

Update on Student Health and Safety Policies

Aug. 28, 2014

Dear Colleagues and Students,

For the past year, two committees consisting of students, staff, faculty, city officials and neighborhood representatives have examined and discussed national best practices for enhancing student safety and bolstering our critically important relationship with our neighbors.

An incredible amount of very good work has gone into this process, and I'm pleased with the recommendations being formulated that place student safety and community health at the center of everything we do. In fact, we already have begun to implement several important initiatives that will further inform our commitment to safety and health. Most notably, a website has been created — www.uky.edu/studentconduct — to allow for reporting of incidents that threaten to compromise the safety of our students or our community. We also have begun to implement several new requirements under federal Title IX provisions that strengthen how we report crimes and incidents, such as sexual assault.

I want to thank the committees for their thoughtful and diligent work over many months on these issues. Their work will strengthen our university community and foster stronger ties with our neighbors.

I had hoped to have a full range of recommendations ready for policy implementation at the beginning of the fall semester. However, after reviewing drafts of the recommended action plan, I believe it is essential to continue the conversation with the campus community and the broader community of which we are a part.

Dialogue and feedback are critical elements of any process, but particularly so with regard to the safety and health of our students and neighborhoods.

So, this fall, we will be engaging in a series of public forums and meetings with neighbors and the campus. We want to review the recommended policies and encourage continued dialogue and feedback before moving forward.

It is more important that we move forward thoughtfully and strategically.

To that end, our goal is to gather input over the next two months, make any modifications that may be necessary, and be ready to implement changes for the start of the Spring 2015 semester.

The overarching goals of this initiative have not changed. We will extend the student code of conduct off campus so as to create a more seamless approach to both student safety and discipline. And we also want to develop a set of best practices, with the goal of safety and collaboration foremost in our minds, for a different approach to the legal and safe use of alcohol on our campus.

I look forward to initiating this dialogue soon, as I am confident the result will be a stronger set of policies and recommendations to protect our students and those with whom we partner and serve throughout the community.

Thank you.

Eli Capilouto
President