

Statement from Provost Sunil Kumar and Acting Vice President for Security Connor Scott
Regarding the May 8, 2019 Altercation at Garland Hall
February 7, 2020

We write to share with the university community the completion of the university's review of a troubling event that occurred at Garland Hall on May 8, 2019, and the subsequent response of JHU security.

As many in our community are aware, in the early morning hours of May 8, 2019, just prior to the conclusion of the five-week student protest and occupation of Garland Hall, a group of people led by then-JHU research scientist Dr. Daniel Povey forcibly entered Garland Hall and engaged in a physical altercation with several protesters.

In the days following this incident, the University took immediate interim action, and later permanent steps, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community. We also heard from some of the protesters with serious concerns about whether Dr. Povey's actions were motivated by race and/or gender identity or expression bias, and about the way the situation was handled by campus security. In response, the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) initiated an investigation into potential violations of our policy against discrimination and harassment, and the Office of Campus Safety and Security (CSS) conducted a review of the actions of its officers.

The OIE investigation and CSS review are now concluded. OIE has confirmed that Dr. Povey engaged in conduct that is wholly unacceptable and unprofessional for a member of our community, but did not find sufficient evidence to show a violation of our discrimination and harassment policy. CSS has found that our security officers were unaware of the circumstances and seriousness of the altercation at the time it occurred – due to limited visibility into the occupied building, lack of cooperation from protesters and guests in allowing officers to manage access to the building, and direction from security leadership to maintain some distance from protest activities – but that their response immediately afterwards very clearly fell short of our expectations and was inconsistent with the mission, mandate and protocols of the office.

The University does not publicize details regarding individual investigations and personnel matters; however, we want to reiterate that Dr. Povey is no longer affiliated with the university, and we want to inform the community that individual disciplinary action has been taken as a result of the CSS review, and additional training is being instituted for security personnel.

We also want to express our appreciation for all those who participated in the investigation and review. This important work was informed and supported by an outside firm, which conducted numerous interviews and reviewed materials and videos. Some witnesses declined to participate and/or declined to provide potentially relevant materials, including some video recordings from the incident. Here, as in every case, findings and conclusions are based on the information made available, and both OIE and CSS remain open to considering any additional information going forward.

Johns Hopkins is committed to fostering an inclusive environment in which all members of our community feel respected, supported, and safe. Inherent in that is our responsibility to conduct thorough investigations of reported misconduct by university affiliates. When inappropriate or

unacceptable behavior has taken place, as unfortunately occurred on May 8, we will remain steadfast in holding individuals accountable and taking meaningful actions to help ensure that lapses are not repeated.

Note: The Protest Timeline below has been updated to reflect the conclusion of this investigation and review (see entry for February 7, 2020) and to clarify an interaction with security at the time of the occupation (see entry for May 1, 2019).