

Princeton University
Department of Public Safety

Dear Community,

As Princeton University's Deputy Director of the Department of Public Safety, I represent the men and women of the department who work tirelessly all year to keep the University one of the safest campuses in the country. The statistics from our 2009 Campus Security and Fire Safety Report reflect these efforts.

The University had no criminal homicides or robberies on campus, and we had statistically small increases or decreases in the other categories of our reported crime. In 2008 there were five aggravated assaults reported to campus officials and none involved what would be considered a serious injury. There was a slight rise in burglaries, with the vast majority of our burglaries involving thefts from dorm rooms that were left unlocked, or incidents in which the door was left propped open by the student. While an increase of reported arsons from two in 2007 to seven in 2008 may seem significant, it is important to note that none of these incidents placed people or property in serious danger. Most of these reported arsons were papers that were set on fire on light poles or sign boards.

Our 2008 statistics also show an increase in the number of sexual assaults reported to campus officials. As public safety officials across the country know, sexual assault is the most under-reported crime on college campuses, and it is no different at Princeton. The vast majority of sexual assaults reported in the Campus Security Report were reported to the University's SHARE office (Sexual Harassment/ Assault Advising, Resources, and Education) and not to Public Safety. This rise in reports over the past several years may be the result of the tremendous outreach that the SHARE office does on campus, and the atmosphere of safety and support they create for survivors to report incidents in a confidential manner.

The other section of our security and safety report provides information on arrests and judicial referrals for violations of alcohol and drug laws. This information includes violations of law committed by students and non-students, as DPS works closely with offices across campus to enforce the University's "Rights, Rules and Responsibilities" document, which outlines accepted standards of conduct for the campus community.

The drug violation arrest statistics include arrests of students and non-students arrested by DPS or local municipal officers. Most of the arrests for drug violations were non-students on campus property. We've seen a consistent rise over the past several years in the number of cases of drug violations referred to the University judicial system. While it's possible there is an increase in marijuana use on campus, we attribute the rise in these statistics to the increased presence of officers in the dorms on Residential Hall Patrol, which started in 2007, as well as an increased number of students calling DPS because they either smell cigarette or marijuana smoke in the dorms.

The number of referrals for alcohol violations decreased from 2007, but the figure does not necessarily represent a decline. In the cases where students are arrested, they are also referred for discipline; however, the referral is not "counted" in the Campus Safety Report because only the arrests are counted. The increase in the number of arrests for liquor law violations is directly attributable to increased efforts by the Princeton Borough police to have an impact on high-risk drinking.

All of the statistics in the 2009 Campus Security and Fire Safety Report show that Princeton University -- while not crime-free -- is a relatively safe campus. Maintaining a safe campus is the result of the hard work of all of our community partners who share in this responsibility.

Charles Davall
Deputy Director of Public Safety