

Introduced By: Senator Mole
Sponsored By: Senator Kostis; Vice Chair Martinez; Chair Cibula; Senator Rolle; Chair Cox; Senator Vervuurt; Vice Chair Anderson; Senator Caldwell; Chair Yalamanchili; Senator Cura; Chair Temple; Vice Chair Tache; Chair Millington; Chair Holmes; March for Our Lives @UCF; Pride Student Association; Active Minds; Young Democratic Socialists of America @ UCF; DSR Foster; Chair Patel; Senator Spaulding; Senator Van Kirk; Chair Borges; Senator Salerno; Chair Saucedo; SG Black Caucus; Black Student Union President Chanelle Henry

Contact: sga_cah3@ucf.edu
First Reading: April 7, 2022
Committee Action: Passed 7-0-1
Second Reading: April 21, 2022; Passed 40-3-3
Third Reading: May 24, 2022
Final Vote: Passed 26-3-2



**University of Central Florida
 Fifty-Fourth Student Body Senate
 Resolution 54-01**

[Resolution Advocating for the University of Central Florida to Create an Unarmed Community Response Team]

WHEREAS, Senate Rule 2.04(G)(1) states the Student Body Advocacy (SBA) Committee shall pass measures advocating on behalf of the student body regarding student, and university affairs;

WHEREAS, Article 2.05(C) of the Student Body Constitution states that the Student Body Senate shall express the will and sentiments of the Student Body Senate through legislation;

WHEREAS, Today, the police are increasingly expected to solve every problem that pops up in the community, from dealing with domestic disturbances and reversing overdoses to resolving noise complaints and de-escalating behavioral health crises;

WHEREAS, Police often lack the tools and training to address many of these concerns, leading to issues such as the unnecessary use of force and strain on officers;

WHEREAS, According to NPR, it is estimated that at least 20% of police calls are in response to mental health and/or substance abuse crises;

WHEREAS, Though many 911 calls do merit an emergency police response, dispatching armed officers to calls where their presence is unnecessary and is an ineffective use of safety resources;

WHEREAS, The Center for American Progress (CAP) and the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) examined 911 police calls for service from eight cities and found that 23 to 39 percent of calls were low priority or non-urgent;

WHEREAS, According to the Treatment Advocacy Center, people with Untreated Mental Illness are 16 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement;

WHEREAS, According to the *Washington Post*, Hispanic people are nearly twice as likely as White people to be shot by police;

WHEREAS, According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, Black people account for upwards of thirty percent of civilians killed in police interactions, and are killed by police at around 2.5 times the rate of white people on a national scale;

WHEREAS, Forty percent of all homeless people nationwide are Black, meaning that Black people and other people of color experiencing homelessness are at especially high risk of charged interactions with police;

WHEREAS, A study by the American Psychiatric Association demonstrated that Community Response Team (CRT) officers report lower levels of force being used during an escalating crisis;

WHEREAS, The purpose of a Community Response Team is to develop a new line of responders and behavioral experts to bring their expertise to non-violent calls where an individual may be experiencing a mental or behavioral crisis and focus on de-escalation;

WHEREAS, A Community Response Team would be comprised of Mental Health and Behavioral experts, Medical Experts, and/or Social Workers as opposed to Law Enforcement Officers;

WHEREAS, A Community Response Team would provide Police officers the chance to divert attention towards issues raised by the community which are more suited towards armed personnel;

WHEREAS, According to National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 2,700 communities around the country have created Community Response Teams;

WHEREAS, A Community Response Team has already been established by the City of Orlando;

WHEREAS, Orlando’s Community Response Team pilot program began in March 2021 as a part of Mayor Buddy Dyer’s initiative of ensuring the residents of Orlando are “equally valued and protected”;

WHEREAS, The Mayor of Orlando stated that when conversing with residents of the city, they gathered a consensus that “they want Orlando Police officers to focus on law enforcement and building relationships through community policing”;

WHEREAS, The CRT of Orlando consists of a licensed clinician and case manager, both of whom are trained alongside career officers;

WHEREAS, According to the Orlando Sentinel, as of September 16th, 2021, the CRT is staffed with 10 officials, consisting of 8 permanent members with 2 acting as alternates;

WHEREAS, The stated goal of the CRT, as it pertains to its pilot phase, is to respond to non-violent mental health situations;

WHEREAS, As of September 15th, 2021, the Orlando CRT has addressed 549 calls and referred 275 such cases to local mental health support resources, with all cases resulting in 0 arrests;

WHEREAS, The Orlando Chief of Police has lauded the program, saying of it “CRT and our department is proving to be beneficial for our citizens and our officers”;

WHEREAS, According to National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 2,700 communities around the country have created Community Response Teams;

WHEREAS, Community Response Teams foster collaboration, intensive training, and improves communications and resources for citizens seeking mental health resources;

WHEREAS, Citizens with mental illnesses will be directed to treatment instead of jail, reducing the amount of arrests of citizens with mental illness;

WHEREAS, A Community Response Team can provide opportunities for students, and faculty interested in the health, psychological, and social work fields to volunteer and work with the team to address student needs on campus that make up as a whole our safety and security;

WHEREAS, Maintaining a CRT can act as the first step in establishing a crisis response system that can help individuals with substance abuse, harm reduction, first aid, transportation to local services, domestic violence, intoxication, mental crisis counseling, and issues relating to homelessness;

WHEREAS, The National Alliance to End Homelessness lays out an ideal crisis response system, which has outreach as being the first element to such a strategy, saying “outreach workers connect people at risk or experiencing homelessness to coordinated entry, emergency services, and shelter”;

WHEREAS, A Community Response Team would save communities money by reducing the costs of incarcerations and allocating funds towards community-based mental health treatments, saving communities millions of dollars;

WHEREAS, Community Response Teams also protect officers by reducing their chances of getting injured on the job;

WHEREAS, Chief Carl Metzger asserted his support for the creation of a CRT if the funding was available at the UCFPD Town Hall on February 15th, 2022;

WHEREAS, Chief Metzger estimated that a CRT would require six-to-seven staff members making a wage of at least \$40,000, bringing the cost of staffing a CRT to between 240 to 280 thousand dollars;

WHEREAS, The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation Inc, assessed UCFPD (in 2019) as a “full service police agency with 79 sworn officers and approximately 57 civilian staff”;

WHEREAS, UCF has a budget of 1.5 billion dollars, including \$1,140,500 for Campus Security and Safety Enhancements that the Board of Trustees Budget and Finance Committee approved for the FY22 University E&G Carry Forward Spending Plans on July 1;

WHEREAS, The approved spending would be defined for “The support of Campus Security and Safety Enhancements issues, such as the recruitment of police officers, vehicles, equipment...[and] may also include mental health counseling and services;

WHEREAS, A community response team, which answers between twenty and thirty percent of all 911 calls, would undoubtedly decrease the need for spending on personnel and equipment;

WHEREAS, Non-emergency calls can be handled during 12 hour shifts as opposed to the full 24 hour shift in order to decrease the cost of maintaining the CRT, or subject to change depending on further demand data; and

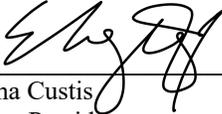
WHEREAS, When non-emergency calls are handled by the CRT, UCFPD’s Deputies may continue to respond to service incidents. Deputies can also refer cases taken after hours to the CRT for follow up.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That it is the opinion of the Fifty-Fourth Student Senate of the University of Central Florida that the University of Central Florida ought to establish an Unarmed Community Response Team to respond to certain non-violent calls which do not require the presence of an armed police officer;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the funding for the community response team first come from the UCFPD budget to account for the decrease in demand before being taken from other areas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to UCFPD Chief of Police Carl Metzger, UCFPD Deputy Chief Robin Griffin-Kitzerow, UCF President Alexander Cartwright, and UCF Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Andrea Guzman.

AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES



Emma Custis
Senate President

05/31/2022

Date



Samantha Ciresi
Senate President Pro Tempore

05/31/2022

Date