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Recent campus crimes a call to caution

In light of recent incidents, the university community must look out for itself more and become aware of the risks on campus. Since the beginning of the semester, a gay-rights proponent has been threatened in his room by an intruder, a baseball player has been accused by police of committing assault in a dorm, and several women on East/West Campus have had their rooms entered into in the middle of the night by strangers.

prevented most of the recent incidents. People who feel the need to harass innocent others will end up making too much of a racket in a hallway trying to enter a locked room and get caught or eventually get over their drunken stupor and forget their intentions.

Students worry and complain about walking alone on

lems must be punished. In the past, the university's administration has left some incidents in the shadows, not mentioning them until long afterward. Every effort has to be made to solve them. Hiding incidents, such as the seven sexual assaults that happened on or near campus last year, heightens the chance of having similar incidents occur. The university must publicize them to warn the university community.

Maine has been lucky over the years that it hasn't been subjected to the safety problems other schools have had, but the number of incidents is catching up. The university should consult with other state universities and see what they are doing to prevent similar problems and incidents. Some schools go to extremes and have codes to get into dormitory bathrooms or have 24-hour surveillance in dormitories.

With each incident, the reputation of the University of Maine is being tarnished. Students are discouraged from coming to it. Enrollment is down enough as it is; we can't let it become any worse. We have to have more responsibility so the university will be respected more. Even if it costs a large amount of money to pay for assault and crime prevention, it is worth it for the safety of present and future university students.

Kristen Dobler is a sophomore English major and is the assistant city editor for the Maine Campus.

**By Kristen
Dobler**



The university has made efforts to prevent these types of incidents, but they continue to occur.

Campus residents should listen to the precautions given throughout the year by Campus Living and Public Safety. We pay these people thousands of dollars to promote safety on campus, but we don't pay enough attention to them.

Dorms aren't as secure as most would like. Most of us would like to trust the people who live around us and feel comfortable leaving doors open, but that's not the way it is. Unfortunately, it's not until incidents hit close to home when we finally start realizing this.

Many of the recent incidents could have been prevented by using common sense. The simple act of locking a door would have

campus, but few take advantage of services offered to them. The Campus Walking Companion program and Late Night Local – aka the drunk bus – are used by students, but never to their full potential.

Even if the number of crimes on campus is low, students should prepare themselves by taking self-defense courses, carrying Mace or whistles. The university provides these and many other crime and assault prevention tools so the campus will remain a safe environment. The capabilities are there. It's a matter of students taking advantage of them. When an incident happens, we tend to blame it on people who have been trying to help all along. We have to consider how responsible we actually are.

The people causing the prob-