

## Possible Campus Demonstrations Update

*April 2, 2010*

To the campus community,

We learned this week that two gun rights advocacy organizations were planning to hold demonstrations on campus next week. To raise public awareness of their views, one organization suggested members would be wearing empty weapon holsters and another suggested members would carry weapons on their person and in open view.

Because we are concerned that these demonstrations could create a high level of anxiety on campus, Vice President for Student Affairs Mary Beth Snyder sent an e-mail on Thursday to notify and prepare the university community. We believe this was a critical measure because the safest community is a well-informed one.

Many students, faculty and staff responded to the e-mail and confirmed that the demonstrations, if held, would create anxiety. Concerns and questions being raised also indicated a need for greater awareness of weapons restrictions both here on campus and in the State of Michigan.

Currently, state laws allow gun owners to carry legally registered firearms in public so long as the weapons are on their person and in open view. State law governing where people can carry concealed weapons is slightly different, in that permit holders are prohibited from carrying concealed weapons in certain places, including classrooms and residence halls.

Although Oakland University maintains an ordinance that prohibits any person except law enforcement officers from carrying weapons on campus, regrettably we cannot interfere with an individual carrying a weapon on campus in accordance with state law.

This being said, we stand by our university ordinance. We enforce a student code of conduct provision that bans carrying weapons on campus, and our faculty and staff recognize that for them to carry a weapon on campus would be inappropriate. We vigorously support a recent University Senate resolution that opposes both current and pending state law allowing anyone with a permit to carry firearms on campus. We also strongly support Oakland University Police Chief Sam Lucido's ongoing lobbying efforts against passage of any laws that prevent universities from restricting weapons.

Chief Lucido has contacted and will be meeting with leaders of the two gun rights advocacy groups and will ask them to consider that the coming week will be a very inopportune time for demonstrations.

As soon as Chief Lucido reaches a resolution regarding the conflict over the timing issues we face next week, he will communicate what he's learned to the campus community. Should demonstrations go forward, he will also share information about how these situations will be managed.

The Oakland University Police Department will closely monitor activities over the coming week and work to ensure that the campus remains a safe place to visit, study and work. And as always, we encourage anyone who sees threatening or dangerous behavior to call the OUPD at (248) 370-3331 or text [911@oakland.edu](mailto:911@oakland.edu).

We also want to take a moment to apprise you of an important event that will take place next Friday morning.

For more than a year now, the Oakland University Police Department and numerous other local, state and federal law enforcement and emergency preparedness organizations (Rochester Police and Fire Departments, Auburn Hills Police and Fire Departments, Rochester Hills Fire Department, Oakland County Sheriff, Oakland County Homeland Security Division, Michigan State Police, FBI, ATF) have been planning a crisis situation training exercise scheduled to take place on campus next Friday, April 9.

Funded by a federal grant we were very fortunate to receive, this extensive, multi-agency simulation will be an invaluable means of preparing the university and partner organizations to effectively respond to emergency or crisis situations. Campus safety is an absolutely top-tier priority at Oakland University, and this exercise will go a long way toward reinforcing and enhancing our commitment to it.

Please rest assured that on the day of the exercise and prior to it, we will provide ample communication and information indicating that this exercise is a simulation and that no real emergency exists.

Meanwhile, we appreciate your efforts to stay informed and to help us maintain a safe and comfortable learning and work environment on campus.

Sincerely,

Gary Russi, President

Virinder Moudgil, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost