

Media Statement, April 11, 2019

The University's position is unchanged and grounded in our Principles on Academic Freedom and Guidelines for Students in Support of Free Expression Through Protests and Demonstration. Students have broad support for expression, including expression of controversial or critical views. However, students and others do not have the right to occupy buildings, disrupt events and services that jeopardize the university's mission, endanger the health and safety of its members, or suppress the speech of others. The students and community members occupying the lobby and other spaces of Garland Hall are currently in contravention of these policies.

The President and Provost welcome reasoned, thoughtful discussion about ways to improve the university and the community of which we are part. They meet regularly with students from across the university, even when the issues raised are difficult and the views presented are in opposition to their own. But they do not meet with students or organizations who are in clear violation of university policy.

The President and Provost attended numerous public meetings on and off campus over the last 18 months in which the case for and against a sworn university police department was discussed, analyzed and debated from a number of different perspectives. Those meetings, coupled with a comprehensive research document, were circulated to the community. The legislation that was adopted by strong votes of both houses of the Maryland General Assembly was based on that report and then subject to more than nine hours of committee hearings and modified by 18 separate amendments.