

Inclusive Public Safety Advisory Committee (IPSAC)
Meeting Minutes: January 24, 2025

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Chair: Melissa Begg opened the meeting, welcomed attendees, and introduced new member Noa Fay (SIPA student).
- Reviewed IPSAC's charge, reaffirming the committee's role in guiding Public Safety policies and practices to foster an inclusive and equitable campus.
- Conversation Guidelines were reiterated:
 - Challenge the idea, not the person
 - Speak from personal experience
 - Listen to learn and bring curiosity
 - Share airtime

2. Review of Community Feedback (IPSAC Website)

Melissa Begg provided an overview of feedback received via the IPSAC website, categorized into five themes. Committee reviewed and discussed:

1. Safety & Security Concerns
 - Concerns about security staff working in extreme weather, requesting better gear and shelter.
 - Questions about the effectiveness of security measures, citing unauthorized access and inconsistent enforcement.
2. Campus Access & Visitor Policies
 - Support for the closed-campus policy, particularly at night.
 - Frustrations with guest access inefficiencies (e.g., delayed QR codes, unclear processes).
 - Alumni concerns over exclusion from campus access.
 - Faculty and neighbors opposing the closed-campus policy for restricting engagement.
3. Communication & Transparency
 - Criticism of vague updates on restrictions and unclear justifications for policy changes.
 - Complaints about dismissive staff interactions impacting the campus experience.
4. Inclusivity & Fairness in Campus Policies
 - Calls for ensuring fair handling of protests and minimizing external law enforcement involvement.
5. Operational & Structural Concerns
 - CUIMC faculty concerns about unsafe street boilers on West 169th attracting loitering and trash accumulation.

3. VP for Public Safety Report

Presenter: VP Gerald Lewis

Topics covered:

- **Clery Compliance Overview** (Presented by Roberto Pineda Sanchez, Clery Act Compliance Director)
 - The Clery Act requires universities to be transparent about campus safety.
 - The Department of Education (DOE) audits compliance, with potential fines of up to \$71,545 per violation.
 - Geography is a key factor in Clery reporting. Columbia is responsible for reporting crimes within its Clery-reportable geography, though communication with other institutions ensures shared safety efforts. Those locations include:
 - On-campus property (including residence halls)
 - Public property (adjacent sidewalks and streets)
 - Non-campus property (university-owned spaces off-campus)
 - Crime Classification & Reporting:
 - Incidents within Clery-reportable areas are logged within two business days and included in the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report if applicable.
 - Timely Warnings are issued only for ongoing threats within these areas.
- **Fair & Impartial Policing Training** (Presented by Jilliene Rodriguez, SIPA)
 - Developed by Dr. Lorie Fridell and facilitated by Public Safety.
 - Training addressed implicit and explicit bias and included de-escalation techniques.
 - All Public Safety staff and contract guards have participated or will participate in this training.
 - Notable takeaways included insights into the psychology of bias in law enforcement interactions.
- **Customer Service & De-Escalation Training**
 - Public Safety staff to undergo Ritz-Carlton service training to improve interactions with students and the community.
 - Continued focus on peace officers as support personnel, not law enforcement replacements.

4. Discussion: Public Safety's 2024 Annual Report

- Report includes policies, statistics, and available resources.
- Efforts made to ensure the report is concise and accessible while remaining comprehensive.
- Greater emphasis on policy transparency rather than solely focusing on Public Safety operations.
- Ensuring the inclusion of smaller campuses (e.g., Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory).
- Discussion on crime reporting:
 - Scooters & e-bikes now classified as motor vehicles in crime statistics.

- Increase in Title IX cases possibly linked to post-pandemic social reintegration.
- Including hazing in future reporting, as it was recently added to the Clery Act.

5. Discussion: Open Forum Design

- Committee discussed the possibility of holding an open forum once per semester to foster dialogue between Public Safety and the campus community.
- Concerns raised about format:
 - Avoiding theater-style or stadium seating to encourage engagement rather than passive observation.
 - Ensuring community-driven conversations rather than reactive Q&A sessions.
- Proposed structure:
 - Small group discussions facilitated by IPSAC members.
 - Clear ground rules to maintain constructive dialogue.
 - Online portal for anonymous questions.
 - Rebranding as “Inclusive Public Safety Community Conversation” to reflect a more open, engaging approach.

6. Updates from EVP David Greenberg

- Campus Access Committee (faculty, staff, and students) meeting biweekly to discuss long-term campus reopening strategies.
- Adjustments underway, including modified gate access during certain hours.
- Consideration of peace officers’ expanded role in protests or classroom disruptions - concerns raised about over-policing versus maintaining campus safety.

7. Additional Topics Discussed

- Security response to a recent classroom incident. Public Safety looking at response time and communication about faculty reporting options.
- Lionsafe app offers emergency reporting tools. IPSAC to explore ways to increase student awareness.
- Quarterly Public Safety Reports to be shared with student leaders for greater transparency.