

Regarding [Resolution Concerning Increased Police and Security Cameras on Cornell's Campus](#), we have asked David Honan, Associate Vice President of Public Safety, to provide information and context based on [University Policy 8.1, Physical Security Systems](#). This update, which was requested by senior leadership and the Policy office, combines the previous policies 8.1 (Responsible Use of Surveillance) and 8.4 (Responsible use of keys and other access devices).

Sincerely,

Mike Kotlikoff and Kavita Bala

Interim President and Provost

The Faculty Senate has requested information about plans for increased police and security presence and increased numbers and placement of security cameras on campus. There is no plan for regular increased police presence in day-to-day operations at Cornell. The Daily Sun article referenced in this resolution reports on a statement made by VP Lombardi narrowly focused on the question of what the university would be doing to protect students on the anniversary of October 7th and his response was in that context. VP Lombardi's reference to extra security was in regards to the Public Safety Ambassadors (PSA).

Aligning with recommendations from the University Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC), the Public Safety Ambassadors provide an alternative approach to public safety that reduces Cornell's reliance on police, especially in instances when an armed police officer may not be necessary, or the nature of a call is not criminal. Public Safety Ambassadors are community-oriented, unarmed, civilian, security professionals. They do not possess any powers to make arrests, or enforce local, state, and federal laws. However, team members are classified under Federal law as Campus Security Authorities and are required to report all crimes to the Cornell University Police Department (CUPD). More information about the PSA's is available at [About Us – Public Safety Ambassadors](#).

The use of, and when necessary, the increase of police and security presence is under the direction of the senior leaders of the University and the Board of Trustees as outlined in New York State Education Law 5708 and 5709. All units within public safety are dedicated to providing services in a community centered manner and in compliance with all legal and constitutional protections. The policy (8.1) does, in fact, take into account the use of physical security systems to enhance campus safety while respecting the privacy of the campus community members and guests.

Regarding security cameras, the DPS Access Control Program uses established guidelines, industry standards, and best practices for all installations large or small. In the event of new construction or major renovation (or at the request of a college/unit that is undertaking a security upgrade) we apply these guidelines and standards. The only exception is when an exemption from policy has been granted. Due to security risks and concerns we do not publish security designs or camera locations to the public.

Cameras are placed at critical locations identified by our team of security professionals in alignment with best practices of the industry and crime prevention principles and in areas required to satisfy regulatory and compliance requirements, including areas deemed high risk. Classrooms are not fitted with cameras, with the exception of specific lab types that require video cameras due to regulatory requirements, labs where faculty members have requested cameras that are not connected to the central security system to document research, and studios where cameras have been installed for life safety purposes.

Security videos are used in investigations and to assist personnel in responding to incidents and safety concerns. Video is stored to be used in investigations after the fact, if an incident occurs or a safety concern is reported. In emergencies, the 911 center can view video to provide officers situational awareness before they arrive at an active crime scene. In large emergencies or during large university events such as Commencement or Slope Day, the University's Emergency Operations Center is activated, and in those instances the Incident Management Team can watch video in real time to guide first responders, emergency management, and recovery efforts. More Information on the emergency management plan is here: [Emergency Operations Plan – Office of Emergency Management](#)

Regarding the relevant policies, they are not new but instead serve as an update to existing policies. Policy 8.1 - Physical Security Systems (which combines 8.1 and 8.4) is a culmination of card access, video monitoring, and brass key management. This policy and the associated procedural documents have been developed by certified security experts (Access Control Program) informed by industry standards and best practices. In addition, they have been vetted by security consultants as it relates to best practices and installation standards (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design). Our procedures are developed in support of the University's Design and Construction Standards to guide units undergoing major renovations or new construction on these best practices and policy. In addition, the policy was updated according to the [university procedures to update policies](#) and relevant stakeholders were included in the Policy Advisory Group portion of the University process. The [revised Physical Security Systems Policy](#) is available on the policy website for review.

The revision to this policy was prompted by advances in technology and best practices, not a recent development or a response to recent campus events. As a tool to provide evidence and leads in the event of crimes, missing students, active threats to life, or premises liability incidents, security cameras are essential tools to provide to our first responders and to provide an alternative to more police on campus. In 2019, Access Control began working on updating the policy to meet needs that have been identified by senior leadership and later by security consultants. DPS has been working very closely with the Policy Sponsors, and the University's Policy Office and its established policy review processes.

This process was on track to be completed in 2020; however, COVID derailed the process. Work on the update was picked back up in 2022, when the policy office published a new process. The procedural documents were developed in 2019 and were formalized in 2022. They have been used for all University installations and new construction and renovations since that time. As of 2023, the Policy Office asked us to combine 8.1 and 8.4 into a Physical Security Systems policy. Then-EVP Joanne DeStefano approved rescinding the policies on June 21, 2023, as they were outdated and

not reflecting current practices. The policy review process has been going on since that time. During this continual review process, University colleges and units have been engaged and provided feedback on the policy and procedures.

Sincerely,

David Honan

Associate Vice President of Public Safety