QUESTION AND ANSWERS FOR ARMING UNIVERSITY POLICE

1. Why do our sworn officers need to carry firearms? Don’t we have a safe campus?

We believe that The University of Scranton does have a safe campus, in part due to the professionalism and status of our Department of Public Safety. At the same time, we acknowledge that expectations for safety on campuses across the nation have increased and that Scranton shares the challenges of crime that face all urban areas. The decision to arm University Police Officers, therefore, has to do with expectation, preparedness and responsibility. We believe that our University Police Officers should be provided the full range of tools commensurate with the expectations of them. The University provides a full service police agency, and it is expected to respond to the full range of routine and critical incidents on campus. The decision to arm was based on the recommendation of a Task Force with the Administrators’ Conference, the Campus Community Committee of the Board of Trustees and the full Board itself. While the discussions began with reservations, they ended with a strong and unanimous consensus that establishing a University Police force was an essential evolution in keeping the University community safe.

2. Will all our public safety officers be armed?

No. As part of the transition, the Department of Public Safety is clarifying the roles of staff, to include administrative personnel, and University Police Officers. Only sworn police officers will be armed. In order to make this transition, the department is undergoing an extensive evaluation process to make certain that our University Police Officers meet the necessary criteria to carry a firearm in the performance of their duties. Only those who meet these new and stringent requirements will transition to the new role.

3. What is the process for arming our University Police Officers?

The University has engaged the services of a respected campus safety firm to help guide us through the arming process. Margolis, Healy & Associates (MH&A, www.margolis-healy.com) is working closely with the administration and the University Police to ensure that the Department’s policies, procedures and internal systems support this transition. Clear policies and best practices will be implemented prior to the transition. Margolis, Healy & Associates are advising the institution on all related matters.
4. **What kind of training do our University Police Officers receive? What is their level of certification?**

Our police officers enjoy the same level of training and certification as those officers serving the cities, towns, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Each University Police Officer attends the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Program. During this training each officer receives extensive instruction in firearms and must demonstrate a level of proficiency in order to graduate. In addition to the above requirements, University Police Officers will receive additional training on topics such as behavior management, crisis intervention and other issues commonly encountered in a university community.

5. **What types of weapons will they carry?**

Firearms are an option only under a specific set of circumstances in the protection of human life. The Department of Public Safety has selected a firearm following a careful and collaborative process. In addition, the Department is evaluating non-lethal options that have been used on our campus for some time or that are consistent with those in use at campuses around the country. These less-lethal use of force tools include chemical (pepper spray), impact (batons), and electric (TASERS). The Department is undergoing a deliberate, measured process to understand and select among these options, as well. This process includes seeking input from the University community.