

Ad Hoc Committee on a Civil, Safe and Open Environment
Minutes
February 6, 2008

Attendees:

Kim Tanzer
Mark Rush
James Klausner
Leslie Jean
Brian Aungst
Mike Seigel

Invited Guests:

Jamie Keith
Betsy Shenkman
Keith Muller

The meeting was called to order at 11:37 AM

The minutes of the December 18, 2007 meeting were approved.

The committee discussed the spring work plan and recommendation structure. Committee members will draft recommendations for their assigned section and Kim Tanzer will compile all of the recommendations into one report. The recommendations should be as concise as possible and background information should be listed in an appendix.

The committee also discussed the first amendment Web site charge from Dr. Machen. The committee will provide guidance on the site on an ad hoc bases, as the site is developed. The committee hopes that the Web site will serve as a resource for the community. The committee also noted there may be a need for focused student training on the first amendment as there has been for alcohol education.

Chief Stump, who was in the meeting's audience, reported that her department will have a draft of their revised use of taser policy within a week.

Mike Seigel stated that he hopes the committee will review revisions in protocols and policies that administrators prepared and submitted to the committee and will be able to support the revisions or make recommendations concerning them in the committee's report.

James Klausner stated that he had reviewed the University's existing regulations relating to dissent, as well as exploring their interpretation. He concluded that existing regulations are appropriate and a new right to dissent policy is not necessary. He offered a draft he prepared with assistance from Jamie Keith, identifying the existing regulations and giving some examples of how they generally apply.

Dr. Betsy Shenkman and Dr. Keith Muller, the committee's invited experts on bio-statistics and epidemiological studies and who are members of the faculty of University of Florida, discussed the strengths and limitations of the Wake Forest Study, the Dallas Conduced Energy Weapons study and the Amnesty International Report from the perspective of the quality of the scientific method used and the resulting weight that should be given to the conclusions. A copy of their slides is attached to these minutes. Shenkman and Muller also opined that the weight of the studies reviewed supports a conclusion that policy should establish when non-lethal use of force, including tasers, is needed and should be used, and the weight of the studies reviewed does not support a conclusion that tasers are more dangerous than other means of non-lethal force when such force is needed. They noted that tasers appear from the weight of the studies reviewed to result in fewer moderate or serious injuries to subjects. They also noted the significant physical danger that police encounter when they attempt to make an arrest and suggested that this needs to be weighed in any policy on use of tasers.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM