

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON STUDENT AFFAIRS
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2009
GERBERDING HALL #36

Chair Brian Fabien called meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Discussion with John Vinson, Ph.D., Chief of Police
2. Discussion with Vice Provost Eric Godfrey
 - a. The impact of recent budget cuts on the Student Life department
 - b. Fraternity/Sorority house safety issues
3. Report from the Chair
4. New Business
5. Approval of the minutes from the May 19, 2009 meeting

1. Discussion with John Vinson, Ph.D., Chief of Police

Chair Brian Fabien welcomed John Vinson, Chief of Police to the FCSA meeting. Council members and guests introduced themselves to Vinson and welcomed him to the meeting.

Chief Vinson gave the FCSA a brief history about his experience and career in law enforcement. He informed the Council that he comes with a blend of experience in municipal, county and university law enforcement. He spent the last seven years teaching as faculty both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He stated that he was here today to talk about some issues facing the department at the UW. Vinson knows every department has been hit with substantial budget cuts. He views this not as a detriment but rather as an opportunity to tighten belts and increase efficiency so as not to impede the level of service his department provides the UW community. Vinson is confident his officers will be able to provide same level of service if not better, despite the cuts.

Vinson identified a second issue as the perceived increase in crime in the area. He noted that while it may appear that the University is experiencing about a heavier incidence of criminal activity, he wanted to assure the Council that is not the case. He pointed out that the UW is now receiving more “timely warning notices”, which is different than a UW Alert. He feels it is important to get information out as quickly as possible. Vinson noted an increase in the number of property crimes on campus and identified bikes, computers and small electronics as popular items to thieves. He informed the Council his department has set up a “laptop sting” in the libraries but have not apprehended any offenders as of yet. There are car prowls in parking garages of the “smash and grab” nature. His office is responding with increased patrols in those areas. He holds monthly strategic deployment meetings with his officers to identify five “hot spots” to designate manpower. He looks to the UW community to assist in identifying those needs.

Vinson informed the FCSA that beginning fall quarter the UW Police Department is going to a department-wide community policing environment. The campus will be divided in four

sectors. Each sector the UW residents will have a permanent point of contact to report any issues. There will also be regular patrols in campus building. He also noted that his department will continue to partner with the Seattle Police Department (SPD). There will be increased joint patrol efforts in the North of 45th area.

McKinstry pointed out a common theme in the libraries is that students leave their belongings for 30 minutes or longer. She asked Vinson for increased effort to educate people about being in an urban environment. She pointed out that the Libraries has a code of conduct and the ability to ban an individual, however this is a public library system and anyone has access. She is pleased that Vinson is here.

FCSA members asked several questions of Vinson on the topics of policing a campus environment, the gun ban on campus, department morale, and counseling available to students in need. Vinson stressed to the Council that his main goal is to de-escalate any situation without the use of force if at all possible. He also noted that his officers are trained to use force if necessary. He assured the FCSA that his officers are trained to respond to any event accordingly and being prepared for every situation is the best approach for a successful outcome for all involved. Vinson thanked the Council for their time and invited them to contact him directly with any questions or concerns.

2. Discussion with Vice Provost Eric Godfrey

Vice Provost Eric Godfrey informed the Council that the Student Life budget was cut by approximately 12%. He noted that Housing and Food Services is self-sustaining and was not affected by the budget cut. His office plans to continue to admit students and provide financial aid to those who qualify. The Student Activities Department and Career Center took bigger cuts. He noted the UW Police Department took a 7% cut. Godfrey is optimistic about future revenue opportunities and is looking to the future for a brighter economic situation.

With regard to safety in the fraternity and sorority houses, Godfrey indicated that his office has been aggressive about the issue. He urged every house to undergo an extensive safety inspection and implement the corrections recommended by the inspector. Of the 46 houses at the UW, 80% of them have been inspected, including all 16 of the sorority houses. Godfrey wants to build the inspection as a requirement into the new contracts which are due to be renewed this year. The Council discussed various aspects of safety issues in the houses and what could be done to make the homes safer for students. Installing fall-proof windows was discussed. Godfrey felt that in general the students' behavior and awareness has improved greatly regarding safety issues. He also noted that all of the houses inspected were up to city fire and safety codes.

3. Report from the Chair

Chair Fabien thanked the Council members for their service this year. He stated he was looking forward to seeing everyone again in the fall and felt the coming year would be an eventful one.

4. New Business

There was no new business.

5. Approval of the minutes from the May 19, 2009 meeting

The minutes of the May 19, 2009 meeting were approved.

Chair Fabien adjourned the meeting at 4:13 p.m.

Minutes by Kelly Baker
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Present: Faculty: Berninger, Fabien, LeVeque, Poovendran, Rocap, Schwartz
President's Designee: Godfrey
Ex-Officio Reps: McKinstry, Perrin, Winans
Guest: Vinson
Absent: Faculty: Burke
Ex Officio Reps: Miller, Nguyen, Osborn