UC RIVERSIDE
Academic Senate

COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

February 26, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
           Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Xuan Liu, Chair
           Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Re: Report Review: Campus Safety Task Force draft report & recommendations

CoDEI reviewed the UC Riverside Safety Task Force Draft Report and Recommendations. The committee appreciates the stated mission and overall intentions of the task force. However, the committee also feels that many of the recommendations are broad and based on evidence that is not concrete or specific to UCR.

For example, consider the statement, "By numerous accounts, the UCR community has expressed feeling or experiencing a lack of safety on campus". The terms "numerous accounts", "UCR community", and "feeling or experiencing a lack of safety" are all vague and unquantifiable. The report does not provide very much tangible and specific evidence to motivate their recommendations (campus-wide surveys, data on disproportionate use of force, etc). As a result, the CoDEI committee agreed that most of the task force recommendations appear too broad and expressed concern that it would be difficult to measure their effectiveness in the future.

One committee member provided a recent (August 2020) report from the Black Student Experience Workgroup. In that report, recommendation 2B in the section Overall Campus Climate and Culture reads, "Assess UCPD policies regarding the escalation process of drawing weapons and the use of force. If not already in place, fully implement the use of body cameras for UCPD. Establish mandatory implicit bias training for all UCPD patrol officers." This recommendation provides a good example of a specific outcome that can be measured. It also highlights that the task force should do more to incorporate the experiences and recommendations of students, staff, and faculty who are most likely to be the targets of unjustified police violence.

In addition to general comments, we have some specific responses to the recommendations.

Recommendation 1A: It would be informative to know the cost the university will incur to change the name of the UC Police Department, as well as some evidence that changing the name will have an intended positive effect. If the benefit of this change is minimal, the resources to do it may be better used elsewhere in the short term.

Recommendation 1B: The committee supports implementing more public safety activities. This is an area where the recommendation could provide more specific detail about those activities.

1

Recommendation 1C: The committee supports a Chancellor-supported workgroup to monitor best practices and the literature surrounding policing.

Recommendation 2A: While the committee supports improved recruitment and training, it also expressed concern about the difficulty of measuring implicit bias. Effectively collecting data to provide evidence of bias is an important step in defining it and addressing it.

Recommendation 2B: The committee strongly supports collecting more data from the UC Police Department and as many members of the campus community as possible. We had hoped to see more specific data in this report, including information about interactions with the UC Police Department reported by the race of the individual involved. The committee hopes these data will be collected and evaluated quickly, as it would be most useful in guiding the creation of effective recommendations for our community.

Recommendation 2C: The committee would like to know more specific details about how reconfiguring the Chief's advisory board will help the campus achieve its goals with regard to redefining campus safety.

Recommendation 3A-C: The committee is optimistic about the possibility of partnering with Riverside City officials and departments to improve the safety and well-being of the entire community.