

IPSAC Meeting Notes

October 11, 2024

Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions, and aims for our time
- Review and discussion of committee's charge:
 - "The Inclusive Public Safety Advisory Committee's charge is to provide guidance to Public Safety on how to enhance their practices and policies and further foster an inclusive campus community. The Committee will meet with Public Safety representatives to discuss issues of importance to the Columbia community and make recommendations that support inclusion and belonging on Columbia's campuses. Public Safety will work in partnership with the Advisory Committee to obtain information about campus sentiment and share relevant policy and practice changes to ensure they align with the University's commitments to safety and anti-racism."
- Review of feedback from IPSAC portal and discussion with Student Senator
- Continued discussion of implementation of enhancements
- Guest EVP David Greenberg
- Full Group Discussion
- Next Steps and close

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Melissa Begg opened the meeting with introductions and acknowledged the new members. She highlighted the focus of the meeting, which is to continue discussions around President Armstrong's charge to Public Safety to advance our efforts to create a multi-disciplinary team of professionals who can support our campus.
- Conversation guidelines were reiterated to foster a constructive discussion environment.

2. Review of Charge

- **Thoughts Discussed**
 - Adding language that encompasses oversight beyond Public Safety as the scope of the committee has broadened - perhaps adding in words like climate or environment
 - Adding anti-bigotry in addition to anti-racism

3. Website Portal Feedback & Outreach from SAC Senator

Recent Feedback Summary

Heightened Surveillance and Negative Experiences: While most respondents expressed discomfort with the increased presence of public safety officers and heightened surveillance measures, there were some who reported feeling safer as a result of the enhanced security. However, many still voiced concerns that the added security has negatively impacted their campus experience.

Negative Interactions with Security Personnel: Multiple respondents shared specific negative encounters with security. Some reported feeling objectified, profiled, or finding officers rude and dismissive. These negative interactions have left many feeling unwelcome and frustrated by the additional security measures.

- Students reported that colleagues feel uncomfortable or have had negative interactions, examples included:
 - Discomfort at first year residence dorm halls
 - Catcalling from APEX security
 - POC profiling/having to show license at gates to confirm identity matches CUID card, when others didn't
 - No consistency in screening
- There may be a part of campus that is not comfortable or reluctant to use feedback forms
- Perhaps creating more intentional spaces for students to share their experiences could help
 - They may feel more comfortable telling other students (maybe those on the committee) about their concerns
 - Some student committee members already hold office hours to encourage students to come talk to them
- Some have mandated reporter responsibilities, they must report even if they become aware of a situation or incident with 1 degree of separation
- Student leadership could use their direct communication pathways (emails used to push out surveys) to encourage feedback

Lack of Enforcement of Campus Policies: Some respondents expressed frustration with the inconsistent enforcement of campus policies by officers. One specific example involved a staff member witnessing a man entering campus with a dog, despite university policy prohibiting pets. They emphasized that such policies should be enforced and that the lack of professionalism was disheartening.

- Perhaps public or the website policies are unclear about what pets are or are not allowed on campus
- Support pets are allowed, some students on campus have these in their residence halls
- Pets must be leashed

Rising Daytime Crime: Concern about an increase in daytime crime, particularly around the Manhattanville and Morningside campuses. Some individuals questioned whether the university is doing enough to address these safety threats, calling for more patrols or improved safety measures when traveling between or around campuses.

- Is there data on this?
- Students voiced that having Public Safety respond first is not ideal as some feel uncomfortable with their presence, but they also don't want to escalate to NYPD either
- Response time for a Safety Escort has been an issue (estimated 10 mins, but ended up waiting 20 to 40 mins) or having to call multiple times

Student Senator Outreach

- Student group expressed safety concern to a Student Senator
- Escort service/safe passage open to whom? Everyone in the Columbia community

- Emphasized commitment to safety of all at CU
- Melissa Begg shared a contact name in Public Safety with that group

4. David Greenberg, EVP for Facilities & Operations

- **Continued implementation of support team**
 - Name will be Columbia Community Support Team (CCST)
 - Planning Group: Public Safety, General Counsel, Columbia Health, University HR, Ixchel Rosal, and Anne Waters
 - CCST is expected to be a four-person team consisting of: Public Safety supervisor, Public Safety officer, First Responder Community Health individual (EMS type person), Student Affairs specialist
 - 24/7 service to serve all campuses (looking at how many teams they would need)
 - Preference for CU employees & not contract staff (maybe some contract at first, but ideally CU affiliates)
 - Public Safety, University Life, and Columbia Health would work logistics
 - They will monitor feedback to improve performance
 - Intention is to bring onsite staffing that have more tailored expertise, who are ready to respond from a multi-disciplinary aspect to issues
 - Team skilled in de-escalation, mediation, negotiation, first responder experience
 - Work in conjunction with Public Safety and other response units
 - Example of incidents they would respond to: wellness checks, distressed or bias incidents, labor actions, other disruptions
 - UPenn, Oregon State, and Johns Hopkins have similar teams that we are learning from
 - They are looking at job descriptions, titles, and procedures for the CCST through October/into early November

5. Discussion

- What would the CCST being active look like, would it be a hotline?
 - Could be direct call and dispatch where Public Safety is onsite then calling CCST; or, Public Safety getting a call and then dispatching CCST
- CCST would have a specific training program because of skill expectations
- Other universities that have implemented similar teams have had positive outcomes
- Comments on the structure of CCST
 - Concern that composition wouldn't be much different than Public Safety (PS) when you have 50% of team from PS where there is general mistrust with PS, and intent for team was to be differentiated from PS
 - Giving PS power to triage how this team is used is concerning to some
 - Note that there are different pathways to contact CPS and SVR team rather than just through PS
 - Pending decision to add a Certified Peace Officer to CCST
 - The idea of not having CCST live under Public Safety was proposed
 - Suggestion that CCST should go through rules training and review of free speech/language training
 - CCST would have ability to remove someone from the situation, or from campus based on the incident

- Examples of when CCST could be used
 - CPS type support, mental health concern
 - Physical altercation between two students
- Flow chart for dispatch
 - Maybe a visual for students of the above
 - Transparent communication on what teams are dispatched when students call regarding a certain circumstance
- Public Safety needs to reroute seamlessly
- What capacity would this team have in terms of enforcing policies and disciplinary action options for students who are inciting physical violence or using language unwanted on campus?
 - De-escalate incident, then a report is made after interaction (currently part of processes, and will continue)
 - Maybe student support position also serves as a delegate
- How often do physical altercations occur on or near campus? IPSAC wants to review Public Safety Annual Report

6. **Next Steps and Closing Remarks**

- Future meetings will be held on:
 - November 15, 2024
 - December 13, 2024
- **Action Items:**
 - Members to send suggestions on language edits to the IPSAC charge
 - Public Safety to provide their annual report for a committee to review frequency of physical altercations, crime rates nearby, etc. as it relates to concerns of IPSAC