

University Public Safety Oversight Committee (UPSOC) monthly meeting

May 16, 2024 , 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Zoom

Approve March 21 and April 18 meeting notes

- Michael Alexander motioned to approve; Michael Smith seconded; Committee unanimously approved March 21 meeting minutes
- Kimberly motioned to approve; Michael A. seconded; Committee unanimously approved April 18 meeting minutes

Chief Halliburton Update

- Chief Halliburton was unable to attend; UPSOC Co-chairs relayed brief updates on his behalf
 - The Chief has been preparing for an anticipated reduction in Campus Public Safety Office (CPSO) budget in the next fiscal year
 - A committee member asked if it was known why CPSO budget was cut
 - A suggestion was made that further discussion as a Committee was needed before making any appeal for increased funding for CPSO
 - The Committee was in agreement that more information was needed concerning what was being cut, ramifications, and plan

Discussion with President Cudd following campus and library protest and occupation

- Pres. Cudd and Chief of Staff Sheila Martin clarified that UPSOC's role is to review events such as the recent protest activity at Millar Library in hindsight and whether there are policies or procedures the President may consider
- Pres. Cudd shared an overview and timeline of the decision making and factors considered in operational conduct of CPSO April 5 through May 3.
 - Protest activity began on the City's Park Blocks; though peaceful, the tents erected there were not allowed by the City, and protest activity moved to Millar Library steps.
 - CPSO did not have enough staff; Portland Police Bureau (PPB) was not going to interfere as this was not City property. Pres. Cudd said there was no reason at this time she saw no reason to prohibit this as there did not seem to be a danger posed initially; tents were not permitted on the library portico but she sought latitude for protestors to make their position known.
 - Activity escalated to the building of a barricade and damage to the library building. By Saturday's Farmers Market, protestors had taken over the front portico and defaced the library's front. Pres. Cudd did not want to escalate matters; in her view, it did not seem serious crimes had been made and protestors agreed to move from the side with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible entrance. PSU cleaned off that side and activity seemed confined to one side.
 - Over the weekend, activity spread; PSU cleaned again on Sunday. Sunday evening, protest evolved to include the climbing up onto and painting of windows, which was seen as unsafe and dangerous.

- On Monday, a decision was made to not tolerate camping on the front of the library due to the rising levels of risk, danger, and defacement; protestors were told they were not welcome to stay.
- Monday evening more protest activity occurred resulting in breaking into the library interior; barricades were constructed at entrances. Protestors disabled PSU security camera systems preventing viewing of what was going on inside the building. Fire systems were disabled and the Fire Marshall determined the building was unsafe and not occupiable.
- Pres. Cudd said they could not see allowing them to safely stay inside anymore and that the safety to those inside, students living in adjacent buildings, students who needed to use the library but were afraid to do so, were considered in deciding the clear the building. It appeared to be an unsafe and dangerous situation PSU would be especially liable for if anything further went awry.
- The Office of the City of Portland Mayor was contacted for assistance; Pres. Cudd said this was not an ideal situation or first choice but a later choice.
 - PPB advised on options. PSU's Incident Management Team remained operationally engaged the entire time.
 - CPSO's Chief Halliburton was consulted on whether CPSO could clear on its own.
 - It was estimated 50-100 people were inside by this time
 - There was concern protestors would resist to a degree or use weapons, which PPB would return with force. Pres. Cudd said she was terrified this would happen; and PPB indicated they did not think this was likely. Pres. Cudd said she didn't take this at face value but was immensely relieved no injuries, tear gas, flash bangs were used in the clearing process.
- Operational control
 - Once agreement was made for Mayor's and PPB assistance, they took control; it was no longer PSU
 - PSU was in the dark about timing; PPB managed this and tactics until the library was under control and then returned to PSU control
- After a subsequent protest, additional security officers were hired by PSU until a barricade around the library could be constructed
- UPSOC members asked questions of President
 - Pres. Cudd asked to speak to when she considered calling for a ceasefire, ending financial connection to Boeing, or offering amnesty to students
 - Pres. Cudd said Tuesday evening; she jumped at opportunity when PSU faculty approached the Office of the President offering assistance negotiating with students. Several hours were spent going back and forth into the morning, and agreement was thought to be reached. When faculty returned to the library, the students who appeared ready to accept the offer had left; no agreement was made. Those remaining, per faculty, tried to convince others to accept without success. A number of students did depart. Of 31 arrests, 6 were students.
- UPSOC asked for comment about Women's Resource Center statement

concerning sexual violence between officers and students

- President indicated had not seen this; understood no report was made
- Another Committee member said a student had forwarded an email from an academic advisor who had told a body of students they were in complete support of the protests and would be operating out of the library; what was happening to faculty and staff involved in this? They relayed additional concern about ongoing protests in fall with the presidential elections and asked about plans moving forward, how to prepare for repeat or ongoing situations.
 - Pres. Cudd said she shared this worry
 - Pres. Cudd said it was made clear in PSU alerts to everyone in the library, including any staff, that they were trespassing. Any staff members who made their whereabouts known would be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination; PSU has gone through Human Resources processes with staff
 - President said future topics such as elections and other external events may not be under university administration but more Portland-centered rather than PSU-focused and therefore involve PPB.
 - Pres. Cudd said she plans to deal with facts as they come forward; she remains committed to political viewpoint neutrality, required of a public academic higher education institution.
 - President also said there need to be clear connections with the City and consideration of events in terms of emergency management where collaboration for such events as earthquakes will be valuable as well.
- President was encouraged by another UPSOC member to reflect, identify mistakes, and figure out how to move forward. When the campus is closed, resources such as the Student Health and Counseling Center (SHAC) were also closed, and students who could have benefitted from access to their services were unable to receive help for injuries they heard of from smoke bombs being released. President was encouraged to ensure SHAC and other key resources remain open moving forward.
- President was in agreement; she said the ice storm earlier in the year also highlighted how we have not learned so many lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. Pres. Cudd said she should have thought about this when campus was closed this most recent time and will definitely take this lesson going forward.
- Pres. Cudd was also asked what alternative measures were considered aside from negotiations, for example whether Portland Fire and Rescue or other emergency entities were considered rather than PPB.
 - Pres. Cudd said once the Mayor was called for assistance it was up to the Mayor, who oversees the Police Bureau, how this would be done. Consideration was given to whether CPSO could manage response. President at one point even considered walking in herself but was advised this would not be safe.
- UPSOC member asked about graduation ceremony safety preparations.
 - The big ceremonies will be ticketed with security and have CPSO

- presence.
- The President is giving further consideration to nonstudent access to buildings
- CPSO has been involved consistently; PPB will only be called in for more assistance. Only in the clearing the library did PPB have full control.
- UPSOC member inquired about viewpoint neutrality and made point PSU is an antiracist institution.
 - Pres. Cudd said people are not being asked to viewpoint neutral themselves; the institution remains so in how it teaches, provides academic opportunities, and does not take a side on external perspectives; this is a way to preserve academic freedom and the right of everyone to speak to various issues while also adhering to legal requirements to do so. As President, she is seen as the face of the university so suppresses her own freedom of speech to give room to everyone else's.
- Pres. Cudd was asked what steps UPSOC could take to provide feedback or assistance moving forward.
 - UPSOC members were asked to provide feedback on any policies it views as problematic, including events such as conferences or parties, and campus safety and security in general.
- An UPSOC member commented that they hoped the President had the opportunity to connect with higher education colleagues and talk through protest activity

Discussion

- An UPSOC member commented they had not realized the majority of protestors who remained in the library were not students, and that they hoped student organizing would not get hijacked by outside community members
- Additional discussion involved hope the President was considering the steps that could be made to repair trust within the PSU community, as well as sense there was a lot of misinformation. UPSOC members posed question of how to combat misinformation while honoring transparency and healing.
- The suggestion was made to build on the value of storytelling and possibility for videos to foster sense of community.
- Additional comments were made appreciating the authentic and genuine way the President showed up to the meeting.

Hiring Subcommittee and Recruitment

- Randy may reach out for UPSOC members' involvement
- UPSOC members encouraged to send names of those who may be interested in future UPSOC service to Randy

Present:

Attendees

Don Mueller

Randy Mishler

Michael Alexander

Michael Smith

Kimberly Kahn

Ofc Swingle

Sarah W

Deborah Arthur

Constantin Severe

Albert Roberson

Marc Fraser

Nic Francisco-Kaho'onei

Wendy Weir

Sheila Martin COS to Pres