



SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

2025 Annual Security Report

Prepared in Compliance with the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act

Jackson Campus (Main)

447 College Drive, Sylva, NC

Macon Campus

44 Siler Farm Rd, Franklin, NC 28734

Swain Center

60 Almond School Road, Bryson City, NC

Jerry Sutton Public Safety Training Center

225 Industrial Park Loop, Franklin, NC 28734

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A Message from the President

At Southwestern Community College, the safety and security of our students, employees, and visitors remain among our highest priorities. We are committed to fostering an educational environment that promotes learning, personal growth, mutual respect, and individual well-being.



This Annual Security Report provides important information regarding campus safety programs, crime prevention efforts, emergency preparedness initiatives, reporting procedures, and crime statistics as required by the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act. We encourage all members of our campus community to review this report carefully and become familiar with the resources available to support a safe educational environment.

Safety is a shared responsibility. Through collaboration among students, employees, local law enforcement agencies, and community partners, Southwestern Community College continues to strengthen its commitment to providing a secure and welcoming campus for all.

Dr. Don Tomas

President, Southwestern Community College

1. Introduction & Overview of the Clery Act

In response to concerns regarding campus safety and security at colleges and universities, Congress enacted the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990, which amended the Higher Education Act of 1965. The 1998 amendments to this Act renamed it the *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act*, in memory of Jeanne Clery. This federal law has largely become known across the United States as the "Clery Act." Further amendments to the Clery Act occurred in 2013 with the Violence Against Women Act, adding enhanced reporting requirements for sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.

All public and private postsecondary institutions that participate in Title IV student financial assistance programs must comply with the Clery Act. Among the various requirements, colleges and universities are required to prepare, publish, and distribute an annual report that discloses campus crime statistics and includes statements of safety and security policies and procedures. The notice of availability must be distributed to all current students and employees and made available to prospective students and employees.

Preparation and Distribution of the Annual Security Report

This Annual Security Report (ASR) is prepared by the Clery Compliance Coordinator in collaboration with local law enforcement, Campus Security Authorities (CSAs), and various administrative offices across the college.

Clery Compliance Coordinator:

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Crime statistics included in this report are compiled from reports submitted by local law enforcement agencies, CSAs, Student Resource Officers (SROs), and other designated officials. The ASR is distributed annually to all current students and employees and is available to prospective students and employees on the SCC Campus Safety and Security webpage.

Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination

Southwestern Community College is committed to providing a welcoming and respectful environment and does not discriminate or treat people differently on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, disability, age, or veteran status. This includes a prohibition on sexual violence and sexual exploitation, which by definition involve conduct of a sexual nature and are prohibited forms of sexual harassment.

The College also prohibits stalking and interpersonal violence, which need not be based on an individual's protected status. Any grievances may be filed pursuant to SCC **Policy 6.03.03 (Discrimination and Unlawful Harassment)** and **Policy 4.03.05 (Sex Discrimination and Harassment)**.

Clery Act Geography

Southwestern Community College must disclose statistics for reported Clery crimes that occur within specific geographic categories defined by the Clery Act:

- **On-Campus:** Any building or property owned or controlled by SCC within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area and used by the institution in direct support of, or in a manner related to, the institution's educational purposes. *(Note: SCC does not have on-campus residential housing, so all on-campus crimes are reported in a single "On-Campus" category).*
- **Public Property:** All public property, including thoroughfares, streets, sidewalks, and parking facilities, that is within the campus, or immediately adjacent to and accessible from the campus.
- **Non-campus Buildings or Property:** Any building or property owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the institution; or any building or property owned or controlled by the institution that is used in direct support of, or in relation to, the institution's educational purposes, is frequently used by students, and is not within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area of the institution.

2. Campus Safety and Security

Southwestern Community College works diligently to maintain a secure environment across all locations. SCC operates in close partnership with local law enforcement agencies to ensure a rapid and coordinated response to any incident.

Law Enforcement Partnerships

Student Resource Officers (SROs) are assigned to our Jackson and Macon Campuses, which house early college programs. We maintain strong collaborative relationships with the following agencies:

- **Jackson County Sheriff's Office:** 399 Grindstaff Cove Rd, Sylva, NC 28779 | (828) 586-8901
- **Macon County Sheriff's Office:** 1820 Lakeside Drive, Franklin, NC 28734 | (828) 349-2104
- **Swain County Sheriff's Office:** 95 Brendle St, Bryson City, NC 28713 | (828) 488-0159

Campus Security Authorities (CSAs)

In accordance with federal law, SCC designates Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) to assist with the reporting and collection of Clery Act crime information. SCC's CSAs include SROs, faculty members, staff members, campus administrators, Student Affairs personnel, and the Emergency Services/Safety Coordinator. All CSAs receive annual training regarding Clery Act requirements and their mandatory reporting responsibilities.

3. Reporting Crimes and Emergencies

The safety and security of the SCC community is our top priority. We encourage all community members to accurately and promptly report all crimes, emergencies, and suspicious activities.

Emergency Notification Systems

Pursuant to the Clery Act, SCC is required to immediately notify the campus community upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health and/or safety of the campus community. Immediate threats include both Clery Act crimes and other types of emergencies (weather-related, naturally occurring, human-caused, etc.) that pose an imminent or impending threat.

During an emergency, SCC may use multiple methods of communication to keep the campus community informed. The following systems make up the SCC Alert System:

- **SCC Alert Mobile App:** Available for students and staff to receive emergency information, report crime tips, and use features like Friend Walk and COVID-19 self-assessments.
- **Text Messages and Desktop Pop-ups:** Direct notifications to registered mobile devices and campus computers.
- **Outdoor Warning Sirens:** When the siren sounds, everyone on campus should take shelter indoors immediately and await an "all clear".
- **Campus Email:** This system will send an email to the entire campus community, including students, faculty, and staff members, through their SCC mailbox.
- **Emergency Information Webpage:** In the event of an emergency, this page will provide the most current information on the nature of the emergency and the college's response to the situation.

Confirming a Significant or Dangerous Situation

Normally, the existence of a credible emergency event or threat is confirmed by local emergency responders (i.e., SROs, City/County Law Enforcement, or Fire Rescue) or the Emergency Services/Safety Coordinator at the respective SCC locations. Once confirmed, they will notify the appropriate administrative authorities who will initiate SCC Emergency Notification Systems without delay, unless sending such a message will, in the professional judgment of the responsible authorities, compromise the efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency.

Emergency Notification Phases

When an emergency event or threat occurs, the phases of emergency communication are: Emergency Notification and Alerting, Emergency Follow-Up/Status Update, and Recovery Information/All Clear.

Follow-up/status update notifications are released when there is new information or instructions for the college population, such as changes in protective actions. Once an emergency has been contained or effectively managed, an "All Clear" notification is disseminated by the incident commander or the Emergency Services/Safety Coordinator.

Testing Emergency Notification Procedures

Training and exercises are essential to demonstrating and improving SCC's ability to execute its alerting protocols. Testing SCC Emergency Notification System components helps identify issues and determine functionality before an emergency occurs.

Full testing of the SCC Emergency Notification Systems components occurs regularly. These drills and exercises may be announced or unannounced. The Emergency Services/Safety Coordinator documents each test, including the date, time, and whether it was announced or unannounced.

Timely Warnings

A Timely Warning is issued when a Clery Act crime has already been committed, occurs within SCC's Clery Geography, and presents a serious or continuous threat to the campus community. The purpose of a Timely Warning is to quickly notify the campus community of an incident and to provide information that may enable community members to protect themselves and prevent similar crimes.

The Emergency Services/Safety Coordinator, in consultation with appropriate administrators and law enforcement, makes the decision to issue a Timely Warning on a case-by-case basis. Factors considered include the nature of the crime, the continuing danger to the campus community, and the possible risk of compromising law enforcement efforts or the identity of the victim. Timely Warnings are typically distributed via the SCC Alert system and campus email.

4. Facility Security & Crime Prevention

Security of Campus Facilities

Access to SCC facilities is designed to balance an open, welcoming educational environment with the need for personal safety. Most campus buildings are open to the public during normal business hours. After hours, access is restricted to authorized personnel. Facilities and maintenance teams regularly conduct lighting and security surveys to ensure pathways and parking lots are properly illuminated and hazards are addressed promptly.

Crime Prevention and Safety Awareness Programs

Crime prevention is a shared responsibility. SCC promotes safety through educational programs and training opportunities provided throughout the year:

- **New Student Orientation:** Includes foundational safety and security information.
- **Employee Onboarding:** Covers workplace safety, emergency procedures, and reporting duties.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** Active threat/response training and campus-wide evacuation/fire drills.
- **Targeted Prevention:** Programs addressing sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking (Violence Against Women Act crimes), alongside comprehensive Title IX education.

Information is continuously distributed via email, the SCC Alert app, and presentations by the Emergency Services/Safety Coordinator and local SROs.

5. Institutional Policies

Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Programs

SCC complies with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA) and strictly prohibits the unlawful possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on campus or at any college-sponsored activity.

Prevention and Support: SCC distributes annual DFSCA notifications outlining the health risks of substance abuse and the legal/disciplinary consequences of violations. The College provides educational campaigns and refers individuals to counseling, treatment, and community support services when appropriate. Violators are subject to disciplinary action—ranging from educational sanctions to suspension/termination and criminal prosecution.

Title IX, Sexual Misconduct, and Violence Against Women Act Offenses

Southwestern Community College is committed to providing a learning and working environment free from sex-based discrimination and harassment, in accordance with **Policy 4.03.05 (Sex Discrimination and Harassment)** and **Policy 6.03.03 (Discrimination and Unlawful Harassment)**. SCC strictly prohibits Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking.

Bystander Intervention & Risk Reduction

Bystanders play a crucial role in the prevention of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. SCC encourages community members to intervene safely when they notice someone at risk. We recommend the following intervention strategies:

- **Direct:** Step in and address the situation directly if you feel safe doing so (e.g., asking "Are you okay?").
- **Distract:** Cause a diversion to interrupt the situation (e.g., spilling a drink, asking for directions).
- **Delegate:** Find someone else to help, such as a friend, a staff member, or campus safety personnel.
- **Delay:** Check in with the person afterward to see if they need assistance or resources.

Risk Reduction Tips: While no one is ever at fault for being the victim of a crime, you can take steps to reduce your risk. Trust your instincts—if a situation feels unsafe, leave. Use the "buddy system" when attending social gatherings. Never leave your drink unattended, and do not accept drinks from people you do not know or trust.

Title IX Coordinators

For Employees: Erin See, M.S.

Director of Human Resources | Balsam Center, Room 181

Phone: (828) 339-4280 | Email: e_see@southwesterncc.edu

For Students: Mark Ellison, Ed.D.

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Victim Rights and Resources

Victims of sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking are strongly encouraged to: (1) Ensure physical safety and seek immediate help from law enforcement; (2) Seek medical assistance to treat injuries and complete an evidence collection kit; (3) Report the misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator to access supportive measures.

Retaliation against anyone who reports an incident or participates in a grievance process is strictly prohibited and constitutes a separate policy violation.

Free Speech Policies

As a public institution, SCC embraces the free exchange of ideas. In accordance with **Policy 3.03.08** and **3.03.08.01 (Free Speech)**, the College maintains a safe, orderly environment while supporting the First Amendment rights of students, employees, and visitors to peacefully assemble and express their views.

Sex Offender Registry Information

In accordance with the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act, individuals can access the North Carolina Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry to identify registered offenders who might be employed, enrolled, or volunteering at the College. The registry is maintained by the North Carolina Department of Justice and can be accessed online at: <https://www.nc.gov/services/sex-offender-registry>.

6. Clery Act Crime Definitions & Hate Crimes

The following are the exact legal definitions for crimes reportable under the Clery Act, as derived from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program:

- **Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter:** The willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another.
- **Manslaughter by Negligence:** The killing of another person through gross negligence.
- **Rape:** The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.
- **Fondling:** The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim.
- **Incest:** Sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.
- **Statutory Rape:** Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.
- **Robbery:** The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.
- **Aggravated Assault:** An unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault usually is accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm.
- **Burglary:** The unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft.
- **Motor Vehicle Theft:** The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.
- **Arson:** Any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc.
- **Domestic Violence:** A felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, or by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim.
- **Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim.
- **Stalking:** Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.

Hate Crimes

A Hate Crime is a criminal act involving one or more of the aforementioned Clery crimes, or the crimes of **Larceny/Theft, Simple Assault, Intimidation, or Destruction of Property/Vandalism**, that is motivated by bias. Under the Clery Act, Hate Crimes are reported when the crime is committed against a person or property based upon the perception that the person or group has one or more of the following characteristics:

- Race
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender
- Gender Identity
- Ethnicity / National Origin
- Disability

7. Clery Crime Statistics (2022-2025)

The following statistics reflect reported Clery Act crimes that occurred on SCC Clery geography. SCC continuously works with local law enforcement to compile accurate data. *(Note: SCC does not have on-campus residential housing facilities).*

Clery Crime Category	2022	2023	2024	2025
Murder / Non-Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0	0
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0	0
Forcible Sex Offenses (Rape/Fondling)	0	0	0	0
Non-Forcible Sex Offenses (Incest/Statutory)	0	0	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	0	0	0	0
Burglary	0	1	0	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	0	0
Arson	0	0	1	0
Hate Crimes	0	0	0	0
Domestic Violence	0	0	0	0
Dating Violence	0	0	0	0
Stalking	0	0	0	0
Weapons Law Violations (Arrests/Referrals)	0	0	0	0
Drug Abuse Violations (Arrests/Referrals)	0	0	1	0
Liquor Law Violations (Arrests/Referrals)	0	0	0	0
Unfounded Crimes	0	0	0	0

Statistics represent incidents reported to Campus Security Authorities and local law enforcement agencies across all SCC locations.