



OFFICE OF THE CHAIR
DEPARTMENT OF MOLECULAR AND CELL BIOLOGY
COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE
142 WEILL HALL, #3200
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720-3200

PHONE: 510-643-3406
EMAIL: mcbchair@berkeley.edu

Dear Chancellor Christ,

Members of the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology have made it clear from compiling responses from multiple recent surveys of staff, graduate students, postdocs and faculty in our department that they strongly favor a new approach to public safety on and around the UC Berkeley campus. This issue has come into focus because of the recent heightened awareness of police brutality against BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) and other marginalized groups. While we acknowledge the important and difficult job that UCPD officers have in providing for the safety of our community, we are deeply troubled by previous publicized incidents of the excessive use of force and racially biased treatment of BIPOC by UCPD. Recognizing that there are many facets in providing public safety, funding allocations should be appropriately adjusted to emphasize other important aspects of public safety. Budgets for social services, mental health and domestic violence treatments need to be increased. Importantly, the BearWalks program and campus shuttle service need to be made much more robust with app-based pickups, shorter pickup wait times, and greater distances covered. Our community favors a campus police force that serves as guardians of public safety who are well integrated into the campus community, and who serve the public without bias or prejudice. All UCPD officers should complete de-escalation and racial bias training. There needs to be greater accountability for police misconduct toward the constituents that they are meant to protect and serve. Finally, we question whether the UCPD needs to have advanced weapons and body armor (in the absence of a riot situation), which create distance between the officers and the community they are charged with protecting, and may affect the way the officers perceive themselves.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of David Drubin in black ink.

Handwritten signature of Donald Rio in black ink.

David Drubin and Donald Rio
MCB co-Chairs