

Inclusive Public Safety Working
Group Meeting Notes
Friday, February 12, 2021
9:00-10:00 am

Agenda

1. Welcome back
2. Introduction of Professor Josef Sorett as additional co-convener
3. Spring 2021 planning and timeline for next steps:
 - Data Gathering completion
 - Formation of the advisory committee
 - Final Report to President Bollinger
4. Advisory committee
5. Data Gathering presentation on findings to date
6. Revisiting the definition of Inclusive Public Safety
7. Addressing wellness checks

1. Welcome back– Ixchel Rosal, Flores Forbes and James McShane welcomed the group back to the first meeting of 2021. Reintroductions were made from all members, stating name and affiliations. Suzanne Goldberg is on leave from the University to serve in the Biden-Harris administration.
2. Professor Josef Sorett was introduced as a new co-convener for the group.
3. Spring 2021 planning and timeline for next steps:

Data Gathering completion: The group is finalizing data collection and wrapping up this leg of the work.

Formation of the advisory committee: As recommended by the December 2020 report, the advisory committee will convene to make recommendations to the University on key learnings and best practices from the group's work going forward.

Final Report to President Bollinger: Conclusions to be submitted by the end of March, with a Final Report sent to the community in early April.

4. Advisory committee – Currently in development, with more information coming soon.
5. Data Gathering presentation on findings to date – Ixchel Rosal presented updates from the subcommittee's interviews and focus groups, including the web form, which collected submissions from students, faculty and staff about their experiences with Public Safety. The group will continue to evaluate the existing data from these sources in tandem with student research and identify themes and recommendations.

6. Revisiting the definition of Inclusive Public Safety – Working group members reviewed the working definition and had the opportunity to provide feedback. The definition will help inform and guide the developing advisory committee.
7. Addressing wellness checks – As a follow-up conversation from the previous meeting, the group discussed the concerns around the front-line response for wellness checks on campus and who students should be referred to when they are in distress. Residential Life staff are normally the first responders for undergraduate wellness checks in residence halls. Public Safety supports revising and approving the process including by having health care professionals involved as first responders. Public Safety responds 24/7/365, and critical emergency calls often happen in the middle of the night or on the weekends. In other instances when Public Safety responds in person, it is usually after several school affiliates have intervened and taken precautionary steps and measures.

Further comments and suggestions on wellness checks:

- Reexamine the definition of wellness checks to expand on the nuances of different circumstances, and outline appropriate interventions for Public Safety and other key resources. Challenges: Wellness checks have a broad definition and include a spectrum of academic and physical concerns, as reported by family, peers, advisors, and residential-life directors.
- Look into the adoption of Wellness Deans by some schools. Challenges: this position has the potential for liability as they are not legally permitted to transport a distressed student to the hospital without consent nor necessarily licensed to practice social work.
- Increase access to social workers and mental health professionals as part of a plainclothes crisis response team. Challenges: Schools are resourced differently and additional resources would be required to rework any current model.
 - Example that was shared: [CAHOOTS](#) (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) in Eugene, Oregon.
- Continue to collaborate with the Students of Concern working group, led by VPSA Joseph Greenwell, and foster partnership with the Mental Health Working Group, which includes mental health experts from Columbia's Medical Center.
- Remain cognizant of the national conversation around policing and how new models of responding to related mental health crises are forming.