Minutes of Villanova University Police Oversight Committee

A meeting of the Villanova University Police Oversight Committee was held on Monday, July 11, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. in the Davis Center conference room.

Members Present:
Rev. Rob Hagan, O.S.A., Associate Athletic Director, CHAIR  
Brighid Dwyer, PhD, Director, Program on Intergroup Relations  
Timothy Horner, D Phil, Assistant Professor, Peace and Justice Education  
Crystal Lucky, PhD, Associate Professor, English and Director of the Africana Studies Program  
Ariel Thompson, Chemical Engineering Student, Class of 2018

Members Absent:
John Cozenza, Alumnus and Retired Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the Criminal Branch of the FBI in Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania  
William Elmore, Management Student, Class of 2018  
Catherine Warrick, PhD, Associate Professor, Political Science

Also Present (Ex Officio):
David Tedjeske, Director of Public Safety & Chief of Police

The meeting began with introductions and a prayer by Fr. Rob Hagan, O.S.A.

Meeting Purpose/Concerns
The purpose of the first meeting of the Committee was to meet and to define the plan/mission and role of the Committee. The Committee will (1) make an honest three year evaluation of the implementation of the Villanova University Police Department; (2) be a liaison between the Villanova community and the Department of Public Safety (Public Safety); (3) be a forum for people to express themselves and be a voice and instrument of peace; (4) collect information and make constructive recommendations to Public Safety; and (5) review issues/violations and make recommendations regarding conflict resolution.

Several concerns were raised at the meeting including: (1) What is the role of the Committee? (2) Does the Committee have power in its recommendations? (3) Does the Committee advise all of Public Safety or only the Police Department? (4) Where will students who are involved in investigations be interviewed? (5) What is Public Safety’s relationship with the Radnor Township Police Department?

In response to question 4, David Tedjeske stated that students involved in investigations will be interviewed in the Department of Public Safety located in Garey Hall. He noted there is an outside entrance to the Department so students in Garey Hall will not see other students being interviewed.
Public Safety Presentation
Mr. David Tedjeske, Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police, informed the Committee of how matters are currently handled in Public Safety and how they will be handled in the future. With the inception of the Villanova University Police Department, Mr. Tedjeske expressed that the University has much greater autonomy than when Radnor Township Police officers were the only armed police officers on campus. He further stated that through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Radnor Township Police Department and Villanova University, Public Safety will handle the majority of criminal matters, with a few exceptions as outlined in the MOU. When facilities are needed (e.g. fingerprinting), a Villanova Police officer will perform these duties at the Radnor Township Police Department. Mr. Tedjeske also stated that Public Safety would like to rely, for the most part, on University Policies and Procedures as opposed to citations. He stated that the total number of police officers the Department intends to employ is 19 out of the 60 Public Safety officers. Eight have been promoted internally and 11 are being hired. Mr. Tedjeske noted that the hiring of police officers is much more involved and demanding than the hiring of non-armed Public Safety officers. Mr. Tedjeske concluded his presentation by asking the Committee for suggestions of ways Public Safety can be more involved and engaged in the Villanova community. Mr. Tedjeske explained that he would like for students not to avoid officers but, rather, get to know the officers in an effort to build trust and assist with conflict resolution.

Member Suggestions
The Committee is hopeful that the Villanova community and the Villanova Police Department will develop a positive rapport. In an effort to enhance the relationship between the Villanova community and Public Safety, some Committee Members suggested that there be more interaction/activities among the two groups. Members also requested a tour of the Public Safety offices. It was also suggested that the Committee be involved in the interviews conducted by the Public Safety officers.

The Oversight Committee meeting was concluded by addressing the following list of the upcoming meeting dates/times, all of which will be held in the Davis Center conference room:

- Wednesday, September 14, 2016 – 9:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, October 12, 2016 – 9:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, November 16, 2016 – 9:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 14, 2016 – 9:00 a.m.