

Inclusive Public Safety Working
Group Meeting Notes
Friday, December 4, 2020
9:00-10:00 am

Agenda

1. Welcome
 2. Brief reports from Subcommittee Chairs
 3. Review of the group's December report draft
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1. Welcome – Suzanne Goldberg, Flores Forbes and James McShane welcomed and thanked the group for their time and the progress made so far in producing the draft report and shaping the process to better implement Inclusive Public Safety on campus.
 2. Brief Reports from Subcommittee Chairs

Data Gathering

The data gathering subcommittee is currently sorting through the over 150 responses of the web form and identifying trends and themes in the data. They are still scheduling focus groups, and their work will continue into the new semester. For the December progress report, the subcommittee is also incorporating a review of a demand letter circulated and signed by students before this committee's formulation.

Training and Other Capacity Building

Members of training and other capacity building subcommittee have continued to attend and evaluate trainings of both the proprietary guards, which are hired through the University, as well as the contract guards, which are employed through Allied Universal Security Services. In the report, the subcommittee addresses recommendations for the trainings, including more transparent communication with the community on the extensive training process and systems to incorporate feedback from Columbia's diverse network.

Comparative Research

The comparative research subcommittee has been in dialogue with peer institutions. Given the national climate, many schools are having similar conversations about where to focus and how to develop best practices, regardless of whether there was an incident on their campus. The observations thus far have focused on similar key areas of wellness checks and mental health response, officer uniforms, staffing of student events, and transparency and communication of information.

3. Review of the group's December report draft
 - The final report will go out to the community, along with the subcommittee reports which will provide further information and context for those who are interested.

- The 13-page draft document was circulated prior to the meeting. The group discussed the process for revising it, with attention spent on collecting feedback on the observations and recommendations segment for the duration of the meeting.
- Points of discussion:
 - Continuing recognition that individuals' and communities' experiences of safety vary and of the importance of those perceptions in shaping people's sense of safety
 - The need to strengthen awareness (and address gaps in awareness) in the community around the full spectrum of work Public Safety provides
 - Importance of understanding the full spectrum of facts related to proprietary and contract guards as the Working Group continues its discussions, including cost differentials and differing managerial needs
 - Acknowledgment that some recommendations require funding that might not be accessible and strategizing about what can reasonably be accomplished given the resources available
 - Extended discussion of the role of Public Safety officers in the de-escalation of mental health crises, wellness checks and other sensitive situations, in partnership with student affairs staff and other campus offices. This discussion is also taking place outside of the Working Group with staff who work together on these responses
 - Noting of the variety of considerations to be taken into account in discussions about uniforms, including visibility, effectiveness in promoting security and sense of safety, cost and more.
- Discussions and suggestions will continue in the coming weeks leading up to the report's publication in mid-December.