



University Senate TRANSMITTAL FORM

Senate Document #:	12-13-48
Title:	Campus Safety Report 2013
Presenter:	Marcy Marinelli, Chair, Campus Affairs Committee
Date of SEC Review:	April 8, 2013
Date of Senate Review:	April 17, 2013
Voting (highlight one):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On resolutions or recommendations one by one, or 2. In a single vote 3. To endorse entire report 4. For information only
Statement of Issue:	<p>The Senate Bylaws (Article 6 Section 2) designate the Campus Affairs Committee as a liaison between the campus community and the University Police on matters of safety and security. The committee is formally charged with gathering input from the community on safety and security issues. The committee holds an annual campus safety forum to fulfill this charge. The 2012-2013 Safety Forum took place on Tuesday, March 12th from 4:00pm – 6:00pm in the Stamp Student Union, with a focus on personal safety on and off campus.</p>
Relevant Policy # & URL:	Not Applicable.
Recommendation:	The Campus Affairs Committee presents the 2013 Campus Safety Report to the Senate as an informational item.
Committee Work:	<p>In February 2013, the Campus Affairs Committee decided that the annual safety forum would focus on personal safety on and off campus, with an emphasis from panelists on tips for staying safe and resources available on campus. The panel for the event included Chief David Mitchell from the University Department of Public Safety / University Police, Major Rob Brewer from the Prince George's County Police, Samantha Zwerling from the Student Government Association (SGA), David Colon Cabrera from the Graduate Student Government (GSG), and John Zacker from the Behavioral Evaluation and Threat Assessment (BETA) Team. The event was co-sponsored by the SGA and the GSG.</p>
Alternatives:	Not Applicable.
Risks:	Not Applicable.
Financial Implications:	Not Applicable.
Further Approvals Required:	Not Applicable.

Senate Campus Affairs Committee

Senate Document # 12-13-48

Senate Campus Affairs Committee Annual Safety Report

April 2013

BACKGROUND

In describing the standing committees of the University Senate, the Senate Bylaws (Article 6 Section 2) designate the Campus Affairs Committee as a liaison between the campus community and the University Police on matters of safety and security. The committee is formally charged with gathering input from the community on safety and security issues. To fulfill this charge, the committee holds an annual campus safety forum. The purpose of the forum is to provide a venue for community members to voice their concerns and interact with representatives from the University Department of Public Safety and other offices.

The 2012-2013 Annual Safety Forum took place on Tuesday, March 12th, 2013 from 4:00pm – 6:00pm in the Stamp Student Union, with a focus on personal safety on and off campus.

COMMITTEE WORK

The Campus Affairs Committee decided upon a theme for the safety forum at its meeting on February 15th, 2013. The committee considered its previous ideas and reflected on the greatest concerns facing the University, especially in light of an incident a few days earlier in which two UMD students died and one student was injured. The committee discussed the importance of personal safety and how little community members know about critical services available to them. Committee members stressed the need to cultivate a culture of care at the University, where community members watch out for each other and where those who need help know who to ask or where to go. Such an environment would challenge misconceptions about safety and could break the stigma of seeking help. Ultimately, the committee decided upon a broader theme for the safety forum focusing on personal safety on and off campus, with an emphasis from panelists on tips for staying safe and resources available on campus.

The committee invited representatives from the University Department of Public Safety / University Police, the Student Government Association (SGA), the Graduate Student Government (GSG), the Behavioral Evaluation and Threat Assessment (BETA) Team, and the Prince George's County Police to serve on the panel at the safety forum. In the hopes of broadening the reach of the event, the committee also asked the SGA and GSG to co-sponsor the event. Both groups agreed and assisted in logistical and financial planning for the event.

PROTECT THE SHELL: THE SENATE CAMPUS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ANNUAL SAFETY FORUM

Campus Affairs Committee Chair Marcy Marinelli opened the safety forum. She explained that the committee is charged with gathering information on safety and security and that it sponsors the forum with the goal of sharing information about campus services and creating a space to hear concerns from the campus community about safety and security. She thanked the SGA and GSG for their co-sponsorship of the event, and introduced each of the panelists in turn.

Panel Discussion

❖ Chief David Mitchell, Director, University Department of Public Safety

Chief Mitchell opened his remarks by acknowledging what a difficult time it has been for the University in the wake of the shooting incident in February. He expressed that the University must recognize the terrible loss it endured. He noted that the campus is still healing and voiced his hope that such conflict would not be seen at UMD again.

Chief Mitchell noted that since February, the University Police has seen an increase in calls reporting suspicious activity. He welcomed the increase, and stressed that the University Police can only respond to incidents they know about, so they encourage community members to call when they feel it might be appropriate. He discussed crime in general, and noted that crime has gone down over the last five years, and it is continuing to decrease. He shared that the largest concern on campus remains the theft of electronic devices, especially Apple products and cell phones.

In his remarks, Chief Mitchell stressed the importance of saying something in situations where something is, or might be, wrong. He spoke about the Community on Patrol program and asked for the continued partnership of those present in working to keep the campus safe through this program. He urged that if someone begins acting in a manner that causes concern, individuals should not hesitate to tell someone, whether that be the University Police, the BETA Team, or someone else. He stressed that the primary interest of the police for individuals in distress is that they get the assistance they need. He impressed upon those present that each community member has a vested interest in making the campus a safe and secure environment.

❖ Major Rob Brewer, Commander, District 1 Station, Prince Georges County Police

Major Rob Brewer serves as Commander of District 1 in Prince George's County, an area that includes College Park. He explained that the PG County Police do not have jurisdiction on campus, but do have primary jurisdiction over the areas surrounding campus. He noted that the PG County Police work closely with the University Police, and PG County values its relationship with UMD.

Major Brewer discussed safety and crime in the county, including in College Park. He noted that the PG Police are seeing an increase in theft, particularly from automobiles. The department is conducting an awareness campaign to encourage individuals to keep valuables out of cars and move items out of view. He stated that of particular concern are large parking lots that seem to be targeted for thefts.

Major Brewer assured the audience that College Park is a very safe community. As it is on-campus, crime has been decreasing in the areas surrounding campus and recently reached its lowest point since the mid-1980s. He noted, however, that there are always incidents that cause alarm, and with social media, there is a greater awareness when events occur. He indicated that such awareness in the community is important and positive.

❖ John Zacker, Chair, the BETA Team

John Zacker began his remarks by explaining the history of groups like the BETA Team around the country. Many universities around the country have created teams with the purpose of evaluating situations and assessing potential threats. Groups that evaluate behavior on college campuses began to develop in response to notable incidents on campuses, such as the Virginia Tech shooting in 2007. The Team at UMD has been in existence for eight years.

The BETA Team is comprised of its chair, who is also the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs; the Director of the Mental Health Service, who is a licensed psychiatrist; the Director of the Counseling Center, who is a licensed psychologist; the Director of the Office of Student Conduct; and a trained threat assessor from the University Police. The team meets weekly to evaluate situations that have arisen and occasionally invites faculty, staff, or students to consult with the Team on specific situations. The Team assesses what intervention might be appropriate and takes action when necessary.

Dr. Zacker stressed that the BETA Team is meant to be on call in situations involving non-specific, concerning behavior in an individual known to the person reporting. Most of the cases seen by the BETA Team come from faculty and staff concerned about how someone is behaving in the classroom or at work, particularly if the behavior has changed in a concerning manner. He stressed that the BETA Team is not a substitute for the police in the case of an immediate threat of physical harm.

Dr. Zacker echoed Chief Mitchell's message of calling someone and telling any individual of authority when something does not seem right. He conceded that, especially for students, calling the police seems like an extreme step. He stressed that the University community should reinforce the notion that individuals should never be afraid to call the police. In lieu of the police, Dr. Zacker advised calling anyone of authority to allow the situation to be evaluated.

❖ Samantha Zwerling, President, Student Government Association

Samantha Zwerling discussed many of the initiatives the Student Government Association has been working on related to safety. She discussed the safety walks in the fall and spring semester, which involve participation of the University Police, the PG County Police, and stakeholders like Pepco and Facilities Management. The group walks around campus and identifies areas where students do not feel safe and discuss solutions like fixing lights or adding crosswalks to busy intersections. The walks serve as an opportunity for students to give feedback on safety and for those who are responsible for things like lights and grounds to take steps to address problems.

The SGA has also been working on improving Nite Ride. Nite Ride provides free rides to community members to areas not included on the evening service bus and shuttle routes. The SGA has been working with DOTs to improve the services, while understanding that there is only so much money in the budget to do so. As an example of a tangible outcome of this work, Ms. Zwerling discussed the new area for motor pool in east campus. Many students felt unsafe walking to this area at night, and the SGA worked with DOTs to extend the range of Nite Ride to take students there at night.

Ms. Zwerling noted that the SGA works very closely with the University and PG County Police, and that she spends works with the City of College Park as well to address quality of life and safety issues both on and off campus. She noted the SGA's concern that the City of College Park view students as residents of College Park, not just as students, and that student safety is a priority.

Ms. Zwerling noted a few issues in the University Senate that the SGA supports. In 2011, the Senate passed the Responsible Action Policy, which protects a student under the influence of alcohol who calls for medical assistance from disciplinary sanctions for the possession or use of alcohol, even if the student happens to be underage. The policy promotes taking action in situations where medical help is needed. Ms. Zwerling noted that the Senate recently approved an expansion of the policy to include drugs, and stated her view that this shows the University's commitment to keeping students safe. Ms. Zwerling also noted that a proposal has been submitted to the University Senate related to sexual assault training for students, and noted that she felt such training would have an important impact on understanding and reporting of sexual assault on campus.

In discussing the crime alerts, Ms. Zwerling noted that the SGA has heard a lot of reports about the frequency of alerts. She noted that crime has gone down, but the alerts raise the question of actual safety versus perceived safety. She suggested that the frequency of alerts sometimes makes students feel less safe. The SGA is concerned about this perception, although it also recognizes that students need to be informed of incidents occurring on and off campus.

❖ David Colon Cabrera, President, the Graduate Student Government

David Colon Cabrera noted that the GSG is constantly working on safety issues, particularly because graduate students are a different population than the rest of the campus community. Most graduate students do not live on campus, so many of the concerns heard by the GSG are from commuter students.

Mr. Colon Cabrera discussed the GSG's safety walks, and noted that there has been a focus on the areas surrounding campus near where many graduate students live, since many safety concerns have to do with traveling to and from campus. These walks have resulted in improvements in lighting and sidewalks. For instance, the area by Graduate Gardens housing and Adelphi Road can be a dangerous area. As a result of the safety walks, there is now a crosswalk across Adelphi for students to use.

Recently, the GSG has been discussing how mental health and safety are related and how the GSG can contribute to the conversation about mental health at the University. He noted again that graduate students are different here as well; graduate students are often older than undergraduates, and in many cases are married or living with roommates in different areas. The GSG wants to start conversations about domestic issues and how to address roommate and partner safety situations. He cited the experience of a student in calling the police to report a domestic disturbance next door to explain how difficult it can be to make a call in these cases. The GSG wants to stress that safety is everyone's responsibility and is a part of being considerate of others.

Open Forum

❖ The BETA Team and University Police

During the open forum, a few people asked questions about the BETA Team and the University Police. One person noted that while most of the reports to the BETA Team are from faculty, students are those who would be most likely to notice signs since they would be spending the most time with peers. He asked if there were ways to educate the University community on how to recognize issues. Chair Marinelli noted that the Counseling Center does presentations called "Helping Students in Distress," which outlines signs to look for and what to do, but the presentations are not offered to students because there has never been interest. The person noted that in this situation, these are things students should know about, but it may not be something students would actively look for. Chief Mitchell noted that this information was important to know, and suggested that the Police could create a video about signs of distress and behaviors that cause concern, to be made available online.

An audience member noted that while some students feel hesitant to call 911 or unsure of whether an issue warrants calling 911, many would probably feel comfortable calling the BETA Team. However, the BETA phone number is available only during business hours. He suggested that with an around-the-clock hotline to refer students to the appropriate place at all hours, students may feel more comfortable calling and may better remember who to call if there was one number. He also noted that many students do not know about the BETA Team, so aggressive marketing of the Team and who to call in what circumstances would be great.

Another audience member asked about the Community on Patrol program and whether it has seen evidence of more calls or whether it is working, and to what extent those calls are transferred over to the BETA Team. Chief Mitchell explained that the Community on Patrol program is focused more on suspicious behavior of individuals you may not know, regardless of whether they are students. Chief Mitchell noted that the Police wants to receive these calls and is encouraged by the increase. The BETA Team is focused more on behavior of individuals you do know, in the context of being a student or a roommate or through some other type of relationship. Calls for the BETA Team could come in to the Police and they would be forwarded on to the Team. He recognized the concern about having too many numbers and not knowing who to call when, and suggested that he would work with Dr. Zacker on a 24 hour call reception strategy.

Dr. Zacker noted that it is important to understand that these groups all work in consultation with each other, and if one group is aware of something, the others will be informed. In situations of imminent harm or danger, including situations involving weapons, calls should immediately be made to the Police. In less well-defined situations with unusual behavior, calls should be made to the BETA Team.

❖ Mental Health Services

An audience member asked about the University's plans regarding mental health services on campus, particularly with the Help Center. The individual noted that students see the Help Center as the first place to go. Chief Mitchell stated that President Loh is in the process of increasing the number of mental health professionals on campus. Dr. Zacker noted that this is a challenging dilemma being faced by institutions nationally. Discerning what is an appropriate level of service, and how long one should wait for service, are challenging issues that are being evaluated at UMD. In addition, the Counseling Center is currently searching for more staff psychologists, and has been discussing ways that divisions could work together more effectively in cases where students do not have a critical need but are waiting for service.

In discussing mental health services, Ms. Zwerling noted that the SGA is looking at the issue of levels of service and has been discussing the issues with the Help Center. She noted her view that the University is putting its students at risk by the current staffing levels, and the University is at risk by having a student body that is suffering in mind and in grades. She noted that the SGA wants to focus on early interventions in the hopes of ameliorating conditions before anything rises to the level of an emergency situation.

Mr. Colon Cabrera stated that the GSG is very involved in these discussions as well. He noted the large attrition rate of Ph.D. students, and cited the lack of support and issues related to mental health as reasons for attrition. He pointed out that the University is partially limited because these services are to a certain extent funded through student fees. There is only so much that can be done with fees and he suggested changing to a system that is not so reliant on fees for funding for mental health services.

❖ Police Jurisdiction

A few individuals present asked about the jurisdiction of the UMD and PG County Police. Major Brewer provided an overview of their jurisdictions. The PG County Police have primary jurisdiction in parts of College Park outside of campus, which means they are the primary law enforcement provider. UMD Police has concurrent jurisdiction in that area, which means they can take police action, but when an issue comes up and they respond, PG County Police has to decide whether to take over the issue or allow UMD Police to handle it. Major Brewer noted that the two units have a good relationship and if UMD Police come across a situation, PG Police usually let them handle it to the extent possible. On campus, UMD police have primary jurisdiction, but if PG County Police saw something, they could take action because the jurisdiction is not exclusive. There are talks now of expanding the UMD Police jurisdiction, but Major Brewer did not expand on details of that process. Major Brewer also noted that there is quite a bit of

police presence in College Park – the UMD and PG County Police are present, but also Metro Transit Police, Maryland Park Police, and State of Maryland Police.

❖ Transportation Safety

Chief Mitchell noted that one concern the University Police face has to do with the UMD shuttle buses. The Police know that there are people who ride the shuttles who are not students – most of these individuals pose no problem, but some can pose a threat to the community. The Police are working with DOTs to address the issue by checking IDs to ride the shuttle buses. Members of the panel noted that appropriate IDs would include IDs from cities that UMD has agreements with – so, for example, individuals who live in Hyattsville will still be able to ride the shuttle buses per an agreement with the University. Programs are being worked out to provide IDs to residents so they can board buses.

An audience member asked about checking IDs when driving on campus at night. Chief Mitchell noted that license plates are read by cameras on campus, but also pointed out that while UMD is a very open campus, it is staffed at night so that the Police are there to check IDs and vehicles. The purpose of this is so that students can be assured that checks are happening, and so that people who want to come to campus with ill intentions know that they have been monitored.

❖ Safety Tips

An audience member asked the Police what the biggest issues students can help address, and what students can do to be safer on campus. Chief Mitchell gave four main tips. First, he noted that situational awareness is key. He advised that everyone on campus be aware of their surroundings. Second, he advised taking care of personal property to guard against theft. Third, he encouraged people to call the police when police might be able to help. In cases where they are not going to be of help, they still do not mind being called. He noted that any opportunities they have to intervene through 911 or through the BETA Team are positive opportunities. Fourth, he advised not engaging in high-risk behavior. He noted that in cases with alcohol, individuals should be careful not to consume alcohol in a manner that renders them unconscious or unsafe. He stressed that as a University, the community should look after each other, and that is part of what the Police seek to do.

❖ Additional Comments and Suggestions.

A campus community member shared her perspective that the lack of personal awareness on campus was a large problem, and suggested paying more attention to surroundings and being more careful when walking alone at night. She noted that other campuses have a Rape Aggression Defense Program and asked why UMD does not have one. A police officer present and familiar with the program noted that UMD did have one at one point, but it was not well received. Students who signed up for the program did not attend, and it was a large time commitment for officers and for students. Chief Mitchell noted that he would be willing to reinstate such a program if there was an interest, and suggested that the SGA and GSG try to gauge whether men and women on campus would be interested in making self-defense classes more accessible.

An audience member suggested that there are universities that have driving services offered by athletic groups. She noted that at her previous institution, during periods of high partying, athletics would provide cars and athletes to be on call to drive students home from parties for free or in exchange for a donation that went to the team. She suggested looking into expanding similar options to get students involved in programs to avoid drunk driving. Panel members noted that there are businesses that operate with similar models. An audience member shared that the University used to have a service called Terrapin Taxi, which had a \$5 charge for a ride within a mile of the University. The service was disbanded because there

was not enough interest. Ms. Zwerling stated that the fact that there was no interest shocked her, and suggested that perhaps the University could discuss whether to reinstate such a program.

A question was raised about the police auxiliary and what the Police can do to raise awareness of the program that provides free escorts on campus. Chief Mitchell stated that the Police are very proud of the student police aides, and noted that they do a great job at escorting people at night and helping with other things like directing traffic on game days. He noted that he always advises students to walk in groups at night, but in cases where it is late at night and someone feels unsafe, he always encourages them to call the Police to ask for an escort. The service does not charge. He noted that the Police are working with the Division of Information Technology to help advertise and manage the escort program. He also suggested that this might be a topic that he could send out as part of the Police blog to remind students about what safety services exist on campus.

One person asked what options student groups have in planning safety events and who they can contact with safety concerns or questions. Chief Mitchell encouraged her to contact the police or any other group, either online or after the forum. He noted that the Police love to do demonstrations and speakers bureaus, and stated that they are important because the Police learn from them too. The Police will provide information and events on any subject discussed at the forum, from date rape and sexual violence to consumption of alcohol.

CONCLUSION

In closing, Chair Marinelli thanked the panelists for their time. She noted that the key takeaway message for her was that the University community needs to focus on taking care of each other.

The Campus Affairs Committee met on March 28th, 2013 and discussed the forum. It reviewed some of the information shared at the forum related to the BETA Team, the successful relationship University Police has with the PG County Police, and resources on campus. In the execution of the forum, committee members discussed attendance at the forum and many members noted that they hoped for higher attendance, especially from students. The committee discussed the difficulty in trying to get people excited and interested in safety. Members noted that the forum might be too broad, and perhaps a more topical and specific approach could draw more attention. Past forums have been very specific, like one directed at motor scooter safety and another at sexual harassment.

The committee discussed the logistics of the event, and things to do differently in future forums. The committee suggests considering the appropriateness of the timing of the event. The timing is difficult to arrange, and a committee member noted that some campus constituents could be disadvantaged by it. For instance, students and student athletes may be disadvantaged by a 4pm-6pm time slot. The committee also suggests considering new marketing strategies for the event. The marketing of the event was largely based on social media, which was positive, but committee members suggested finding new ways to alert the campus community to be more visible to potential attendees. The committee also discussed the overall structure of the event and suggested rethinking it to see if there might be a better way to get the feedback the committee wants. Members discussed asking the SGA and GSG to be more active in the planning and structure of the event, or tying the forum to another standing event related to safety.