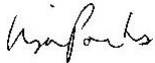


April 20, 2021

To: Susannah Scott, Divisional Chair
Academic Senate

From: Lisa Parks, Chair 
Council on Faculty Welfare, Academic Freedom, and Awards

Re: Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures

The Council on Faculty Welfare, Academic Freedom, and Awards met on April 7, 2021 to discuss the proposed revisions to Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures.

While the Council acknowledges the difficult role that UC police officers play, members found these proposed policy amendments deeply flawed. Members noted the intensity of reading this proposal during the ongoing trial of Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, whose intentional use of deadly force on George Floyd produced three months of global uprisings about institutional racism and structural violence, and relaunched a conversation about abolition or profound rethinking of what are the proper functions and roles of police in our society.

These revised policies are noted as having been developed with consultation in 2017, and then “put on hold, pending recommendations of the President’s Police Task Force.” We are concerned that this consultation process was not inclusive or transparent. Key stakeholders were unaware that any consultation process occurred. Those Task Force recommendations are not qualified in the materials and should be included along with more substantive comments about the rationale for these policy revisions. CFW finds that this set of proposals does not reflect the trend nationwide to consider using non-armed, non-police services to address issues of safety and security whenever possible and practicable. CFW members strongly urge policing policies that emphasize de-escalation as opposed to discretionary police powers and/or militarization. Some members favor abolishing UC police and support the growing DIVEST/INVEST movement.

There are disturbing elements to the four policies being proposed or altered here that imminently impact faculty welfare along with civilian, student, and activist voices. Civil protesters appear to be the objects of policing envisioned by most of these policy changes. These policy changes have the potential to lead to a campus environment where the safe atmosphere for public expression, which is essential to the university, is replaced by one of armament and militarization.

The Body Worn Video Camera policy has many weaknesses, including a long list of exceptions and discretionary windows. Historically, efforts to implement police reform and control have been consistently gutted and rendered meaningless by precisely these types of clauses that permit discretion/exception for police behavior. These policies allow too much leniency for exactly the judgment calls that BMV are used to balance. The Council also questions the rationale for restricting the

recording of conversations between police officers as well as internal decisions to delete or otherwise keep information from the public. Clearer provisions regarding public access to BMV data should be added. Moreover, the policy seems heavy handed in its downplaying of the utility of BMV data, and its emphasis that officer safety comes before (and is separate from) public safety.

The Council opposes the permitting of retired officers to continue to carry concealed weapons. The state of California by default does not allow for Carry Concealed Weapons and the Council does not see the rationale for retired UCPD to do so. Many civilian communities do not agree that private security guards and private citizens with concealed guns provide enhanced security. Thus, the university does not need to participate in the expansion of access to weapons in our communities.

The Council patently opposes the existence of a UC police Systemwide Response Team (SRT) to respond to crowd assemblies and/or protest activities. The UC does not need its own version of a National Guard to respond to “riots” and to “protect the Constitutional Rights of all persons. . . and protect life and property.” Council also questions the expense of the long list of military-style equipment issued to these teams for use against, presumably, members of the UC community, as well as the high-cost of training SRTs. In section 1602.5 the policy describes how the SRT will be constituted as a military-style entity “deployed in team/squad formations.” The equipment issued to these SRTs will include “helmet with face shield and 36-inch baton, gas mask with extra filter and mask carrier, soft riot armor, flex cuffs with officer’s badge number on the cuffs, peltor headset, kinetic energy projectiles, chemical agents.” Section 1606.3 notes “use of SRT weapons will remain at the discretion of the host campus Chief.” This is very concerning. In the subsequent Chapter 8 on Use of Force, Intermediate Force Application includes the use of “Conducted Energy Devices [tasers], oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray [pepper spray], other undefined and unspecified “chemical agents” [tear gas] other unspecified projectile devices, and kinetic energy projectiles (KE) [these include the infamous rubber-coated munitions and plastic ammunition]. This disturbing list includes the kind of devices that have killed many protesters, projectiles that have blown out eyeballs and mutilated bodies, and chemical agents that have suffocated asthmatics, triggered respiratory distress and cardiac incidents.

The proposed Use of Force policy is quite complex and urgently relevant to today’s crisis in policing. While it notes that the carotid control hold that killed George Floyd is not authorized, its emphasis is not that which reflects a non-violent approach to peace keeping.

The national discourse on policing has significantly changed in the last year. The Council finds these policy proposals to be out of step with the current landscape and recommends they be rejected.

We also insist, in light of the productive and paradigm-shifting national debates that have opened up around policing in the past months, that this conversation around policing policy be restarted from scratch, and be broadened to include all stakeholders – faculty, students, staff -- in our UC community.

CC: Shasta Delp, Executive Director, Academic Senate