
The University Senate

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Campus Safety Committee (CSC)

November 28, 2022

Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Call to Order, Welcome, and Updates; Dinkytown and Marcy-Holmes Street Lighting and Draft Support Letter; System Campus Safety Practices Discussion; Definition of Safety and Promotion of Culture of Safety and Breakout Sessions; Other Updates]

PRESENT: Edgar Arriaga (chair), Salman Ali, Cameron Berthiaume, Tina Erasmus, Myron Frans, Clara Hanson, Tia Hernandez Petrulo, Jabra Kawas, Kate McCormick, Adam Negri, Terry Niebeling, Ashok Singh, Megan Sweet, Julie Thompson, liz thomson, Andy Whitman

REGRETS: Joseph Alf, Jovany Betancourt, Sue Bosell, Savala DeVoge, Joshua Ichen, Nathan Mara, Barry Standorf

ABSENT: Linda Pozen

GUESTS: Katharine Bonneson, assistant vice president, University Health and Safety; Janelle Broesch, assistant vice president and assistant chief operating officer, Office of the Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations; Katie Eichele, director, Aurora Center; Sean Huls, police chief, University of Minnesota Duluth; Jessica LeBlanc, assistant to the senior vice president, Office of the Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations; Chuck Tomlinson, director of operations, Department of Chemistry; Leah Zhu, chair, Undergraduate Student Government Campus Safety Task Force

1. Call to Order, Welcome, and Updates

Edgar Arriaga, chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Arriaga provided the committee with a “Safety Moment” before discussing the meeting agenda. He also reviewed meeting ground rules and priorities. Arriaga noted that more detailed meeting information may be found in this [slide deck](#).

- Arriaga recognized the committee members who have volunteered to work on the following 2022-23 committee themes. Definition of safety and promotion of a culture of safety: Tia Hernandez Petrulo, Joshua Ichen, Ashok Singh
- Safety across campuses - a holistic approach: Jovany Betancourt
- Engagement of UMPD with DEI activities and community: Jabra Kawas

- Accountability structures: Cameron Berthiaume and Terry Niebeling

He then encouraged other committee members to sign up, including ex-officio members.

Arriaga added that the January 2023 Campus Safety Committee (CSC) agenda will likely include discussion on a holistic approach to safety, in combination with discussion regarding a definition of a culture of safety from a system perspective.

2. Dinkytown and Marcy-Holmes Street Lighting and Draft Support Letter

Tina Erazmus noted the \$9 million in the Minneapolis city budget (\$4.5 million over 2 years) set aside for additional pedestrian lighting in a number of areas, including University of Minnesota neighborhoods. Erazmus added that she has been working with various University partners to advocate for support of this budget item. She then expressed appreciation for CSC's consideration in submitting a [letter of support](#) to key members of the Minneapolis City Council, especially in light of the safety-related issues being experienced on or near campus. Erazmus added that the focus of this funding is to fix existing lighting, as compared to adding new lighting.

Arriaga noted information included in the letter and opened up discussion. Hernandez Petrulo said she has been in contact with the council members as a concerned citizen and is in full support of sending the letter. Adam Negri asked about the source of the crime index at the bottom of the letter, and expressed concern that data are from a private real estate company. Arriaga confirmed the data source and mentioned it can be removed if the committee wishes. Myron Frans also expressed support for sending the letter, noting the additional lighting will help promote safety both on and near campus.

A vote was first taken of voting members requesting to remove the table of the real estate data from the letter draft; members voted to keep the table. Voting members also voted to support the letter, which will be sent to the appropriate Minneapolis City Council members by committee staff.

3. System Campus Safety Practices Discussion

Katharine Bonneson, assistant vice president, University Health and Safety, and Janelle Broesch, assistant vice president and assistant chief operating officer, Office of the Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations, presented an [update](#) on the System Campus Safety Plan, which is tied to MPact 2025 action item 5.4: *Assess and improve campus safety protocols and organizational structure*. Bonneson noted consultations on the plan to date; how safety is defined within the plan; and systemwide safety goals. Broesch addressed the extent the plan incorporates prior work related to campus safety; how the safety plan will be used; and how progress will be measured and when. Bonneson mentioned that systemwide goals will be implemented separately on each campus based on their unique needs. Bonneson concluded the presentation and asked for any questions or comments, or whether there is any component of safety not covered.

Andy Whitman noted the importance of parent perception of and communication related to safety. Bonneson said the plan includes an extensive communications plan with key interested parties, including parents. Jabra Kawas mentioned the plan is comprehensive, and noted the need for the plan to be flexible. Bonneson confirmed that the plan will be, realizing safety-related priorities may change over time.

Arriaga thanked Bonneson and Broesch for the update and offered an opportunity for them to return to the committee as the safety plan evolves.

4. Definition of Safety and Promotion of Culture of Safety and Breakout Sessions

Arriaga opened the discussion by addressing the CSC goal of “Establishing an operational and inclusive definition of safety culture that informs the communities of the University system and its leadership in its pursuit of such culture.” Arriaga summarized definitions of safety culture from the Occupational Health and Safety Association, the American Chemistry Society, and the National Civic League. He also outlined a multidimensional safety culture pyramid for consideration. Details regarding the definitions Arriaga mentioned, as well as the culture pyramid, may be found [here](#).

Arriaga then introduced guests Chuck Tomlinson, director of operations, Department of Chemistry, Leah Zhu, chair, Undergraduate Student Government Campus Safety Task Force, Katie Eichele, director, Aurora Center, and Sean Huls, police chief, University of Minnesota Duluth, to each provide a brief introduction and discuss the following questions: (1) what is safety for you; (2) what is a culture of safety for you; and (3) what are characteristics of a culture of safety at the University of Minnesota?

Chuck Tomlinson noted the following definitions related to safety and culture of safety:

- Safety in his *department* pertains to research, teaching, and lab safety. He added that more recent departmental work has taken place regarding workplace culture, mental health, and laboratory safety.
- In terms of *culture*, Tomlinson mentioned that safety is about a place where people want to be; specifically, that people feel comfortable and empowered to advocate for what they need to know or are concerned about. He described his unit’s involvement with Dow Chemical to create a grassroots joint safety team, which is peer-led by graduate students and post-docs. Tomlinson added that this group is now nationally known as the Minnesota Model, and that departments from around the country have come to their department to be trained in this collaborative lab inspection model.

Leah Zhu then introduced herself, and mentioned that the focus of the Undergraduate Student Government Task Force is to improve both on- and off-campus safety. She also noted that the task force is working on a variety of projects with a focus on providing student resources. She responded to the three questions above as follows

- Zhu described her *definition of safety* as a state of security. She added that student safety means students are able to feel comfortable living as themselves and practicing their identities in a welcoming and diverse environment. Zhu noted that safety includes financial, basic need, mental health, and security protection components, adding that the task force’s goal is to provide students with resources to strengthen student relationships with each of these elements of safety and to foster a diverse and inclusive environment.
- Zhu described a *culture of safety* as having a shared understanding of what safety is, rooting out concerns and providing resources, and making connections with administrators. She mentioned there are also conflicting definitions of safety across individuals and groups, so consultative relationships are especially important in trying to find solutions for everyone.

- In terms of promoting a *culture of safety at the University*, Zhu mentioned the work of the task force's communications team that pushes out resources, as well as their work with the RAVE Guardian [campus safety app] development team. She also noted their communications with SAFE-U and their promotion of additional lighting on or near campus. Zhu closed by saying the task force seeks to establish a foundation of safety for future generations of students.

Katie Eichele introduced herself to the committee and presented the following definitions:

- Eichele describes her *definition of safety* as a state of being as well as of action being taken. She added that it is important to listen to varied groups (e.g., students, parents, community partners) on safety-related concerns, and to promote both prevention tactics before a crime takes place, as well as intervention tactics in the event a crime occurs. She also mentioned safety is about being protected from danger or risk of harm, noting that it is important to understand the influences of fear on behaviors, decisions, values, and culture, and that the core of fear is the threat of physical, emotional, or psychological harm, whether real or imagined.
- Eichele then mentioned that her understanding of a *culture of safety* is that it is positive and encouraging, adding that it can also be physical or emotional. She added that it is also both a system and an individual practice: for instance, one person may take a self-defense class to calm themselves or to give themselves courage, while another individual's practices may be different. Eichele said that a system culture also acknowledges conflict and resistance, which then works to create a strong foundation of trust.
- Regarding a *culture of safety at the University*, Eichele noted a culture such as this requires the creation of both mutual respect and collaboration, and that the Aurora Center is working to create a culture of non-judgment so those who have been harmed can seek support. She added that this culture of safety needs to be both trustworthy and transparent, and that any collaboration focused on decision-making needs to be unbiased by power differences.

Sean Huls then outlined his thoughts on a definition of safety and a culture of safety, both in his unit and on his campus:

- Huls' *definition of safety* is to create an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued, heard, and safe in their person and property. He mentioned he also reached out to two students for their perspectives, and they expressed similar sentiments.
- In terms of a *definition of a culture of safety*, Huls deferred to the students he consulted, who said that a culture of safety refers more to community, specifically what people may do to make others around them feel safe or unsafe, as well as the extent a school makes an effort promote feelings of security, respect, and support.
- Huls noted that a *culture of safety at University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD)* is inclusive and collaborative, involving students, staff, and the community; and there is also caring staff who are open and transparent in communication (e.g., crime alerts, educational information). Huls also mentioned UMD uses an educational approach to promote public safety, whether through safety training or other outreach.

Arriaga thanked each of the guests for sharing their perspectives, and then broke out committee members into breakout rooms to briefly discuss the same three questions. Given time limitations, Arriaga noted that discussion on committee member responses will take place at the January 2023 CSC meeting.

5. Other Updates

Arriaga also provided updates on the following safety-related items, which are highlighted in this [slide deck](#):

- Arriaga mentioned recent events which have further prompted concerns related to classroom safety. Tomlinson added that he received questions regarding Office of Classroom Management protocols following the recent warning sent to all students on the St. Paul campus regarding a possible active shooter.
- Arriaga received a recent email regarding smoking and loud music on the light rail, and concerns about possible behavior escalation and impact on safety. He mentioned that Metro Transit has also received this concern.
- Arriaga mentioned a recent student survey on resident safety resources and awareness. He noted when the survey was deployed, the response rate and key findings related to which resources respondents were most familiar with.

In the interest of time, Arriaga thanked everyone for being a part of the CSC and adjourned the meeting.

Erin Heath
University Senate Office