



MONTCLAIR STATE
UNIVERSITY

University Senate

Recommendation for the development of video and audio surveillance policy

Approved March 23, 2022 by the University Senate

The University Senate recommends that the University Administration develop and promulgate clear and comprehensive policies and procedures to govern video and audio surveillance on campus.

Among other considerations, the policy should specify:

1. how data is stored and who has access to it, including but not limited to how long data is retained and how data is protected;
2. who will review and approve requests to use or disseminate surveillance data for non-law enforcement purposes; that all data obtained and observations made through surveillance systems should be presumed to be confidential and only used for official university and law enforcement purposes;
3. specific information about when and how the data will be used, i.e., to protect equipment, and secure locations;
4. how to request placement of cameras for security;
5. provision to restrict surveillance in areas where individuals can reasonably expect privacy, including the interiors of restrooms, locker rooms, residence hall rooms, private offices, and human health-care treatment areas;
6. a point of contact for community members that have questions related to the policy.

In the development of the necessary policies and procedures, the Administration should solicit broad-based input, including provision for public comment by the members of the University Community on proposed policies and procedures. Moreover, any aspects of policies and procedures that address items subject to collective negotiation should be properly negotiated with the respective negotiations agents (unions).

Rationale

In 2019, the University Senate received a report from a community member that there are more than 300 video surveillance cameras on campus. The University Senate Administrative Council surveyed the University community to gauge the level of concern about audio and visual surveillance. Most respondents (62.9%) indicated that they were aware they may be under surveillance while on campus and that they think surveillance cameras increase personal safety

(71.4%). Despite this general pro-surveillance camera sentiment, several concerns were expressed and many respondents had strong feelings. Many of the comments and responses express concerns related to transparency and confusion about the University's intentions and integrity surrounding surveillance. Most respondents would like camera signage posted and a more clearly articulated policy on where cameras may be placed. Further, there is widespread concern of whether or not audio is captured, how these recordings may be used, and processes in place that would allow access to recordings by the general public, security teams, or supervisors. Generally, those surveyed thought audio capture was the most invasive. Additionally, there is significant interest in how data is stored, how long it is retained, and how this data is being protected. Concerns expressed in survey open comments included legal issues and privacy. The overriding desire in open comments is for greater transparency and more information about audio and video surveillance.

There is currently no visible, comprehensive policy that governs A/V surveillance. Other Universities publish their A/V surveillance policies without damaging the integrity of safety. A few examples are,

Tufts University <https://publicsafety.tufts.edu/policies/video-security/>

Rutgers University <https://policies.rutgers.edu/file/3169/download?token=KkHVqlgu>

University of Iowa

<https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/administrative-financial-and-facilities-policies/video-surveillance>

SUNY <https://www.esf.edu/au/documents/VideoSurveillancePolicy.pdf>