



University Senate TRANSMITTAL FORM

Senate Document #:	13-14-30
Title:	Campus Safety Report 2014
Presenter:	Willie Brown, Chair, Campus Affairs Committee
Date of SEC Review:	April 3, 2014
Date of Senate Review:	April 17, 2014
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 informational only
Statement of Issue:	In describing the standing committees of the University Senate, the Senate Bylaws 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 on an annual basis. The 2013-2014 Campus Affairs Committee engaged in various efforts to gather information on safety concerns throughout the academic year.
Relevant Policy # & URL:	Not Applicable.
Recommendation:	The Campus Affairs Committee presents the 2014 Campus Safety Report to the Senate as an informational item.
Committee Work:	The Campus Affairs Committee addressed its charge by designing and disseminating a survey to identify the top safety and security concerns experienced by each constituency, and by conducting additional outreach to Facilities Management to receive feedback from non-exempt staff, who were not well represented in the survey. The committee reviewed all results and identified commonalities between faculty, staff, and students in concerns related to safety and security at night, building security, pedestrian and traffic safety, and police presence, preparedness, and alerts.
Alternatives:	Not Applicable.
Risks:	Not Applicable.
Financial Implications:	Not Applicable.
Further Approvals Required:	Not Applicable.

Senate Campus Affairs Committee

Senate Document # 13-14-30

Campus Safety Report 2014

April 2014

BACKGROUND

In describing the standing committees of the University Senate, the Senate Bylaws (Article 6.2.e) 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 on an annual basis. The 2013-2014 Campus Affairs Committee engaged in various efforts to gather information on safety concerns throughout the academic year.

COMMITTEE WORK

The Campus Affairs Committee began discussing how to address its annual charge in September of 2013, and worked on the charge throughout the academic year. The committee discussed previous efforts, in which the committee held an annual campus safety forum each spring. In past years, concerns had been raised regarding the efficacy of the safety forums, and the committee considered whether holding a safety forum would be appropriate this year. Concerns were raised related to the logistics of the events, in trying to find a time and place to hold a forum that would be convenient for all constituents, and members noted that safety forums have not been successful in generating interest in safety issues in past years and have not drawn great attendance. The committee also considered the difficulty in identifying a clear topic that draws interest and discussion from faculty, staff, and students. After much discussion, the committee determined that it would fulfill its charge this year through other means, by disseminating a survey to identify key concerns and by doing additional outreach to specific constituent groups.

CAMPUS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SAFETY SURVEY

Survey Design

The Campus Affairs Committee designed a simple survey tool (an example of which can be found in Appendix 1) to be sent to all Senators and all Senate committee members. The committee determined that targeting Senators and Senate committee members would be an effective way to gather broad information, as these representatives are elected or appointed to represent a larger constituency within the University. The survey asked representatives to identify their constituency, and provide their impression of the three main safety and security concerns experienced by their constituency. The committee felt that identifying the constituency of the respondents was critical to being able to compare responses from faculty, staff, and students. The committee hoped to identify whether there were significant differences in the concerns and experiences of each constituency, and intended to find commonalities between faculty, staff, and students. The committee also wished to ensure that no constituent groups were left out of its efforts to gather information, and used the constituency identification to determine whether additional outreach would be necessary to gather information from any one constituent group.

The survey consisted of four questions, and was hosted on the Senate website for a two-week period in November 2013. The survey was emailed to all Senators and Senate committee members, and the survey was announced at the November 13th Senate meeting, where Senators were encouraged to participate.

Survey Results

The committee's survey received 80 responses from faculty, staff, undergraduate, and graduate students. The top concerns noted did not vary greatly by constituency, and in reviewing the results, the committee categorized the comments received into five main issues.

❖ Safety and Security at Night

The most frequent comments gathered in the survey were related to safety concerns walking around campus at night. These concerns were expressed by faculty, staff, and students as the top concern for each constituency. Responses from faculty members note concerns walking to parking lots after late classes, and often ask for more lighting or more emergency phones on paths frequently traveled late at night (examples include paths from the Metro to campus and in the Regents Drive garage). Staff responses cite concerns for staff who work late at night or early in the morning and often work and walk on campus in the dark. Many graduate student responses explain that these students often work late into the night in labs and in buildings that are far away from the center of campus. Respondents note that graduate students often have to walk far to their vehicles or to neighborhoods off campus, and some suggest that services that are currently available (like police auxiliary escorts and late-night bus routes) may not be well advertised in the graduate student community, and other services like Nite Ride are not currently serving the graduate student community because they do not include off-campus graduate student housing. Undergraduate students echo concerns related to walking to cars late at night and to nearby housing, and particularly cite concerns about Route 1 and surrounding areas in the hours past midnight on the weekends.

The Campus Affairs Committee reviewed these concerns and was surprised by the widespread concern among all constituent groups. In discussing ways to address these concerns, the committee discussed the safety walks coordinated each year by the Student Government Association (SGA) and Graduate Student Government (GSG) as an effective means of identifying specific issues and addressing them with the appropriate authorities. The committee also discussed the suggestions of adding more lighting to campus. Members agreed that additional lighting may be appropriate, but also noted that the University should explore smart solutions for lighting, rather than simply increasing lighting in general.

❖ Theft and Building Security

Many of the comments in the survey raised concerns related to theft, safety of valuables, and the security in offices and buildings. These concerns were most prevalent among staff, but were also expressed by many graduate student respondents and by some faculty members as well. Many staff members suggested that offices and buildings should be assessed to determine whether they are as secure as they ought to be, in terms of doors locking appropriately and having secure places in each office to store valuables away from pedestrian traffic. Graduate students expressed similar concerns, and noted that these students are often in buildings late at night and find that the buildings are not as secure as they should be. Graduate student respondents suggested putting into place more card-swipe access for buildings, or for labs or other areas within buildings that stay open at night. Faculty members expressed concerns about buildings that are open at all times, and suggested that more measures should be taken to increase security in these locations (via security presence, cameras, or other measures) to protect the faculty, staff, and students who use these facilities at night.

The committee discussed these concerns and agreed that assessments of the safety of individual buildings and offices could be very useful in identifying areas of concern and taking steps to resolve issues. The committee discussed experiences in McKeldin Library as an example, and suggested that a review of safety exits in such large buildings could identify key issues. The committee also discussed concerns raised in the survey and in the experiences of committee members related to the lack of cell phone and Wi-Fi reception in various buildings across campus. A few respondents mentioned this concern, and a committee member from Athletics explained that this is a constant issue in the Comcast Center as well. The committee agreed that the lack of consistent reception is a serious safety concern, and suggested that these buildings and offices may need to be reviewed by the Division of Information Technology, which can perform an audit on buildings to measure cell receptivity and take steps to boost signals.

❖ Pedestrian and Traffic Safety

Safety issues related to walking, biking, driving, and parking on campus were noted throughout the survey responses, and were most frequently noted by faculty and staff. Some faculty respondents noted a lack of bike lanes and concerns for bicyclists in integrating into traffic with vehicles, while other faculty members expressed concerns about bicyclists using sidewalks and colliding with pedestrians, or riding in the road but ignoring traffic rules. Responses from staff raise concerns for students who are not attentive to their surroundings when walking on campus. Both faculty and staff raised concerns about cars exiting from parking lots or garages at high speeds and causing accidents when trying to leave campus during times of high traffic.

❖ Police Presence, Preparedness, and Alerts

A few comments in the survey discussed issues related to police presence on campus, emergency preparedness, and the alerts sent to the campus community related to safety and security situations. Across all constituent groups, there were a few comments asking for additional police presence at night, and suggesting that seeing University police around campus late at night may prevent unsafe activity and make the campus environment safer during these hours. In addition, a few comments in the survey were made related to the alerts, suggesting that the alerts are not always received consistently by those who signed up for them. Examples were given of alerts of drills being received well after the drills had concluded. The committee reviewed these comments and noted that the alerts system is currently being revised, which may lead to better implementation.

In relation to emergency preparedness, there were also a few comments raising concerns about active shooter or other emergency situations. These comments were mainly from staff and faculty respondents, and noted that faculty and staff are looked to as leaders in these situations but often do not know how to respond appropriately. The respondents suggested additional education on how to react in emergency situations, and trainings specific to various buildings on campus to create and practice procedures so that faculty and staff understand how to identify situations and respond to them appropriately.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE OUTREACH ON SAFETY ISSUES

The Campus Affairs Committee felt that there were a few constituent groups that were not well-reached by its survey, and it decided to reach out to a few groups in particular to receive additional feedback. Committee members from Intercollegiate Athletics, the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center (CSPAC), and the Libraries solicited feedback from their colleagues and brought concerns to the committee. These concerns were added to the survey results and the discussion of the issues mentioned above.

In reviewing its survey results, the committee noted that non-exempt staff were not well represented in the responses. In order to be able to understand the concerns of non-exempt staff, the chair of the Campus

Affairs Committee met with a Safety Committee within Facilities Management (FM) to solicit comments related to the concerns of non-exempt staff. The group identified six top concerns, some of which echoed issues raised in the survey related to bicycle safety (following traffic laws, lack of reflectors at night, lack of understanding of bike safety) and pedestrian safety (lack of attentiveness while walking in streets and parking lots). The group also identified concerns related to the reduction of service parking spaces on campus, safety standards and practices by contractors, and road closures.

In discussing the concerns raised by Facilities Management, the Campus Affairs Committee discussed in particular concerns related to snow closures, which were not mentioned by any respondents in the survey. The FM Safety Committee noted that many non-exempt staff begin work at four o'clock, which is well before decisions to close the University are announced, and it is often unsafe for these staff to report to work. The Campus Affairs Committee discussed the variables (the strength of the storm, its timing, and the confidence in the predictions) involved in the decision to close the University for inclement weather. Members suggested that since many recent closures have been announced the night before, the University may be able to assess the benefits and difficulties of announcing closures the night before or the morning of inclement weather, and consider whether there could be ways to better address the concerns of staff who begin work in the early morning hours.

The Campus Affairs Committee also met with representatives from the Department of Public Safety (UMDPS) to discuss its concerns related to classroom and building safety in the case of emergency situations. UMDPS has been working for some time on finding a solution to the difficulties involved in locking classrooms on campus to allow students and faculty to shelter in place effectively in cases of emergencies, without adding inconvenience to the day to day operations of campus buildings. UMDPS is in the early stages of considering solutions, and has identified a manual lock that could be installed in most classrooms, which allows doors to be locked and opened quickly in one motion. Newer buildings and buildings currently under construction could use an electronic locking system, which is already in place in some locations. UMDPS noted that some locations may require different solutions, and explained that its next step is to conduct a survey of all classroom doors on campus to assess the options for installing the lock or an electronic system, and to identify locations that may require alternatives. The Campus Affairs Committee provided feedback to UMDPS on how faculty, staff, and students would likely respond to its proposed solution. Since UMDPS is in the early stages of its work on this issue, the committee and Chief Mitchell agreed that UMDPS could return to the committee with an update and for additional feedback once its survey of buildings is complete.

CONCLUSION

The Campus Affairs Committee met on March 4 and March 24, 2014 and discussed its findings. It felt that it had been able to gather more feedback from the constituency through its survey and additional outreach than it had in previous safety forums. Throughout its review, the committee noted other organizations or offices on campus that are engaged in work related to safety and security issues as well, and the committee suggested that in future years it consider partnering with others in its charge, to collaborate and coordinate efforts to add value to the work already being done on campus.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Senate Campus Affairs Committee Survey on Safety and Security Concerns

APPENDIX 1 - SENATE CAMPUS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SURVEY ON SAFETY AND SECURITY ISSUES

1. What constituency do you represent?

2. Please identify the top three safety and security concerns for your constituency.

1.

2.

3.

3. (Optional) You may expand upon your previous responses in the text box below.

4. Please include your first and last name.

Done