

Gates, Entrances and Classrooms – A Comprehensive Framework for Campus Security



In the modern campus environment, gates and doors are not just architectural features, they are critical control points that influence safety for students and staff. Campuses face a security landscape shaped by high foot traffic and a broad spectrum of spaces that require different kinds of protection. Exterior gates function as gateways to the campus perimeter and must reliably withstand attempted breaches and weather while remaining easy for students and staff to pass through. On the other hand, interior doors in classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and administrative offices need to balance ease of access with the need to restrict sensitive areas.

In all cases, the reliability of security devices determines how effectively a campus can preserve safety without compromising the learning environment. The consequences of failure can be severe. A single malfunctioning door during an incident can impede safe egress, delay first responders, or grant access to restricted spaces, with real-time implications for safety. For that reason, campuses today require a robust approach to gate and door security integrates physical hardware that provides a comprehensive access control, creating a dynamic defense that adapts to traffic patterns and threat landscapes.

This whitepaper outlines why robust door and gate security is essential for campuses, the challenges campuses encounter, and how modern solutions can deliver superior protection, reliable operation, and measurable return on investment.

Gates: The First Line of Defense

Universities want to be seen as open, welcoming and accessible. However, this sometimes conflicts with the need to keep educational facilities safe from some unwanted individuals. As the first line of defense, well-designed gate security helps deter unauthorized entry, supports rapid emergency response, and reduces risks from theft, vandalism, and violence. It also reinforces a sense of safety that enables people to focus on learning.

In addition, campuses often host large sporting, theatrical and social events, making robust gate security a practical necessity rather than a luxury. Leading security companies such as Detex not only provide traditional gate security products but have gone a step further with the introduction of the 5-ft panic bar. This Grade 1 exit device represents the highest level of security in the industry and is weatherized to stand up to the elements year-round.

What to Look for in Gate Security:

- Compliance with local regulations and standards
- Reliability and ease-of-use
- Weather and corrosion protection
- Clear customization options, scalability and future-proofing
- Ease of installation
- Vendor qualifications, experience with gate systems, references, and certifications



Main Entry Doors: An Open and Shut Case

Exterior door locks act as a visual deterrent to potential break-ins. They dissuade would-be intruders by signaling that entry is not easy or fast as they usually seek fast, easy entry into buildings, such as unsecured windows and porous locks. For educational facilities, high-quality door hardware—long-throw deadbolts and reinforced strike plates help resist forced entry. These locks should be durable, fire-compliant, and easy to operate under stress. Look for certifications and standards such as UL listing to ensure reliability, performance, and compatibility with emergency egress requirements.

Modern access control systems extend this protection by enabling campus- or building-wide lockdowns from a central command center. In an emergency, these systems can automatically secure all connected doors, reducing the time to containment and limiting exposure. The Advantex IOED from Detex exemplifies this capability: with a single button press, a rapid lockdown can be initiated, activating Detex electric dogging on all applicable doors across the campus or facility. This approach not only enhances security but also improves incident coordination, situational awareness, and the ability to maintain safe egress for occupants when conditions permit.

Universities should evaluate exterior door security devices for safety, reliability, and campus-wide usability. Here's a practical checklist of what to look for when selecting locks for facilities:

- Lock security level: Grade 1 or Grade 2 hardware for high-traffic, critical buildings. Look for robust construction (solid metal, reinforced components) and proven resistance to forced-entry
- Lockdown and emergency modes: If a lockdown capability is needed, make sure that the system can trigger a campus- or building-wide lockdown, including automatic engagement of locks and audible/visual alerts where appropriate.
- Weather and vandal resistance: Choose locks with weather seals, corrosion resistance, and tamper-resistant components suitable for exterior use.
- UL listings and safety certifications: UL-listed components and systems for security and life-safety applications.

Classroom Doors – Why Best-in-Class Devices Are Necessary

For classroom doors, it all begins with choosing the right lock features and functions that will make the biggest impact when protecting our students and educators. In a typical classroom setting, the door might only lock from the outside with a key. This poses a security concern, as teachers need a quick and efficient locking mechanism, especially during a crisis. Locks with a “classroom security” function address this by allowing teachers to lock the door from the inside using a key, eliminating the need to venture into the hallway.

Enhancing classroom security goes beyond just the lock itself and the functions available with the lockset. Visual lock indicators offer a significant benefit by providing a clear way to confirm the door's status with color coding that is easy to understand. This eliminates any confusion for teachers and allows for a swift response during an emergency. Products like the 1010D Double Cylinder Rim Exit Device from Detex includes an indicator on the inside of the door that allows quick visual identification of the lockout status of the outside trim.



A Higher Level of Security for Higher Education

Due to social media, students are also more aware of threats to their safety than ever. With only 23% of universities reporting on crime statistics according to Complete University Guide Limited, these fears aren't being disproved. For that reason, universities need to approach campus protection beginning with a 3-point play for selecting gates, main entrance doors, and classrooms. By prioritizing modern, effective gate and door hardware solutions, universities and schools can create a comprehensive framework for campus security, enabling a much safer and more secure environment for everyone.

Speak with a Security Expert Who Understands Your Industry.

Discover how security can protect the future of your campus students and personnel.

Contact Tim Shafer

Detex Corporation

Access Security Expert | Sales Leader | Community Advocate

(830) 629-2900

Email: tbs@detex.com

Web: <https://www.detex.com/marketing/landing-pages/campus-security/>