



# University of Oregon Police Department

Office of the Chief

**DATE:** March 21, 2019

**TO:** Chair Representative Jennifer Williamson, Vice-Chair Representative Chris Gorsek, Vice-Chair Representative Sherrie Sprenger, Representative Jeff Barker, Representative Janelle Bynum, Representative Mitch Greenlick, Representative Rick Lewis, Representative Mike McLane, Representative Carla Piluso, Representative Karin Power, Representative Duane Stark

**FROM:** Matthew E. Carmichael, Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** House Bill 3338

Honorable Members of the Oregon House Judiciary Committee,

As the Chief of Police at the University of Oregon I am tasked with protecting more than 25,000 students and all of those entrusted with operating the University of Oregon. As a parent of a UO student I can tell you this is no easy task and one that I do not take lightly.

The University of Oregon Police Department is the safety and law enforcement agency serving the University of Oregon campus and UO off-campus properties. UOPD employs sworn police officers, as well as non-sworn community service officers, student security assistants and other civilian staff.

UOPD has been a state certified law enforcement agency since January 1, 2012, and officially changed its UO department name on October 1, 2012 from the former Department of Public Safety. UOPD police officers have carried firearms since July 2013, when the (now defunct) State Board of Higher Education approved arming. UOPD officers have carried Tasers as a less-lethal stun-device option since April 2018.

All Pac-12 institutions have armed police on campus (including OSU, which contracts with Oregon State Police), as does every other Association of American Universities school. Police officers with guns have always been on the UO campus, whether through contracted, dedicated Eugene Police Department service as in the past, with general EPD service, or with UOPD.



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In 2010-11, the University of Oregon worked with its local legislative delegation to change Oregon law to allow for university-operated police. The goal was to allow universities to better serve their campuses, as is the norm at larger institutions across the country. Most municipal law enforcement, including our local agencies, have service challenges and are stretched thin. Municipal law enforcement typically does not have the resources to consistently provide many services important to a campus, like traffic stops, sexual assault and domestic violence investigations, crime prevention, theft or burglary investigations, and suspicious conditions or harassment investigations. Outside agencies will respond to immediate threats of violence (such as an active shooter) but will not be able to arrive on scene as quickly as campus police.

At the University of Oregon we are creating a campus policing model like no other. Our focused approach demonstrates true community policing, shown through many projects focused on serving students, the result of engaging with, listening to, and working with students. While I appreciate the opportunity to speak at the hearing it did not afford me enough time to adequately share with you why we are the department others aspire to be.

Many of our services from UOPD are made possible by being sworn police agency. Some of those standard services include but are not limited to:

- Arrest and transport of criminals to jail and away from campus
- Response to active threats and dangerous individuals
- Traffic stops including reckless and impaired driving
- Investigations into sexual assaults, domestic violence, stalking and other Title IX offenses, and participation in the Lane County Campus Sexual Assault Response Team
- K9 program for explosives and weapon detection at campus events and buildings
- Access to law enforcement information for knowledge of arrest warrants and other background of non-UO-affiliated individuals contacted on or near campus

University police have the same certification standards, required basic training, accountability and authority as any law enforcement officers in the state. UOPD has higher training standards than most municipal law enforcement agencies, with additional criteria for first aid and CPR; Clery, Title IX and FERPA; cultural competency and understanding implicit bias; more frequent and rigorous training with firearms and de-escalation; and other aspects of community policing.

I am proud to say because of this training we have saved lives. In 2018 alone, UOPD officers with their department-issued Narcan saved the lives of two community members who had overdosed on heroin. The prior year UOPD officers, utilizing their department issued AED, saved the life of an international graduate student. Three human beings are still alive today because of UOPD.



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I know that unarmed policing in the U.S. is not effective nor safe. Safety and criminal justice experts clearly say that officers shouldn't be expected to do police functions or take police risks without being able to use industry standard police tools and training. The UO would no longer employ sworn police or operate a police department if its officers were not able to use their industry standard tools and training. All police response and services would likely be handled by an outside agency like the Eugene Police Department which in turn still provides armed police on campus.

Some colleges and smaller universities use a model with a school-operated security office, with all police response and services handled by local law enforcement. Some, like Oregon State University or Stanford University, have a contract with a sworn law enforcement agency to place that agency's sworn and armed officers on campus and carry out agreed-on police services for the university. Armed, sworn police from any state law enforcement agency can and would still come onto college campuses, whether university police existed or not.

UOPD sworn police officers all use body-worn cameras on-duty as well as cameras in patrol cars; this footage is uploaded and secured automatically and can be used to fact-find and review police activity and interactions with the public, for the protection of both officers and the community.

Besides receiving the same basic training and certification as all Oregon law enforcement officers, UOPD police receive extensive training tailored to a campus setting.

- All officers are trained in First Aid and CPR, and carry Automated External Defibrillators and Narcan (naloxone) spray, an opioid-overdose-reversal agent. Each year, UOPD officers save lives because of their training, equipment and close proximity.
- Firearms qualification and trainings in decision-making and de-escalation are also more frequent and extensive than in most municipal agencies. Officers also carry and are trained in use of Taser stun devices as a less-lethal option that by design and how they are worn, cannot be mistaken for a firearm.
- All officers participate in ongoing training on understanding and managing implicit bias. The department arranges opportunities for officers to learn directly from diverse members of the campus community about their experiences and concerns, and how police can help them feel safer at the UO.
- UOPD is one of the departments on the forefront of effective, humane management of substance-abuse issues and the destructive criminal justice cycle, by participating in the Police-Assisted Addiction Recovery Initiative. This landmark change to law enforcement practice allows substance users to voluntarily surrender illicit substances and receive help and support from



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police in getting treatment, as opposed to being drawn into a crippling repetition of incarceration, destitution, addiction and social stigma.

- All officers are gradually participating in a landmark multi-day leadership course that emphasizes empathy and service. In a partnership with the Glide Memorial church in San Francisco, officers provide meals and outreach to homeless and marginalized citizens, and learn the human stories behind conditions of drug addiction, mental health, and other issues. Whenever possible, UOPD sponsors UO students to accompany officers for this life-changing experience. This one-of-a-kind immersive leadership program was created by and is managed by our police department. <https://center.uoregon.edu/uosafety/2018Leadership/>

In addition to specialized training for officers, UOPD has other unusual aspects that demonstrate commitment to being a department of its campus community.

The UOPD training manual is available for the public to review, on its website at <https://police.uoregon.edu/training>. Enforcement and use-of-force data, broken down by ethnicity groups contacted, is also posted online at <https://police.uoregon.edu/enforcement-data>.

As a community-oriented police agency UOPD is committed that our very foundation, department policy, is also developed through the lens of our community. A committee of students, faculty and staff meet to review, question and recommend changes to the policies that dictate how department services are rendered.

Students, faculty and staff have a strong say in who is hired as UOPD sworn police officers, through participation on hiring committees. Matter of fact, our community holds the keys to the gate. Our non-traditional approach to hiring puts the community in the driver seat. A panel, consisting of only students, faculty, and staff are the first interview panel for all police officer positions at the UO. There are no police personnel on this panel and even the style/configuration is nontraditional. An agency cannot claim to be community based if the community does not have a clear and defined role in the initial hiring process.

The UO has a Police Complaint Resolution Committee made up of students, faculty, staff and administrators who review all formal complaints regarding police officers or police policy, to ensure that complaint resolution follows relevant laws and policy.

As the chief of police, I employ student assistants who network with other students and student groups to bring me student ideas or concerns, beyond the regular and periodic meetings that I hold with students and student leaders. I widely share my personal cell phone number with my entire community including parents, students, especially student leaders, and encourage calls at any time with questions



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or ideas. As a police chief I am entrusted with serving our community and as such should be directly available to our community.

Our department employs more than 100 students as ride program drivers and dispatchers, student security assistants, and other positions. Our students comprise the largest employee pool in the police department.

Being a sworn department brings an authority and an acceptance of competence that allows us to more effectively work in our community to solve problems. A “campus security” department would simply not have the clout with citizens, outside agencies, and businesses to be able to create and drive change the way that we have.

Just a few of the projects we’ve spearheaded to be responsive to student needs, that hinge on our identity as sworn and fully trained and equipped police:

- The recent launch, after a year-long development, of a program to train local bar staff on intervention and sexual assault prevention techniques; this innovating program is the brain-child of a UO student with whom we’ve worked, but the progress and receptiveness of the bars is due significantly to our involvement and our law enforcement agency relationship with the Oregon Liquor Control Commission. Bar owners know that a law enforcement agency that can investigate assaults and druggings, and with access to data on complaints and incidents at bars, carries a lot of weight.
- Chaperoned safe rides home from football games for students leaving early in an impaired state, who otherwise would be at risk for victimization or misadventure; the service is an offshoot of a campus shuttle program also created and operated by UOPD.
- A program that allows students to sign up to have police personnel check their off-campus residences during academic breaks, to deter property crime.
- Drop-in self-defense and pepper-spray-use classes for students, offered in the student union building and for short durations that fit student schedules.
- An explosives-and-firearms-detection dog program, where we identified, trained and certified a rescue black lab dog to be able to check UO buildings and special events as an extra security measure; explosives-and-firearms detection police dogs are rare in Oregon and difficult to bring in, having one is a great advantage to enhance campus safety. Our dog is not a search or bite dog. It is incredibly friendly and popular with students and spends most of its time being petted and loved by students who might be missing a pet at home, and see the dog as an entry point to engage with police.



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While we're proud of these programs, we know that at times, our police work needs to be very traditional in the sense of identifying and dealing with criminal threats.

Having fully equipped and certified sworn police on campus saves precious minutes in response time for all calls, especially emergencies. Lives can be lost in medical or active threat crises in the time it would take for police to respond from off-campus. Response time is even worse when responding officers aren't familiar with campus buildings and routes.

Eugene Police Chief Chris Skinner told the Oregon Daily Emerald newspaper that Eugene Police are not adequately staffed to handle the needs of the entire city, so his department has to prioritize calls when someone is in immediate danger. As a result, Skinner said his officers do not have time to do the proactive patrols needed to curtail crime near the university. "We're doing the best we can," Skinner said. "But I don't want to ever pretend like we're where we need to be when it comes to level of service."

Since our training on basic police practices like use of firearms, critical thinking and decision-making exceeds state standards, we are well-prepared in dealing with these serious situations.

On Nov 10, 2018, UOPD officers responded to an area near campus to assist Eugene Police investigating a report of a shooting. Witnesses identified two suspects and one was quickly arrested in a search of the area; the other remained at large and possibly armed.

About two hours after the initial call came in, UOPD received a call from a campus community member about a man unconscious in the Pioneer Cemetery, on the southern edge of campus. When officers went to check on the man's welfare, they immediately saw he matched the description of the second suspect in the shooting. When officers contacted the subject he woke, began resisting and tried to grab a gun that was concealed inside his jacket pocket: a situation that could have resulted in a use of lethal force. Instead, the officers used their training in physical control tactics and decision-making to subdue the man and take the gun. The suspect was arrested without injury to anyone at the scene.

This is just one example of the risks and challenges faced by University of Oregon police officers each and every day. We are members of our community who choose to serve others in quiet humility and when called upon will run to the fight. Our department is comprised of veterans, UO alumni, moms, dads, sons and daughters.

Let me be very clear: you should not have a police department that is unarmed. If officers can't use a full range of their training and tools in dealing with unknown, unsafe and rapidly developing dangerous situations, you should not put them in those positions and have expectations of them that you would have of police. All members of our society have expectations of police that they are available to protect them, and to respond immediately. To fail to meet that public trust is unacceptable.



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I know that we bring great service to students here because we have the authority and influence that comes with being sworn, certified and fully equipped police. We attend to student and campus needs that can't be found from non-campus law enforcement, or found from a more limited, non-sworn security department.

We work hard to be approachable and to show our students that we are here to protect them, while respecting the wide range of feelings and opinions that exist about law enforcement today. Based on my experience working in both settings, I believe that sworn, fully trained and equipped campus police have the potential to serve higher education far better than municipal departments.

Respectfully submitted,

*Matthew E. Carmichael*

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Chief of Police