

USC Statement on Western/Police Information Sharing Agreement

23 September 2019

The USC has been an active member of the city-wide Broughdale Task Force since January 2019 because we recognize the serious safety concerns that exist on Broughdale Ave during annual end-of-September festivities. The [recently disclosed](#) information sharing [agreement](#) with police was not an initiative of the Task Force, but rather a direct agreement between Western University and the London Police Service. The USC does not endorse this agreement, nor were we involved in the ideation or creation of this agreement.

Since learning about the agreement in June, we have shared our concerns with Western's administration about its overly broad scope and potentially wide application. The MOU does not define a specific threshold of seriousness that would trigger information sharing, as any instance of information sharing simply requires a student to be charged under any federal or provincial act. Moreover, it does not restrict information sharing specifically to unsanctioned street parties like Broughdale, but simply to large assemblies of individuals not sanctioned by Western, which could technically include a range of large gatherings. Both Western's administration and the London Police Service have informed us that the spirit of the agreement is to transfer information about only serious behaviours occurring during large gatherings and to focus on the safety of our students and community members, and behaviours that put others at risk. However, we are not comfortable with the precedent this agreement sets and the potential impact it may have on our students; we fear that the ambiguity in the agreement technically allows for information sharing about many types of behaviours occurring in a variety of off-campus group settings.

We believe that our students expect a reasonable degree of separation between their on- and off-campus activities, which is why we are concerned by the broad scope of the agreement. We are also disappointed with the lack of consultation completed with the campus community before the agreement was signed. Put simply, we cannot support this agreement because we are uncertain of its potential implications on our students, we are concerned by its overly broad scope, and we believe that our students were inadequately consulted on its development.

Our primary contribution to the Task Force is to provide safer alternative programming at Purple Fest, allowing our students to enjoy a top lineup of artists in a sanctioned venue, while still celebrating their Purple Pride. We believe our role is to help our students make informed decisions about their actions on September 28th and encourage safer decisions that do not hinder celebration or community building. We are thankful for the continued dedication of the Task Force partners in addressing the serious safety concerns for all involved in festivities on September 28th.

We understand that our students will have diverse perspectives about this agreement, and we encourage them to have open, constructive, and critical dialogue to share their voice. We also ask them to reach out to the USC at info@westernusc.ca to share their perspective in order to inform our advocacy moving forward.