Toward Carrying Concealed Handguns on Campus by Gender
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	Female	Male
Students should be allowed to carry guns on campus.	3.84 (1.45)	3.63 (1.56)
Faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus.	3.59 (1.55)	3.31 (1.58)
Non-security staff should be allowed to carry guns on campus.	3.64 (1.47)	3.58 (1.55)
I would carry a gun on campus if allowed.	3.78 (1.50)	3.28** (1.67)

* sig. @ $p < .001$

** sig. @ $p < .01$

*** sig. @ $p < .05$

The results for mean attitudes toward carrying concealed handguns on campus by gender for each item are reported in Table 4.15. Among the items, a score of one indicates strongly agree and a score of five indicates strongly disagree. As shown in the table females and males both disagreed on the statements of students, faculty, non-security staff, and themselves carrying a concealed handgun on campus. When asked if students should be allowed to carry guns on campus, females indicated a mean of 3.84 while males indicated a mean of 3.63 revealing females were less likely to agree with the statement than males. There was no statistical significance. When asked if faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus, both females and males indicated they agreed more with this statement than students being allowed to carry, but overall they still disagreed that faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus. When asked if non-security staff should be allowed to carry guns on campus, both females and males disagreed with the statement with females disagreeing more, but they are not statistically significant. When asked if the respondent would carry a gun on campus if allowed, both females and males once again disagreed with the statement by indicating a mean of 3.78 and 3.28 respectively. The mean differences by gender whether they themselves would carry a gun on campus is significant at $p < .01$ level. Female students and male students both

indicated they were neutral when asked if guns should be carried on campus. Both females and males agreed more with faculty and non-security staff carrying guns on campus if allowed, but overall results indicated they were neutral towards disagree with the statements of students, faculty, non-security staff and themselves carrying guns on campus if allowed with males indicating a more neutral mean than females.

Table 4.16 Mean Perceptions of Safety by Gender
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	Female	Male
How would you feel if students were allowed to carry on campus?	3.88 (1.33)	3.38** (1.46)
How would you feel if faculty were allowed to carry on campus?	3.34 (1.48)	2.99** * (1.47)
How would you feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry on campus?	3.51 (1.41)	3.40 (1.42)

* sig. @ p<.001

** sig. @ p<.01

*** sig. @ p<.05

Table 4.16 indicates the mean perceptions of safety by gender for the scale measure as well as for each individual item reported. Among the items, one indicates much more safe and five indicates much more unsafe. As the report shows, both females and males tended to feel more unsafe when asked how they would feel if students, faculty, and non security staff were allowed to carry guns on campus. For each item, females indicated they felt more unsafe than males when asked how they would feel if students, faculty, and non-security staff were allowed to carry on campus, however, both males and females indicated a mean of at least a 3.0 for each of the items except for one indicating overall they felt neutral. The mean differences by gender measuring perceptions of safety and how safe the respondent would feel if students were allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus are significant at p<.01 level. Both females and males indicated a lower score when asked how they would feel if faculty were allowed to carry on campus revealing they would feel more safe with faculty carrying guns on campus than they would if their fellow students or non-security staff were allowed to carry guns

on campus. Males indicated they would feel more safe with a mean of 2.99 when asked how they would feel if faculty were allowed to carry on campus. The mean by gender for the scale measuring perceptions of safety and how safe the respondent would feel if faculty were allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus are statistically significant at $p < .05$ level. Females and males also did not indicate any statistically significant difference when asked how they felt if non-security staff were allowed to carry concealed guns on campus. The mean was 3.40 and 3.51 respectively indicating neutral if non-security staff were allowed to carry concealed guns on campus.

Table 4.17 Mean Likelihood of Crime by Gender
(Standard deviation in parentheses)

Item	Female	Male
How likely is it that you will be victimized on campus during the day?	2.23 (1.11)	1.81** (1.11)
How likely is it that you will be the victim of a violent crime on campus during the day?	2.14 (1.11)	1.73** (1.15)
How likely is it that you will be the victim of a violent crime on campus at night?	3.28 (1.15)	2.45* (1.15)
How likely do you think it is that there would be a school shooting on the UTA campus?	2.66 (1.07)	2.24* (1.14)
Compared to other campuses in Texas, how likely is it that a school shooting would occur on the UTA campus?	2.62 (1.05)	2.16* (1.12)

* sig. @ $p < .001$

** sig. @ $p < .01$

*** sig. @ $p < .05$

The results for the mean likelihood of crime by level of study for the scale measure as well as for each individual item are reported in Table 4.17. Among the items, a score of one indicates not at all likely and a score of five indicates very likely. As the table shows, both female and male indicated they did not feel it was likely they would be victimized on campus during the day or night, and they did not feel it was likely for a school shooting to occur on UT Arlington campus. For each item, females were more indicated they felt it would be more likely for them to be victimized than the males, but both males and females indicated it would not be very likely. When asked how likely it is that the respondent will be victimized on campus during the day females indicated a mean of 2.23 and males indicated a mean of 1.81 which shows

females thought it was more likely than males, but neither felt it was very likely. The mean likelihood by gender for the scale measuring likelihood of being victimized on campus during the day are significant at $p < .01$ level. The mean likelihood by gender for the scale measuring likelihood of being a victim of a violent crime on UTA campus during the day are significant at $p < .01$ level. The mean likelihood by gender for the scale measuring likelihood of being a victim of a violent crime on campus at night are significant at $p < .001$ level. In general, men perceive less risk of victimization than women, but women still do not perceive crime as very likely.

When asked specifically about a school shooting on campus females thought it would be more likely than males but both females and males felt it was overall unlikely for a school shooting to occur. The mean likelihood by gender for the scale measuring likelihood that there will be a shooting on UTA campus are significant at $p < .001$ level. When respondents were asked how likely it would be that a school shooting would occur on UT Arlington campus compared to other campuses in Texas, both males and females felt it was less likely compared to the previous question, but still overall advised it was not very likely to occur. The mean likelihood by gender for the scale measuring likelihood of a school shooting occurring on UTA campus compared to other campuses in Texas are significant at $p < .001$ level.

4.1 Qualitative Responses

At the end of the survey there was an open ended question allowing the respondents to add anything they felt necessary regarding students carrying handguns on campus. Of the 292 surveys, 67 students responded. Of the 67 responses, 35 students responded they did not support the idea and 18 students responded they did support the idea of students carrying handguns on campus. There were 14 neutral responses that did not indicate a strong agreement or strong disagreement.

Of the 35 respondents who indicated they did not support the idea of students carrying handguns on campus at all, some of the respondents believe only police officers should be allowed to have guns on campus because they have been properly trained. One respondent

wrote, "I think that in a high stress environment such as college campus, adding firearms into the mix is a bad idea. Having concealed handguns does not make you safer, but instead pulls you into danger. CHL classes do not effectively teach how to handle dangerous situations, but your typical CHL holder does not have that training." Other respondents simply answered they do not believe students or faculty should be allowed to carry handguns if they have a record or have been previously charged with assault or other violent crimes. Some respondents found it was unnecessary as it is the police officers' job to handle emergencies, "We give up that right to carry guns when we enter any federal building. It should be the same for all public institutions, schools, libraries, parks, and universities." Another respondent answered, "Even if someone had a license to carry, we all as humans have emotions and cannot always control those. Someone carrying a gun (license or not) has a purpose, whether it be for their safety or others, but that purpose can always change." Other respondents stated they do not agree; do not think it was a smart idea. One respondent answered, If there is a shooting, it would be difficult for law enforcement to tell the difference between the shooter and the CHL carriers possibly interfere with law enforcement who are trying to do their job. Last but not least a respondent answered, "I don't think it's safe. Students are not prepared to handle such responsibility nor faculty. We will have a bunch of accidents."

Of the 18 respondents who answered the question and strongly agreed with the idea of students carrying handguns on campus, one student answered, "We should have the right to do it! We are all adults and should be allowed to protect ourselves! At Virginia Tech, the police did no good!" Two more respondents answered they agree with it, but there would probably be some specific people that would make them uncomfortable if they carried weapons, or it is the ones without the proper license that they worry about. Another student suggested a database with the UTA Police Department for each of the carriers to be registered in. "I just find the idea to be good. The people who are going to hurt others with guns are going to bring them anyways, so we might as well allow students the right to carry something to defend themselves.

Many school shootings could have been avoided simply by letting normal students defend themselves and others with their own gun. I know I would gladly take offensive action if someone was threatening me or anyone else on campus.” Other respondents answered there should be psychological exams given to prove mental stability before allowing students to carry on campus in addition to special training and metal detectors. One respondent wrote, “People who want to cause harm and danger will carry handguns on campus whether they are allowed or not. Therefore, if safe responsible people were allowed to carry guns on campus, they could protect themselves and others from crazy people opening fire.” Others who strongly agreed with the idea of students carrying handguns on campus answered, “It is our right! Stop making it illegal to protect ourselves!” and “It is our right! Stop infringing on it!”

The 14 remaining answers did not indicate a strong level of agreement or disagreement. Many of the answers were not directly related to the question and one student answered he or she did not know much about the subject while another student answered, “Please use your best judgment.” Some other respondents mentioned concerns and one student answered, “I plan on getting one for personal protection. (Single parent.)” but did not indicate whether he or she agreed or not. Other students called it an “iffy” and difficult decision, and one respondent answered, “It sounds kinda crazy,” and another respondent answered, “Some people are crazy.” Another respondent answered, “I think that students should be able to defend themselves better if a violent act did occur if they had a handgun , but it worries me because at any time a student could snap over a bad grade or other issues while at school and it would be much easier to start a violent crime.”

Overall, of the 67 students who responded to the open-ended question at the end of the survey, a little over half (35) of the students elaborated on how they disagreed with the idea of students carrying handguns on campus. A little less than one-fourth of the students indicated they agreed with the idea of carrying concealed handguns on campus elaborating on how they should have the right to carry handguns on campus. While the remaining 14 students indicated

a feeling of unsure whether they agreed or disagreed due to not knowing much about the subject or they possibly did not understand the purpose of the research and survey.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The major conclusion to be drawn from this research is that college students' attitudes towards carrying handguns did not indicate a feeling of strong agreement or disagreement. The results reveal that both undergraduate and graduate, criminology and criminal justice majors and other majors but were not statistically significant. When asking the overall question of whether students, faculty, and non-security staff should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on UT Arlington campus, the students were not in favor of the idea because they did not indicate a strong agreement. The hypotheses regarding graduate students to be more supportive of the idea of students carrying handguns on campus with the proper license was not supported because both graduate and undergraduate students were neutral leaning towards disagreeing. It was anticipated that criminology and criminal justice students would be more supportive of the idea of students carrying handguns on campus with the proper license, but this too was not statistically significant. Both CRCJ majors and non-CRCJ majors leaned towards disagreeing with the idea of carrying handguns on campus, however there was no sign of strongly agreeing or disagreeing.

The three primary hypotheses tested in this study were not all supported because there was not a significant difference between graduate and undergraduate students, and there was no significant difference between CRCJ majors and non-CRCJ majors when asked about carrying concealed handguns on campus. Males were more supportive than females of the idea of carrying handguns on campus with the proper license but once again they were not statistically significant and were neutral.

CRCJ majors and non-CRCJ majors generally disagreed with the statement of students, faculty and non-security staff should be allowed to carry handguns on campus. Among the items, a score of one indicates strongly agree and a score of five indicates strongly disagree. CRCJ and non-CRCJ majors indicated a mean of 3.8 and 3.71 respectively indicating neither the CRCJ majors nor CRCJ-non majors strongly agreed nor disagreed with the idea of carrying concealed handguns on campus; their means were both very close. CRCJ majors disagreed more with the statement of students carrying handguns on campus, but they were not statistically significant.

When graduate and undergraduate students were compared by level of study, a score of one indicates strongly agree and a score of 5 indicated strongly disagree. When the respondents were asked if students should be allowed to carry guns on campus, graduate students had a mean of 3.73 and undergraduate students had a mean of 3.74. Both graduate and undergraduate students leaned toward disagreeing with the statement that students should be allowed to carry guns on campus, but neither graduate students nor undergraduate students strongly agreed or disagreed. Undergraduate students and graduate students were neutral when asked if students should be allowed to carry guns on campus indicating there was no statistical significance.

There also was no significant difference in gender when females and males were asked if students should carry handguns on campus. A score of one indicates strongly agree and a score of five indicates strongly disagree. Overall, females and males agree on the statements of students, faculty, non-security staff, and themselves carrying a concealed handgun on campus. When asked if students should be allowed to carry guns on campus, females indicated a mean of 3.84 while males indicated a mean of 3.63 revealing females were less likely to agree with the statement than males, however, it was not statistically significant. When asked if faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus, both females and males indicated they agreed more with this statement than students being allowed to carry, but overall they still

disagreed that faculty should be allowed to carry guns on campus. When asked if non-security staff should be allowed to carry guns on campus, both females and males disagreed with the statement with females disagreeing more indicating no significant difference. When asked if the respondent would carry a gun on campus if allowed, both females and males once again disagreed with the statement by indicating a mean of 3.78 and 3.28 respectively. The mean differences by gender for the scale measuring attitudes toward the students and whether they themselves would carry a gun on campus are significant at $p < .01$ level. Female students and male students indicated they disagreed that guns should be carried on campus, showing they disagreed more with fellow students and themselves carrying a gun on campus if allowed. Both females and males agreed more with faculty and non-security staff carrying guns on campus if allowed, but overall results indicated they disagreed with the statements of students, faculty, non-security staff and themselves carrying guns on campus if allowed.

From this study, the researcher learned that students at the graduate level and undergraduate level, CRCJ majors and non-CRCJ majors did not strongly agree or disagree with the idea of students, faculty, and non-security staff carrying handguns on campus. There was no significant difference between them and, although they leaned toward disagreeing with the statement, it was not a strong disagreement and is considered neutral.

Now that it is clear that there is not strong support or non-support from students for carrying handguns on campus, it is a neutral opinion. Just as Brinker (2008) found in his study of the University of Missouri students, majority of students surveyed did not favor allowing students, faculty, and staff to carry guns on campus. In addition, in Brinker's study, female respondents tended to be less in favor of allowing students to carry guns, but more likely to favor allowing campus security to carry. If someone were to use the results from the current research project, they would be able to show that overall the UT Arlington students had a neutral opinion when asked if students, faculty, and non-security staff should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on campus with the proper license.

5.1 Limitations and Future Research

It is suggested that future research expand to more campuses in more states. One limitation the current research has is that there was only one campus surveyed. It is hard to generalize the opinions of a full campus or university students in general due to the small sample size within the one department of criminology and criminal justice students. Students within other departments could be compared to the criminology and criminal justice students in future research. In addition, UT Arlington is located in the Texas where the South is to have conservative gun laws and strong support. The Texas Conservative Coalition (2008) states, "Legislators have kept traditional conservative values at the forefront of public policy in Texas... enhancing Texans' right to defend their homes from intruders" indicating strong gun rights to the Second Amendment. Future research could also entail comparing many students from colleges and universities from different geographic locations to be compared.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Survey of University of Texas at Arlington Students
Guns on UT Arlington Campus

To be read aloud prior to passing out the survey:

This study is being conducted through the Criminology and Criminal Justice Department at UTA. It is aimed at measuring the opinions of UT Arlington criminal justice students at the graduate and undergraduate level. This survey is strictly voluntary and anonymous. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this survey. You are not required to participate in this project and you have the right to terminate this survey at any point before its completion. There are no risks associated with participation in the survey. You will personally receive no direct benefit as a result of completing the survey. The potential benefit of the research is increased understanding of the perceptions of students regarding crime and crime-related issues. The findings of this study will be used as supporting data for several research articles that will be submitted for publication in academic journals.

If you have any questions or research-related problems at any time, you may call Melissa Van Winkle at 817-694-1150. You may call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at 817/272-3723 for any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject.

Survey of University of Texas at Arlington Students
Guns on UT Arlington Campus

For this section, please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5, with one meaning strongly agree and 5 meaning strongly disagree, your reactions to each statement.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I am knowledgeable on the current rules concerning carrying concealed handguns on college campuses. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Students should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on the UT Arlington campus. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Faculty should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on the UT Arlington campus. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Non-security staff should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on the UT Arlington campus. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I would carry a concealed handgun on campus if allowed. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

For this section, please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5, with one meaning much more safe and 5 meaning much more unsafe, your reactions to each statement.

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. While on campus, how would you feel if students were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus with the proper license? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. While on campus, how would you feel if faculty were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus with the proper license? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. While on campus, how would you feel if non-security staff were allowed to carry a concealed handgun on campus with the proper license? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

For this section, please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5, with one meaning not at all likely and 5 meaning very likely, your reactions to each statement.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9. In general, how likely is it that you will be victimized on the UT Arlington campus during the day? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. How likely do you think it is that you will be the victim of a violent crime on the UT Arlington campus during the day? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. How likely do you think it is that you will be the victim of a violent crime on the UT Arlington campus at night? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. How likely do you think it is that there would be a school shooting on the UT Arlington campus? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Compared to other campuses in Texas, how likely is it that a school shooting would occur on the UT Arlington campus? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. If people are allowed to carry concealed handguns on college campuses, what level of training should be required to do so? | | | | | |
| a. No special training. | | | | | |
| b. Standard concealed handgun training. | | | | | |
| c. Standard concealed handgun training plus training designed specifically for college campuses. | | | | | |
| d. Other: _____ | | | | | |
| 15. What should be the minimum age for people to carry concealed handguns? | | | | | |
| a. Less than 17 years old | | | | | |
| b. At least 18 years old | | | | | |
| c. At least 21 years old | | | | | |
| d. At least 25 years old | | | | | |

16. Do you have a concealed handgun license issued by the state? Yes (go to question 16a and 16b) No (skip to question 17)

- a. How long have you had your concealed handgun license? _____
- b. Why did you get your concealed handgun license? _____

17. Have you ever been a victim of a violent crime? Yes (go to questions 17a -17d) No (skip to question 18)

- a. How long ago did the victimization occur? Less than 6 months 6 months-1year ago More than 1 year ago
Yes No Yes No Yes No
- b. Did the victimization occur on the UT Arlington's campus? Yes No
- c. Did you report the victimization to the police? Yes No
- d. Did this incident change your perception regarding carrying of concealed handguns? Yes No

18. Finally, please indicate the following information about the person who completed this survey.

- a. Female
- b. Male

19. Please indicate your level of study.

- a. Graduate
- b. Undergraduate

20. Do you live on campus?

21. What is your major? _____

22. How many hours have you completed? _____

Yes No

23. Please indicate your race
- a. Caucasian
 - b. African American
 - c. Hispanic
 - d. Asian
 - e. Other _____

24. What is your age? _____

25. Is there anything you would like to add about people carrying concealed handguns on campus with the proper license?

Thank you for your participation.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Melissa Van Winkle graduated in 2003 from Peaster High School. Her academic career includes dual associate degrees from Weatherford College, bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Arlington and is currently working on her master's degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. The first degree Melissa achieved is an Associate's in Applied Science in Criminal Justice and Corrections in December, 2005; and then graduated from Weatherford College with her Associate's in Applied Science in Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement in May 2006. Melissa graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Texas at Arlington in December, 2008. She is now just a few steps away from graduating with her master's degree in criminology and criminal justice. Throughout her academic career she has been a member of Alpha Phi Sigma, and been inducted into the National Honor Society of Leadership and Success, Golden Key International Honour Society, and the National Honors Scholar Society. Her research interests consist of carrying guns on college campuses, gangs, fear of crime, and why people commit crime. Her future plans include staying employed with the government and getting her Ph.D. so she can teach at a major university in the field of criminology and criminal justice.