



April 18, 2007

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff and Other Members of the MSU Community:

For the past two days there has been an outpouring of compassion and sadness for the loss sustained by our friends and colleagues at Virginia Tech. Our campus flags have been lowered to half-mast in honor of those who lost their lives in this tragedy. Yesterday I sent a letter of condolence and support to Charles Steger, the University's President, conveying the sympathies of our community.

An incident such as this is always tragic, but perhaps even more so because we can so readily identify with it. While some of us have roots at Virginia Tech, many of us feel an affinity for those there because we are fellow educators, students, and members of a university community. In addition, we too live and work in a rural university setting, where we like to think that we are safe, as surely did our friends in Blacksburg.

When tragic events like this happen, we need to carefully analyze the information to determine what we can learn to enhance our own policies and responsiveness. While we pride ourselves for having a safe campus within a safe community, we know that we live in a society where violence does occur. It is our responsibility to do all that we can to take preventive measures, but also to be fully prepared in the event of a crisis or widespread emergency.

I have asked Allen Yarnell, Vice President for Student Affairs, to lead an examination of our campus procedures and protocols. He has already convened a meeting of the MSU Emergency Response Team, which is composed of representatives from across campus. This group will work to assure that our procedures incorporate developments in technology, communications and the lessons we can learn from the Virginia Tech tragedy.

Our current protocols, developed a few years ago and regularly tested, are detailed in an emergency response plan that can be viewed at:

[http://www2.montana.edu/policy/emergency\\_manual/erm100.html](http://www2.montana.edu/policy/emergency_manual/erm100.html).

Students affected by this tragedy who wish to speak with one of the counselors at Student Health Services may reach one at 994-4531.

We can all take pride in knowing that our student government has joined in a national effort to create paper cranes to send messages to the students at Virginia Tech. I know you join me in grieving for the Virginia Tech family and resolving to protect and cherish community on our own campus as well.

Sincerely

  
Geoff Gamble  
President

**Office of the President**

211 Montana Hall  
P.O. Box 172420  
Bozeman, MT 59717-2420  
[www.montana.edu](http://www.montana.edu)

Tel (406) 994-2341  
Fax (406) 994-1893