

To the University Community:

I write to announce that I have formed the first President's Advisory Council on Policing at UConn. Given the ongoing, vital national conversation regarding policing in America, I felt that it was essential that we at UConn create a strong community voice to provide advice, guidance and perspective when it comes to policing our campuses. As the [written charge](#) states, in part:

The Advisory Council on Policing (ACP) is being established to advise the University's President and Associate Vice President (AVP) for Public Safety on the standards and best practices for community policing. As the flagship university of the State of Connecticut, UConn has an important role in providing intellectual leadership and practical guidance to national, state and local policy makers and citizens alike on the effective design and implementation of community policing. The goals of this Council are to 1) conduct research on effective policing models and methods, 2) advise the President on the need and prospects for policy changes at UConn, and 3) serve as a sounding board for the AVP for Public Safety on changes in policy and strategies that seek to improve UConn's operations and leadership in university community policing.

As I have said recently, I have great confidence in our Police Department and its leadership and I believe that they serve our campuses well. But that does not mean we can't always do better. Departments need to evolve with the evolving needs of their communities. That is a fluid and ongoing process. I want to make sure that the AVP for Public Safety, Chief of Police and I are hearing directly from diverse and engaged voices within our community at all times, including faculty, staff, and students, when it comes to policing at UConn. I want this group to collaborate with our community and our Police Department leadership to facilitate a better understanding into the operations of our department, and interface directly with members of its leadership team, as well as myself.

The council is being co-chaired by Associate Vice President for Budget, Management and Institutional Research, [Lloyd Blanchard](#), and our Vice President /Chief Diversity Officer, [Frank Tuitt](#). Find the full membership of the council [here](#). They will update the campus community on their work as it progresses.

There are other actions we can take immediately regarding training, mental health resources, dialogue and student engagement, in addition to creating the advisory council. Those actions are [listed here](#).

In addition, as you may know, UConn Police Chief Hans Rhyhart will be stepping down from that role next year. We are launching a national search for his successor. The search committee will also be chaired by Lloyd Blanchard, establishing a direct connection between the advisory council and the search committee. The full search committee membership list can be [found here](#).

Sincerely,

Tom