

Two page paper on  
the tragic massacre  
at va tech to be  
completed in apa  
format



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Reflections on the Tragic Massacre at VA Tech: Lessons Learned After Cho Seung-Hui gunned down 32 and himself on April 16, 2007 at the VA Tech University, the country and the world were drastically made aware of the communication issues within and between university and other governmental and law enforcement organizations and departments and the complexity of dealing with mentally unstable students. Indeed there is a multitude of lessons to be learned from this tragic incident—a lesson that had to be learned in the hardest and most painful way.

Long before the shooting, professors were already aware of Cho's eccentric behavior, which scared other students and prompted them to enroll him in one-on-one tutoring (Setrakian and Shaylor, 2007). He was even investigated by the police twice after apparently stalking fellow two students (Griffin, 2007). After expressing suicidal tendencies to his roommate who reported the incident, he was diagnosed as “ an imminent danger to himself or others as a result of mental illness” and “ incapable of volunteering or unwilling to volunteer for treatment” and was ordered by the Montgomery County to be an outpatient of Cook Counseling Center, which is located on-campus (CNN, 2007; Setrakian and Shaylor, 2007). The question now is, did he go for treatment? The answer is most probably “ no” as people failed to follow up on this (Setrakian and Shaylor, 2007). Hence, they failed to recognize the signs and symptoms of a violent breakdown.

With so many people knowing that there is something wrong with Cho , with the police having already investigated him—not once, but twice—and with a court-ordered psychiatric treatment, how did they miss his violent

tendencies? Why was the proper intervention not applied to him? How was he

able to legally purchase two guns? The answer to these questions lies in the <https://assignbuster.com/two-page-paper-on-the-tragic-massacre-at-va-tech-to-be-completed-in-apa-format/>

fact that professors, administrators, law enforcement officers, the state court, and other government departments failed to communicate with each other. The bottom line is that “no one knew all the information and no one connected all the dots” (New Scientist, 2007). Each was holding an important piece of the puzzle; however, there was no communication between them and so, the pieces remained isolated from each other. For instance, the police failed to communicate to campus authorities about their investigation of Cho; likewise, the court neglected to let the university know of their diagnosis and decision. These related incidents were also not inputted into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System; this is why Cho was able to legally purchase the two guns that he used to kill 32 students (Griffin, et al., 2007).

One of the more obvious reasons for this miscommunication stems from privacy laws and issues (CNN, 2007). Disclosing personal information, like psychiatric evaluation and police records, is an act that is bordered by laws. In the act of self-preservation, peers, professors, law enforcement authorities, lawyers and mental healthcare providers fail to “raise a red flag” to give attention to disturbed students with a high risk of committing violent acts (CNN, 2007). In the aftermath of the shooting, a strategy has been proposed that will allow for all of the involved parties to be able to communicate effectively and monitor and help disturbed students (CNN, 2007). In this way, schools and universities are made less vulnerable to attacks. Moreover, the lives of disturbed students will also be saved. Indeed, these have long been identified as “loopholes” and “information silos,” but no one did something about it. Now, at the expense of 33 lives—and yes,

Cho should be seen as a victim of failed intervention—people are starting to  
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take action.

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