

Policy Consultation and Approval Process

Summary of Comments Received during the Informal Review Phase

Weapons and Firearms

A. Individual Comments

- Students who are in law enforcement, military veterans, and who have a Minnesota concealed carry permit should be allowed to conceal carry on campus. The world is getting dangerous and having trained personal with weapons could stop a mass shooting event and save many lives.
- Response: Minnesota State Policy [5.21](#) "Students are prohibited from possessing or carrying a firearm while on system property, regardless of whether the student has a permit to carry a firearm, except as provided in this policy." Exceptions are made for academic use or use at a campus shooting range.
- I would not support anyone outside of law enforcement carrying firearms on campus, despite any permits. I fear that the interpretations of a "registered holder" could be misinterpreted.
- Response: Minnesota State Statute [624.714](#), subd. 18 specifies that employers of public colleges and universities may establish policies that restrict the carry or possession of firearms by employees and students from carrying firearms on university property. Minnesota State has chosen to do this under the policy noted above.
- Ability to carry pepper spray and use if needed.
- The policy allows for the carrying of small canisters of chemical irritant that is possess/carried for personal protection purposes.
- While the constitutionality of a "No Gun Zone" is not under question, advertising that law abiding citizens will be unable to defend themselves in the event of an emergency is not the wisest way in which to discourage those who choose not to abide by the law from violating it.
- I think that there could be a change on conceal carry for students.

From what I understand the policy states that outside of students, adults that have a permit may carry on grounds, but students can't, even though the

students are the ones there every day. Just a thought would be the ones who have their permit to carry should be able to carry on campus.

- **Response: Minnesota State Policy [5.21](#) “Students are prohibited from possessing or carrying a firearm while on system property, regardless of whether the student has a permit to carry a firearm, except as provided in this policy.” Exceptions are made for academic use or use at a campus shooting range.**
- It is not clear how consequences are determined; it is also not clear how a member of the campus community would report seeing or being aware of a weapon on campus - how would they notify security? What protections are available to them for this notification?
- **Consequences are determined through Human Resources and the various collective bargaining units for employees and by Student Conduct for students. Members can report to security by calling (507)389-2111 or by using the [Silent Witness Report Form](#) located on security’s website. This report can be done anonymously.**
- With the nationwide trends of increased sexual assault on college campuses and the increased propensity of violence towards traditionally marginalized and oppressed groups (especially members of the LGBTQ+ community, POC, and Indigenous persons), it is imperative that we allow our students and faculty to defend themselves in a manner consistent with their beliefs and in such a way that is most effective for each of our students and faculty members.

Currently, the university bans such non-lethal defensive implements as tasers. In fact, the only effective self-defense tool apparently allowed is small quantities of chemical irritants (such as pepper spray). However, the policy would seem to preclude even such non-lethal devices as those made by the Pepperball company, or commonly used ASP batons.

While pepper spray is not necessarily a poor choice for self-defense, it has notable drawbacks. The largest is the fact that the spray may be affected by wind. If an assailant's back is to the wind, a person's ability to defend themselves in this manner would be extremely hampered and the victim may even come into contact with the spray due to the wind - aiding the assailant, not the victim. A second consideration is the possibility of building a tolerance to pepper spray that exists. Although it is remote, this would negate any benefits derived from a student or faculty member using the only option to defend themselves.

Furthermore, even the non-lethal implements listed above may be entirely useless in a problem with multiple attackers - something sometimes only practicable to solve with a firearm.

In light of the above, I recommend that the University at the very least drops restrictions on the size of chemical irritant canisters and devices like those sold by Pepperball, ASP, and Taser.

I further recommend that the university drop all restrictions on weapons more restrictive than those established by Minnesota statutes. The State of Minnesota already has a robust system for certifying concealed carry and regulating defensive implements. The State even requires that all licensees are 21. We should allow our students and faculty to use this system if they so choose.

It is absurd that the University should pretend to be an ally or advocate for marginalized populations without allowing them to make the appropriate choices to ensure their safety on our campus. Allowing self-defense is being an ally.

Allowing self-defense is hearing all women. Allowing self-defense ensures equity.

- **Response: Minnesota State Policy [5.21](#) “Students are prohibited from possessing or carrying a firearm while on system property, regardless of whether the student has a permit to carry a firearm, except as provided in this policy.” Exceptions are made for academic use or use at a campus shooting range.**
- **As for the carrying of any of the other “defensive tools” that you list out, by the time someone retrieves the ASP or Taser that they are most likely not carrying in their hands, an assailant can have already inflicted great physical harm. I do not know of any university that allows the carrying of such weapons by their staff and/or students. As someone who carried these types of tools for 30 years as a police officer, I understand that there is a need to have regular training on the use of such a weapon in order to increase the odds that you can successfully use it. Most probably don’t think that this is necessary. And most definitely don’t understand the first hurdle that involves overcoming the psychological reluctance that most of us have to physically hurt someone. It’s not as easy as one might think to physically hurt someone even to defend themselves. Many sexual assault victims freeze and don’t offer physical resistance. I investigated many sexual assaults during my career in law enforcement and very few victims fought back.**

B. Group Comments (Note: some comments may also have been submitted as individual comments above)