

September 2017

Police Oversight Committee meeting, 6 April 2017

The main topic of discussion at this meeting was issues related to the recent news about DACA and undocumented students on campus. Police chief David Tedjeske reiterated information provided to the committee some months ago, affirming that Villanova police and public safety officers do not maintain information on individuals' immigration status, do not ask students about their immigration status, and do not have a law enforcement role relating to immigration matters. The committee members felt that it is important to ensure that Villanova community members are aware of this, so that individuals concerned about immigration matters do not avoid relying on campus public safety services when they need to do so. The committee agreed to ask Father Peter to encourage the dissemination of this information, which was later communicated in his most recent statement relating to DACA and the Villanova campus.

The committee also discussed the possibility of political demonstrations and protests on campus in the coming year. Villanova has a procedure for issuing permits to groups wishing to hold demonstrations, but non-permitted demonstrations are not necessarily dispersed if they are not a threat to public safety or the functioning of campus business. The Villanova police department engages in liaison work with a variety of groups on campus, including those planning demonstrations, and also has an established relationship with the Radnor police for the policing of larger events that threaten public safety. Villanova Public Safety recognizes that heavy police presence, as in the case of a talk on campus last spring at which an armored Radnor police vehicle was prominent, can be counterproductive, and have undertaken more outreach and engagement with the campus community to build better relationships, particularly with students. Watch for the new Public Safety ice cream truck at upcoming campus events.

Submitted to Faculty Congress by Catherine Warrick, POC member and FC vice chair, 11 September 2017