

Dear Physics Faculty,

I'm sure that many of you share the concerns of the Physics Graduate Student Association (PGSA) in regards to the incident of armed robbery that happened last Tuesday morning, May 10th on the 2nd floor of Rockefeller. While we are grateful for the swift and active response made by Drs. Kash, Covault, and Taylor, we would still like to take a moment to express our own unique perspective and concerns. Namely, we have discussed and approved a small set of adjustments that would make us, as graduate students who often work odd hours, feel safer.

One of our primary worries is that while the CWRU administration may address the safety issues of entering Rockefeller, the entire Rockefeller-Strosacker-Smith-Smith complex may not be made safer. Many of our graduate students have noticed in the past that the passageways that connect each of these buildings to Rockefeller are not routinely monitored or locked according to university protocol. Even the alarms set between buildings are armed, the response by campus police is slow. An increase in the number of times that Rockefeller (complex) receives a pass over by security would alleviate many of our worries. However, the number of such passageways is extensive and the difficulty of maintaining a safe Rockefeller while ignoring the security issues elsewhere within the complex should not be ignored. We would feel safer knowing that any security upgrades or changes that are made in wake of this incident would extend to include other departments within the complex.

We also recommend increasing the hours of restricted entry into the building during the summer and for holidays. While most of the campus vacates during the summer months, faculty and graduate students still keep regular hours. With fewer eye-witnesses on campus overall, this leaves individuals at work (even in the daytime; the aforementioned incident occurred at 9:10am) susceptible to crime.

Historically, we have also seen the benefit of having video cameras as deterrents against potential theft and would like to see that practice extended to cover more of our complex. On a related note, the back of Rockefeller (which faces the medical complex) is a poorly lit alleyway that concerns many of us. Since this alleyway is not visible from the quad, improving the lighting conditions near the building and increasing the number of pass overs would be a simple and straightforward way to deter against future crimes.

Again, the PGSA would like to extend our gratitude to everyone at CWRU who has worked so hard over the last week to address this problem. We hope that with graduate students, faculty, and administration working together we can ensure that this type of incident never happens again.

Thank you,

Physics Graduate Student Association
Melody M. Maxson, President
Robert Halliday, Vice President
Allen Foster, Secretary/Treasurer
Michael McMaster, Faculty Liaison
Mohammed ElKabbesh, GCAS Senator