

# **Reimagine Campus Safety Committee**

## **Report on Activities in AY 2021**

### **May 18, 2021**

#### **Background**

On August 13, 2020, Portland State University President Stephen Percy announced two key changes in the University's approach to campus public safety: first, Campus Public Safety officers would begin to patrol the campus without firearms and, second, a new Reimagine Campus Safety Committee (RCSC) would convene during the 2020-21 academic year to make a comprehensive set of recommendations for additional changes to the University's approach to campus safety and security. In that announcement, President Percy introduced a four-person Steering Committee for the RCSC (Jose Coll, dean of the School of Social Work; Vicki Reitenauer, faculty member in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Faculty Senate presiding officer elect; Ed Washington, director of Outreach and Community Engagement in the Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion; and Motutama Sipelii, president of the Associated Students of Portland State University).

This report, created by the Steering Team and vetted by the full RCSC, outlines the RCSC's activities this past year and identifies the actions it will take to conclude its work early in AY 2022. For details on these activities, visit the [RCSC website](#) for meeting agendas, notes, and other documents, including [operating protocols](#).

#### **The RCSC's Purpose and Charge**

Consistent with Portland State's history and mission as an urban-serving institution of higher education, the RCSC was formed to engage in a collaborative process to understand the array of safety needs of the campus community and to reimagine an approach to meeting those needs that reflects our commitment to racial justice and human dignity. The RCSC exists to develop recommendations for not only new functional approaches to campus safety and security, but cultural shifts that will call forth a new vision of a welcoming campus that promotes well-being and creates the conditions for genuine belonging for all members of the PSU community.

#### **The RCSC's Approach**

To catalyze change on both functional and cultural levels, the members of the Steering Team designed an intentional process for productive engagement across differences. In establishing the foundation for the RCSC's work, the Steering Team affirmed a number of key principles, grounded in a commitment to anti-racism in practice and intended outcome and informed by [Showing Up for Racial Justice](#) and [The Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture](#) by Tema Okun (2021/2007):

- Inclusion of individuals from diverse social locations and institutional positionalities, as well as ideological perspectives
- Self-nomination as the basis for participation
- Fundamental commitment of participants to engaging in this work as a learning process
- Relationship-building as the foundation for every aspect of the RCSC's work
- Consensus process for group decision-making

## Timeline of Activities

### August & September 2021:

- President Percy announces the formation of the Steering Team for the RCSC.
- The Steering Team begins building relationships, drafting the framing document for the Committee's work, and developing a self-nomination process and form.

### Fall 2021:

- The Steering Team releases to the campus community the framing information and self-nomination for the RCSC.
- The Steering Team accepts President Percy's offer to contract with the National Policy Consensus Center for RCSC facilitation and project management.
- The Steering Team reviews self-nominations, schedules 1:1 conversations with potential participants, and invites members to join the RCSC.

### Winter 2021:

- The RCSC convenes. Participants build relationships across weekly 2-hour meetings, explore themes related to the RCSC's purpose and charge, and develop [guiding principles](#) for its work.
- Five task groups are formed to carry out the work of researching approaches across several key areas: Community Engagement, Frameworks for Campus Safety, Physical Environment, Responding to Individuals in Crisis, Welcoming and Belonging.
- The task groups are constituted from the remaining self-nominators and additional invitees.
- The RCSC Steering Team and members of the University Public Safety RCSC (UPSOC) begin meeting for shared understanding and mutual support of each group's charge.

### Spring 2021:

- Task groups convene, form relationships and begin data gathering and research.
- Through the President's Office, the Steering Team begins distributing honoraria to participants.

### Summer 2021 (projected):

- The Community Engagement Task Group begins informal engagement activities.
- Task groups continue data gathering and research, and begin to draft recommendations.

### Fall 2021 (projected):

- The Community Engagement Task Group conducts formal engagement processes with campus constituents and neighbors.
- Task groups finalize recommendations.
- Recommendations come to RCSC for adoption.
- RCSC engages a consensus process to finalize recommendations.
- Recommendations sent to President Percy and the Board of Trustees.

## Further Considerations

The RCSC notes the importance of connecting this initiative with related projects on campus, including the diversity, equity, and inclusion approaches emerging from the Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion's Equity Summit, the University's "Open for Fall, Open for All" campaign, and the planning for the return to campus in Fall 2021. Directly and explicitly bringing these initiatives into contact and conversation with each other will be imperative to achieve the meaningful campus-wide impacts each initiative is working to bring about.

## For More Information

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