

Office of the President

Post Office Box 751
Portland, Oregon 97207-0751

503-725-4419 tel
503-725-4499 fax
www.pdx.edu

December 9, 2019

AAUP Executive Council
Portland State University
Email and Campus Mail

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your thoughtful and detailed response to my Campus Safety Plan, and for your continued engagement on this incredibly important issue.

I agonized over this plan. As I have said publicly, I want everyone to feel welcome and safe at PSU. I recognize that safety means different things to different members of our diverse community, and creating a plan that responds to these differences was tremendously challenging. Over months of studying the issue, I began to see that our safety approach was ripe for innovation and improvement and that a more balanced public safety force could reduce the number of interactions that armed police officers had with the public. That is why I chose to move forward with the three-pronged staffing plan, with enhanced and comprehensive training, and with enhanced oversight of public safety by a campus committee of diverse members.

The enhanced oversight is led by the University Public Safety Oversight Committee (UPSOC), whose membership can be viewed [here](#). UPSOC members come from the community, the faculty, the administration, the staff, the student body and CPSO. UPSOC will now report directly to the President and has regular access to me as needed. The University administration is required to respond to UPSOC recommendations and to provide an explanation for any that are not implemented. UPSOC will review training to ensure it is effective. The group will meet in December to finalize revisions to their charter, to expand and clarify the investigative role and to establish subcommittees.

As I write this, we are in the early stages of implementing this comprehensive plan. All current CPSO staff have completed 21st Century Policing Training. Our first student ambassadors - positions added at the request of students eager to play a role in campus safety - will begin work in January.

Much work remains ahead of us, particularly as it relates to how we will exercise our campus commitment to human dignity for everyone. Our C.A.R.E. Team offers a range of services to students facing crises, but we remain in the early stages of working with community partners to provide health-care informed responses to the visitors on our campus who are in need of support. I have asked the Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative for its support, possibly in partnership with other knowledge and training resources in the greater Portland area. I recently met with Dr. Danny O. Jacobs, president of OHSU, and we agreed to collaborate at an institutional level to find humane, public health care-informed responses to the needs of visitors

on our campus who are facing mental health crises, homelessness and other serious challenges.

We have learned from many sources that some members of our campus community have concerns for their safety. Campus Public Safety is an essential service on our campus, and keeping the campus safe requires expending resources as provided in the budget approved for this academic year.

This is a dynamic, ever-evolving plan because maintaining safety requires constant reflection and innovation. In addition to our commitment to ongoing review, we will formally review this plan every three years, learning from our experiences in order to advance overall public safety and security. To underscore my deep, personal commitment to this plan, I have made its successful implementation one of my goals for this year. The Board will be holding me accountable for faithful execution of the plan.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns. May we all continue to advocate for a safe, welcoming campus community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Percy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "S" and a long, sweeping tail.

Stephen Percy
Interim President